

APTC Mid-Term Review: Scholarship Program Analysis Draft Report

22 June 2009

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APTC Mid-Term Review: Scholarship Program Analysis – Final Draft Report

Executive Summary

The Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) provides Pacific Island women and men with Australian qualifications that present opportunities to find employment in targeted sectors nationally and internationally, and to support skills development in the Pacific in response to labour market requirements. The APTC is open to applicants from Pacific Island Forum (PIF) countries (except Australia and New Zealand) who meet the technical skills and English language, literacy and numeracy (ELLN) entry requirements for specific courses. The first students commenced in July 2007, with a target of 3,000 graduates by June 2011. APTC funding includes A\$10m for a Scholarship Program to promote access for Pacific Islanders, especially individuals from smaller island states (SIS) and those without other means of support. Training is conducted in the campus countries (CC) - Fiji, PNG, Samoa and Vanuatu by two Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in partnership with local technical and vocational education and training (TVET) providers and private sector companies. The Coordination Office (CO) is based in Fiji.

The Scholarships Program analysis is part of a wider APTC Mid-Term Review (MTR) to assess the progress and performance of the APTC and to make recommendations on its medium and longer term future directions. This report is based on MTR consultations, extensive data from APTC's Blue (student database), financial/other data provided by the RTOs and written stakeholder responses to a Consultation Paper. The recommendations and analysis in this report are based on the implementation and performance of the Scholarships Program to date. The impact on the Scholarships Program of MTR recommendations for medium to longer term changes to the APTC are addressed in the main MTR report.

Uptake of APTC Scholarships. Access to the APTC has been facilitated through its Scholarship Program. Over 1,193 scholarships have been awarded, providing financial and tuition fee support to 58 percent of enrolments, many of whom would not otherwise have been able to afford to train at the APTC. There is a strong demand for the scholarships, with over 3,598 applications received to date. 93 percent of Non Campus Country (NCC) course applications were accompanied by a scholarship application, compared to 82 percent of CC applications. Not unexpectedly, based on population size alone, demand for APTC training and scholarships has been highest from the CC (with 69 percent of applications and 73 percent of the scholarships awarded). Demand from some NCCs including the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Kiribati, and Nauru has also been strong. The third highest number of scholarship applications have been received from the Solomon Islands, reflecting its population size after PNG and Fiji. Over 85 percent of NCC enrolled students are on a scholarship compared to 51 percent of CC students. However, only 43 scholarship applications (1 percent of the total) have been received from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Marshall Islands and Palau, with none from the Cook Islands. Lack of demand from these countries is considered by the RTOs to be due to differences in their educational systems and alternative opportunities for sponsored training in New Zealand or America.

Of the scholarships awarded to date, 48 percent are for training at the Schools of Automotive, Construction and Electrical and Manufacturing (SACEM), 42 percent for

the School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) and only 9 percent for the more recently established School of Health and Community Services (SHCS). There are significant differences by country in the demand for training at the Schools with, for example, 51 percent of Kiribati scholarships awarded for the STH compared to 83 percent of the Tonga awards. However course supply is also a factor with 47 percent of Vanuatu scholarships being for training at the SHCS. Over 65 percent of scholarships have been awarded for six courses – Hospitality Operations, Children's Services, Commercial Cookery, Systems Electrician, Automotive Mechanical Technology and Tourism Operations.

Demand for APTC scholarships varies significantly by country, course and gender, reflecting factors including course availability, gender-based demand for the courses and differences in the number of applicants that meet the technical skills and English language and numeracy course entry requirements. It is also recognised that RTOs have needed to fill course places within short time periods and have contractual accountability for achieving graduate (and not scholarship offer) targets. These factors may work against the offer of scholarships to NCC students, who also need higher levels of resource investment in terms of assessment, travel, accommodation and pastoral care than do CC scholarship or fee-paying applicants. Access and the sustainability of the NCC pipeline of students for the APTC will be at risk unless actions are undertaken to mitigate the known constraints.

Access to APTC scholarships by marginalised students. RTO/CO awareness of the specific needs for access to the APTC by individuals from smaller island states and isolated rural areas is clearly established, even though it is more costly for RTOs to recruit and train students from there. APTC marketing/assessment visits have been made at least annually to all NCCs, with, on advice from AusAID, the exception of the Cook Islands. Even with the appointment of Country Coordinators in Kiribati, Nauru, the Solomon Islands and Tonga, it is acknowledged that SIS access to information on the APTC and to course entry assessment (particularly in countries with no Country Coordinator) is significantly less than in the CCs.

APTC scholarship policies and award benefits positively favour students from the NCCs. The Scholarships Program is a regional scheme with flexibility to award offers to ensure equitable access by country across the first four years of the scholarships scheme. Access to scholarship funding is critical to NCC students who are faced with the higher cost of having to train overseas and typically do not have access to the same level of employer funded support as CC students. In accord with the need to provide greater scholarship access to SIS, the Scholarship Allocation Model (SAM) developed by the APTC includes indicative targets that allocate a higher proportion of scholarships per person to the NCCs compared to CCs. Higher level scholarship benefits are also available to NCC students to enable them to train overseas. Of the NCC applications, 98 percent stated that their intended funding source was an APTC scholarship, compared to 69 percent of CC applications.

The January 2009 Contractor Self-Assessment gives itself an overall score of 2-3 on a five point scale against PAF 4.1 “equitable access for under-represented groups including women, citizens of smaller island states, and students with disabilities”. Not including PNG, the CCs have had 56 scholarships awarded per 100,000 population, significantly higher than that of the NCC (41 scholarships per 100,000 population). In addition, an estimated 69% of scholarship funding has been awarded to citizens from the campus countries (66% of which has been Full awards for study in another campus country). On this basis, to date, scholarships do not appear to have been preferentially allocated to NCCs. It is noted however, that there has been only limited scholarship interest from the FSM, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau and the Cook

Islands, with no scholarships yet awarded to students from Palau or the Cook Islands.

The award of scholarships to SIS was initially constrained by lengthy delays in applicant assessment, and to some extent this is still an ongoing concern. Acceptance into APTC courses of applicants with the required technical skills is constrained in the SIS by the ELLN entry requirements, especially for existing workers that may have left school early. In some countries there is also employer resistance to releasing workers where workers with replacement skills are in short-supply. Technical skills are also limited and 67 percent of rejected NCC applicants had insufficient work experience or failed their technical skills assessment tests. This has implications for the sustainability of the NCC pipeline of students for the APTC, unless mitigating actions are undertaken.

RTOs report that despite the current under-awarding of scholarships to NCCs (compared to the indicative targets), there are sufficient qualified NCC applicants to enable them to meet the SAM targets in Kiribati, Nauru, the Solomon Islands and Tonga. Although most of the PAF risk minimisation strategies with respect to SIS access have been progressively implemented by the APTC, there is still a need for ongoing, and for some countries, accelerated, activities to ensure scholarship targets for this phase are met and that there is a pipeline of qualified SIS applicants for entry to the APTC post 2011.

To fast-track SIS/NCC access it is recommended that:

- real demand be substantiated and mapped against the scheduled supply of courses and accommodation till June 2011 and any shortfalls urgently addressed;
- SHCS courses be made available for NCC students;
- barriers to application be reduced through the development of a combined application and scholarship form; and only requiring certified documentation after an applicant has been assessed as meeting the course entry criteria;
- in countries where the pipeline of applicants is weakest, some scholarships be allocated for Certificate II courses at local TVET institutions or APTC partner training institutes; and
- a feasibility study be undertaken as to the ELLN gap training that is needed to assist technically qualified applicants to meet the ELLN course entry requirements.

Female need for scholarship support to attend the APTC appears to be higher than for males (85 percent of the females indicated that an APTC scholarship was their intended funding source, compared to 75 percent of males). Despite a range of initiatives (including scholarship advertisement and selection to promote gender equity in APTC courses), only 35 percent of scholarships were awarded to female students. Many of the current course offerings, especially in SACEM, are in non-traditional areas of female employment in the Pacific. This has resulted in female participation rates of only 3 percent in SACEM (broadly mirroring enrolment patterns for similar courses in Australia), compared to 54 percent in the STH and 99 percent in the SHCS. This gender imbalance has been accentuated, particularly in the SIS, by the initial focus on existing worker training. To redress this balance, the RTOs are now scheduling courses for new entrants, as well as some customised courses specifically for females.

Students from remote areas or economically disadvantaged backgrounds are assisted to undertake APTC training through the Partial Level 1 Award which gives CC students from remote locations the same stipend benefits as Full Award students. At least 22 percent of applicants are unemployed, whilst even those that are

employed are also likely to be working on low wages in the trade sector. APTC disability policies and practices are substantially aligned with those of AusAID.

Scholarship policies and procedures. The Scholarships Program is managed and administered as a stand-alone scheme. The current policies and procedures appropriately reflect specific APTC objectives (including training for overseas employment) and the varied APTC training modalities. The January 2009 Contractor Self-Assessment against PAF 4.1 (Access and Equity) included as high priority, the development of a Scholarship Manual (which has now been drafted) and an Annual Scholarships Strategy to guide the allocation of scholarships. The CO should complete the Scholarships Strategy as soon as possible to inform stakeholders and to guide RTO recruitment/scholarship activities particularly in the NCCs.

The APTC offers both Full and Partial scholarships, with three levels of Partial Awards introduced in 2008. Although administratively more complex, the Partial awards are appropriate to support students from remote locations and to reflect the diversity in travel and other costs faced by economically disadvantaged CC students. Reflecting the short-term nature of the training, the APTC allowances are significantly less than other AusAID scholarship scheme allowances. The stipend has been set at a level that is comparable with the wages paid in the hospitality and trades sectors, It was reported that some students, particularly those with families or who leave paid employment, are making considerable sacrifices to attend the APTC. A formal methodology for setting and reviewing the stipend should be implemented.

APTC Scholarship management and administration. Overall scholarship administration has been satisfactorily coordinated, with minimal gaps and duplication considering the rapid start-up to the APTC and the complexities of its regional operations. There is significant coordination and collaboration between the RTOs (responsible for student recruitment, assessment and on-award management) and the CO (responsible for scholarship selection and offers). Although a new role for the RTOs, awardee pastoral care has been pro-actively and professionally managed. There does however appear to be a need for clarification on Country Coordinator roles, for improved induction and training, as well as for consistent use of NCC support services and local advice by the APTC Schools. Ongoing work is needed to improve efficiency and effectiveness of pre-award processing and assessment, which has resulted in avoidable delays in award offers and mobilisation, causing difficulties for APTC staff, awardees and their families/employers.

In addition to general media publicity, the RTOs have used a de-facto “profiling” approach, where they have directly contacted public and private sector organisations employing persons who would be likely to have the technical skills for entry to the APTC. Whilst this recruitment approach has considerable merit and efficiencies, there needs to be safeguards in its possible extension to scholarship selection. As APTC training benefits both individuals and their organisations, unless scholarship access is publicised and made available to all individuals and employers with the same target profile, this could expose the APTC to perceptions that the scholarship selection is not managed in a fair or equal manner. There is a need to clearly separate recruitment/employer support activities from scholarship selection.

Scholarship selection is a two-stage process whereby after applicant assessment, the Schools recommend a shortlist of assessed applicants for a course, which is then checked and approved by the CO. Unlike many other AusAID scholarship schemes, AusAID Posts, partner governments or external experts are not involved in APTC awardee selection. Whilst not external, the independent role of the CO from the RTOs should provide sufficient assurance of selection objectivity and transparency,

as long as the CO has sufficient resources and mandate for making final scholarship selections. For merit and transparency reasons, to incorporate scholarship equity considerations, and for greater administrative efficiency, a more structured process to scholarship selection should be implemented as soon as possible.

Due to the slower than expected commencement of courses and offer/mobilisation of scholarships, as at 31 March 2009, the CO and Box Hill Institute had expended 68 percent and 70 percent of their scholarships budget, whereas Sunshine Coast IT had only expended 30 percent. RTO current estimates of committed expenditure however, seem to indicate that, overall the APTC is on track to fully utilise the scholarship budget over the four years. The RTOs should be asked to urgently review their committed expenditure forecasts so that the number of Full and Partial awards that can still be offered with two years of the program remaining are more accurately established.

To guide the recruitment of students and the award of future scholarships, there is also an urgent need for the CO to review the target distribution of remaining scholarships. Distribution by School/country should realistically reflect the demand pipeline of applicants qualified to enter the APTC and attempt to redress imbalances in award offer to the SIS and female applicants whilst recognising supply constraints of course/accommodation scheduling.

The administration and reporting of the Scholarships Program was limited until the development in June 2008 of Blue, an APTC specific database (before then the RTOs used their separate management information systems). Blue is a multi-user, multi-country system and contains extensive application data, some assessment and scholarship offer data, and RTO enrolment data. However the quality and comprehensiveness of its data (in particular award offer and stipend level data) needs routine ongoing attention. To support scholarship processing, reporting and M&E, Blue functionality and data capture requirements needs to be reviewed, licenses increased, training improved, and its ongoing funding beyond mid 2009 confirmed.

Other recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Scholarships Program include the development of pre-departure briefing materials, the rationalisation of student travel, the establishment of an active alumni association, and the implementation of a more structured approach to APTC knowledge management on training demand.

APTC Mid-Term Review: Scholarship Program Analysis – Final Draft Report

1 Background to Analysis

1.1 Background to the APTC

The purpose of the Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) is to provide Pacific Island women and men with Australian qualifications that present opportunities to find employment in targeted sectors nationally and internationally, and to support skills development in the Pacific in response to labour market requirements. The APTC's three training, employment and productivity *goals* are:

- Increased supply of skilled workers in targeted sectors in the Pacific region;
- Pacific Islander women and men with Australian qualifications realise improved employment opportunities nationally, regionally and internationally in targeted sectors; and
- Increased productivity of individuals and organisations in targeted industries and sectors.

AusAID allocated A\$149.5 million to establish and operate the APTC for a four year program. Since the original allocation, APTC funding has been rolled into AusAID's baseline funding at the current level, assuring the continuation of APTC beyond June 2011. The APTC was designed to enhance, rather than compete with, existing training at local institutions. It partners with other Pacific training providers in order to build on existing strengths in the region and to understand the local industry's training needs and therefore offer courses based on industry demand.

Training is conducted at campuses (and workplaces) in Fiji, PNG, Samoa, and Vanuatu by two contracted Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in partnership with local technical and vocational education and training (TVET) providers and private sector companies. The Coordination Office (CO) is based in Fiji. Australian Certificate III, IV and Diploma courses are offered through the Schools of Tourism and Hospitality (STH), the Schools of Automotive, Construction and Electrical and Manufacturing (SACEM) and the School of Health and Community Services (SHCS). The APTC offers a flexible entry and exit approach enabling students to achieve gap competencies, rather than undertaking a sequential program for the full nominal course duration period. As a consequence, course design and length varies between Schools (as described in Annex C).

The APTC is open to applicants from Pacific Island Forum (PIF) countries (except Australia and New Zealand) who meet the technical skills and English language, literacy and numeracy (ELLN) entry requirements for specific courses. This includes current workers seeking formal or upgraded qualifications and technical students seeking a higher qualification. The first student intake commenced in July 2007, with a planned target of 3,000 graduates by June 2011.

1.2 APTC Scholarship Program Objective

APTC funding included A\$10m for a Scholarship Program to promote access to the APTC for Pacific Islanders, especially individuals from smaller island states (SIS) and those without other means of support. The Scholarships Program should:

- adhere to principles of access, transparency, equity, and merit;
- complement other sources of financial sponsorship for students including from the private sector, other donors and Pacific Governments;
- be flexibly structured to reflect the varied training delivery mechanisms of the APTC Schools; and
- be delivered in a cost-effective way to maximise the number of awards offered and assist the APTC to meet its graduate target.

1.3 Analysis Methodology

This analysis of the APTC Scholarships Program is part of a wider Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the APTC. The independent MTR team has been asked to assess the progress and performance of the APTC and to make recommendations on its future directions (Annex B). The MTR is particularly interested in issues of equity, efficiency, value for money and the impact of the APTC.

The Scholarships Program analysis reviews the performance of the Scholarships Program to date in meeting its objectives and in achieving the Key Result Area (KRA) for Scholarship and Student Management identified under the APTC Performance Assessment Framework (PAF). This KRA is to “administer scholarship procedures that maximise opportunity for students from Pacific Island Forum countries to access and successfully complete APTC programs with particular focus on redressing gender, isolation and income discrimination and ensuring that student health and welfare concerns are proactively and professionally addressed.” The recommendations and analysis in this report are based on the implementation and performance of the Scholarships Program to date. Any MTR recommendations for medium to longer term changes to the APTC that impact the Scholarships Program will be addressed in the main MTR report.

The scholarships analysis is based on MTR consultations with CO and RTO staff, members of the APTC Advisory Group, NCC Country Coordinators, AusAID representatives from the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG), NCC Posts and student/graduate focus groups in Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, PNG and the Solomon Islands, extensive data from the APTC’s Blue (student database), and financial and other data provided by the RTOs. The analysis also reflects input from responses to a Consultation Paper that included the following scholarships related questions:

- Have APTC Scholarships opened up opportunities for marginalised students to access training otherwise unavailable to them?
- Are APTC Scholarship policies and procedures, including the level of full/partial scholarship benefits appropriate? How could they be improved?
- Has the management and administration of the APTC Scholarship scheme been effective and efficient? How could it be improved?

The APTC blue data as at 31 March 2009 was used for the analysis. There are a number of data quality issues with respect to this data, particularly the assessment and award level data. There are also a significant number of incomplete/duplicate applications by the same applicant which overstates demand for course places and scholarships. The data presented in this report are therefore indicative only, and the data updated after the recommended data cleansing by the APTC.

It is noted that the ASG is currently conducting a number of reviews on AusAID scholarships aimed at improving their quality and effectiveness. These reviews (including on effectiveness, selection and re-integration, Introductory Academic Program and an Australian Scholarships Alumni Network scoping pilot) were not

available at the time of the MTR, but should be taken into consideration by the APTC when completed.

2 Demand for APTC Scholarships

The following high level overview of demand for APTC scholarships is based on data in the APTC's student database, Blue as at 31 March 2009. Table 1 below provides some key applicant/scholarship metrics by home country (applicant citizenship). As might be expected from the APTC presence there, 69% of the 3598 scholarship applicants for an APTC course were from Campus Countries (CC). Although 69% of scholarship applications are from CC, they represent 73% of scholarships offered, although this could be due to a number of factors including the proportion of NCC applications that do not meet the APTC entry requirements as well as lags in the assessment of NCC applications. Similarly CC are over-represented in enrolments compared to applications, representing 81% of all enrolled students to date.

Over 1,193 scholarships have been awarded, providing financial and tuition fee support to 58% of the APTC enrolments. 93% of NCC course applications were accompanied by a scholarship application (compared to 82% of CC applications). Demand for APTC training and scholarships from some NCCs including the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Kiribati, and Nauru has also been strong. The third highest number of scholarship applications have been received from the Solomon Islands, reflecting its population size after PNG and Fiji. Over 85% of enrolled students from NCC are on a scholarship compared to 51% of CC students (PNG 40%, Vanuatu 42%, Fiji 60% and Samoa 61%) . However, only 43 scholarship applications (1% of the total) have been received from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Marshall Islands and Palau, with none from Cook Islands (Annex I, Table A).

Table 1: Key APTC student/scholarship metrics by country

APTC Campus	Citizenship	Applications		Scholarships Awarded	Enrolments	Graduates
		Course	Scholarships			
CC	Fiji	1091	882	380	495	115
	PNG	1009	851	226	364	67
	Samoa	432	369	155	157	20
	Vanuatu	473	377	106	198	31
CC Total		3005	2479	867	1214	233
NCC	Cook Islands	0	0	0	0	0
	FSM	27	26	1	0	0
	Kiribati	225	214	41	38	15
	Marshall Is.	16	16	0	1	0
	Nauru	88	86	16	14	3
	Niue	9	9	2	2	0
	Palau	1	1	0	0	0
	Solomon Is.	609	552	194	165	70
	Tonga	173	163	69	66	42
	Tuvalu	34	34	3	3	0
NCC Total		1182	1101	326	289	130
ND	ND	21	18			
Grand Total		4208	3598	1193	1503	363

Note: ND – No data provided in application form

Only 73% of the scholarships awarded have already enrolled in their course indicating significant expected intakes of scholarship students over the next six months (Annex I, Table B).

Of the scholarships awarded to date, 48% are for training at SACEM, 42% for STH and only 9% for the more recently established SHCS. There are significant differences by country in the demand for training at the Schools where, for example, 51% of Kiribati scholarships were awarded for the STH compared to 83% of the Tonga awards. However course supply is also a factor with 47% of scholarship awards in Vanuatu being for the SHCS since its introduction (Annex I, Table C). Over 65% percent of scholarships have been awarded for just six courses – Hospitality Operations, Children's Services, Commercial Cookery, Systems Electrician, Automotive Mechanical Technology and Tourism Operations. The balance of awards were distributed between fourteen courses (Annex I, Table D). It is noted that there is high SIS demand for STH courses and to a lesser extent the SACEM. SIS are disadvantaged in attending SHCS courses as these are currently only available to local students in Vanuatu and Fiji. These courses should be made available for NCC students as soon as possible.

Table 2: Scholarship awards by citizenship and School

Citizenship	SACEM	SHCS	STH	Total
Fiji	51%	14%	35%	100%
Kiribati	49%	0%	51%	100%
Nauru	38%	0%	62%	100%
Niue	100%	0%	0%	100%
PNG	61%	0%	39%	100%
Samoa	58%	2%	40%	100%
Solomon Is.	37%	1%	62%	100%
Tonga	14%	3%	83%	100%
Tuvalu	0%	0%	100%	100%
Vanuatu	46%	47%	8%	100%
Total	48%	9%	42%	100%

A significant number of CC awardees have undertaken APTC training overseas in courses not available in their home country. For example 99 Fijian scholarship students have been enrolled in SACEM courses in Samoa (42 of whom are in the Systems Electrician course), and 59 PNG awardees have been enrolled in STH courses outside of PNG (Annex I, Table E). Consideration needs to be given as to whether any of these courses can be more cost-effectively held in other countries, whilst not duplicating courses available at other local institutions, or whether it would be more appropriate to utilise this scholarship funding to offer places to NCC awardees.

Demand for APTC scholarships varies significantly by country, course and gender, reflecting factors including course availability, gender-based demand for the courses and differences in the number of applicants that meet the technical skills and English language and numeracy course entry requirements. It is also recognised that RTOs have needed to fill course places within short time periods and have contractual accountability for achieving graduate (and not scholarship offer) targets¹. These factors may work against the offer of scholarships to NCC students, who also need higher levels of resource investment in terms of assessment, travel, accommodation and pastoral care than do CC scholarship or fee-paying applicants. Access and the

¹ SACEM 1,183; STH 1,360; SHCS 217. Consideration should be given to including scholarship targets and KPIs in future MC contracts

sustainability of the NCC pipeline of students for the APTC will be at risk unless actions are undertaken to mitigate the known constraints.

Of the 363 APTC graduates to date, 51% were scholarship funded (Annex I, Table F). Given the relatively low number of graduates to date (compared to the June 2011 target of 3000 graduates) the impact and outcomes from the scholarship funded training (including training relevance, skill utilisation, training recognition and post-award employment) are analysed as part of the total graduate group in the main MTR report.

3 Contribution to Access and Equity

3.1 Smaller Island States

RTO/CO awareness of the specific needs for SIS access to the APTC is clearly established. The January 2009 Contractor Self-Assessment gives itself an overall score of 2-3 on a scale of five against PAF 4.1 “equitable access for under-represented groups including women, citizens of smaller island states, and students with disabilities”. Although it is cheaper and less time consuming for RTOs to meet their contracted graduate targets through the recruitment and training of students from the higher populated campus countries², marketing/assessment visits have been made at least annually to all the NCC, with the exception of the Cook Islands. Even with the more recent appointment of NCC Country Coordinators in Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga and the Solomon Islands to promote the APTC and the scholarships program, the APTC presence in NCCs is significantly less than in CCs.

Scholarship policies positively favour students from the NCCs. Based on the Scholarship Allocation Model (Section 4.1), there is a higher target of indicative scholarships per person for NCCs compared to CCs. Higher level scholarship benefits are also available to NCC students to enable them to study overseas. Significant staff time is also spent on assisting NCC students with flight and visa issues and providing pastoral care to students living overseas on their own for the first time.

Scholarship funding is critical for APTC attendance by NCC students who do not have the financial means to study overseas or the same level of employer funded support. Of the NCC applications, 98% stated that their intended funding source to support them during their training was an APTC scholarship, compared to 69% of CC applications (Annex I, Table G). Table 1 above shows the strong uptake of scholarships from Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga and the Solomon Islands. Applications received from the FSM, RMI, Niue, Palau and the Cook Islands are lower than expected at the Scholarships Program design stage. No scholarships have yet been awarded to students from Palau or the Cook Islands. Lack of demand from these countries is considered by RTOs to be due to the differences in their educational systems and alternative opportunities for sponsored technical training in New Zealand or America.

Table 3 below shows the considerable variation in the number of scholarships awarded per population head, with Samoa and to a lesser extent Tonga better provided for than Vanuatu, Kiribati, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. The smallest island states show significantly higher awards per population head compared to the largest, PNG. Although overall the NCC have benefitted from a higher proportion of

² Whilst Solomon Islands is the third most populous country in the Pacific (over 409,000 in 2004), it does not yet have an APTC campus

scholarships (41 per 100,000 people) than the CC (14 per 100,000 people), this is distorted by PNG where scholarship applications and enrolment rates per head of population are significantly lower than all other countries except Palau and the Cook Islands. Excluding PNG from the analysis, the CCs have had 56 scholarships awarded per 100,000 population, significantly higher than that of the NCC (Annex I, Table H). On this basis, to date, scholarships do not appear to have been preferentially allocated to NCC. Whilst NCCs appear to have higher levels of unmet demand³ compared to CCs, this is not at the stage able to be reliably determined by the Blue data.

Table 3: Scholarship applications and awards per 100,000 population

APTC Campus?	Citizenship Country	Population (as at last census)	Per 100,000 population			
			Course Applications	Scholarship Applications	Scholarships Awarded	Enrolments
CC	Fiji	141	141	114	49	64
	PNG					
	Samoa	244	244	209	88	89
	Vanuatu	253	253	202	57	106
CCTotal		47	175	143	56	75
NCC	Kiribati	266	266	253	49	45
	Nauru	874	874	854	159	139
	Solomon Is.	149	149	135	47	40
	Tonga	177	177	167	71	67
	Cook Islands					
	FSM	25	25	24	1	-
	Marshall Is.	31	31	31	-	2
	Niue	503	503	503	112	112
	Palau	5	5	5	-	-
	Tuvalu	356	356	356	31	31
NCCTotal		150	150	126	41	37
Grand Total		59	165	136	50	59

SIS participation in the APTC is reported to be constrained by the ELLN course entry requirements, especially for existing workers that may have left school early⁴⁵. The analysis of application rejections indicates areas where there was initial lack of clarity regarding entry requirements but also, for NCCs, where there may be scope for providing support to potential students to fulfil the entry requirements. 193 scholarship applications from NCCs (including 123 from Kiribati⁶) have been rejected. Where the reason is recorded, 64% had insufficient work experience, 6% had failed their skills assessment tests and 14% had failed their literacy and numeracy tests⁷. It is noted that only in 1% of applications was insufficient APTC scholarships recorded as a reason for rejection. Fifty percent of the female applications had their application rejected due to English language, numeracy or technical skills assessment, compared to 16% of the male applicants (Annex I, Table K).

³ The number of applicants for APTC courses who have the technical skills and ELLN skills to meet the course entry requirements but are not offered a place

⁴ Annex I, Table I show considerable variation of ELLN test scores between countries and needs further analysis

⁵ Concurrent ELLN support is provided by the Schools, through mechanisms such Learning Support officers, and the design of appropriate training delivery and assessment methodology both in the institutional and workplace setting

⁶ The high rate of unsuccessful applications in Kiribati needs further analysis

⁷ It is noted that 13% of NCC applicants are recorded as having a low suitability rating. For analysis purposes, RTO coding of reason for rejection should be more specific.

RTOs report that despite the current “under-award” of scholarships to some NCCs, there are sufficient applicants to meet scholarship targets. It is **recommended that the level of NCC unmet demand be substantiated and mapped against the scheduled supply of courses and accommodation till June 2011**. Achievement of scholarship targets could be facilitated by fast-tracking the assessment of NCC applications already in Blue to enable these applicants to undertake Certificate III as soon as possible. Increasing SIS participation rates (or to meet an ongoing pipeline from 2011) will depend on developing the pool of applicants able to meet technical qualification (Certificate II level) and ELLN course entry requirements.

As included in the Scholarships Program design, **it is recommended that a small pool of scholarships be allocated for NCC applicants to undertake Certificate II courses at local TVET institutions or APTC partner training institutes⁸**. The APTC PAF (3.2.3) provides for Certificate II level courses to be initiated for prospective NCC students unable to meet Certificate III course literacy and numeracy requirements. Although concurrent on-award ELLN training and support is provided, as yet there are no preparatory ELLN courses. **It is recommended that a feasibility study be undertaken as to what ELLN gap training should be provided to technically qualified SIS applicants who do not meet the ELLN entry requirements**, and how this should be funded. Both the above recommendations are consistent with the PAF 4.1 risk minimisation strategy to prepare motivated SIS students for entry to the APTC.

3.2 Gender and Disability

The APTC *Gender Access and Equality Policy Framework* confirms the commitment to ensuring women have equitable access to all APTC training. The Scholarship Program is seen as critical to improving access to the APTC by women and other disadvantaged groups. Pre-award processes, including scholarship advertisement and selection, promote gender equity in APTC courses, particularly for courses which are not traditional areas of employment for their gender in the Pacific (e.g. women in trades sectors, or men in the community services sector). During selection, awards are allocated evenly between female and male candidates, until no further qualified female candidates remain to be selected⁹.

Female need for scholarship support to attend the APTC appears to be higher than for males (85% of the female applicants stated that an APTC scholarship was their intended funding source to support them during their training, compared to 75% of males (Annex I, Table G). During these initial implementation years and despite the gender access policy initiatives, only 35% of scholarships were awarded to female students, with considerable variation by home country (Annex I, Table L).

Female participation in the APTC appears to have been limited by the current APTC course offerings, many of which are in non-traditional areas of female employment in the Pacific. Only 3% of enrolments in SACEM courses are female (ranging from 2% in Carpentry to 12% in Wall and Floor Tiling) compared to 99% in the SHCS. In the STH, 54% of enrolments are female, ranging from 34% in Hospitality-Commercial Cookery to 70% in Hospitality-Operations (Annex I, Table M). Despite this imbalance, it is noted that these participation rates do however broadly mirror female participation rates in similar courses in Australia¹⁰. This imbalance has been

⁸ Although prospective applicants could apply for ARDS, however given current training priorities (degree level health and education courses in many Pacific countries), would be unlikely to be awarded a scholarship.

⁹ Draft APTC Scholarships Policy and Procedures Manual, 30 March 2009

¹⁰ As a broad comparison, females represented 62% of 2007 NCVER enrolments in Australia in food, hospitality and personal services courses (most broadly aligned to STH) and 10% in engineering

reinforced by the initial APTC focus on the training of employed workers. To redress this balance, the RTOs are now scheduling courses for new entrants, as well as some customised courses specifically for females (e.g. a female only Painting and Decorating course in Fiji). The impact of these changes needs to be closely monitored.

APTC disability policies and practices are substantially aligned with those of AusAID¹¹. Only two students stated a physical disability in their application (one of whom might need a wheelchair for moving long distances). Country Coordinators should be trained on appropriate responses to questions on disabled access to APTC courses and scholarships. Although the level of unmet demand from applicants with a disability was not able to be established by the MTR, it is likely that this group is under-represented¹².

3.3 Remote and Economic Disadvantage

Scholarship Program policy is that students from remote/rural or economically disadvantaged backgrounds should be facilitated in their access to the APTC. As experience from other scholarship programs in the Pacific suggest that it is difficult to verify students' claims to remote or economic disadvantage, the APTC scholarships selection criteria⁹ do not directly promote awards for these groups of applicants. In practice, where there are two students of equal technical merit, Schools are encouraged to prioritise the applicant from a rural/remote area for a scholarship¹³.

The MTR team was advised that publicity of the APTC/scholarships and access to course entry testing was limited in both CC and NCC areas remote from the respective capital city (including both the SIS outer islands, as well as remote rural areas in PNG and the Solomon Islands). CC students from remote areas do have access however to higher level scholarship benefits than students living in the capital cities. The Partial Level 1 Award gives CC students from remote locations the same stipend benefits as Full Award students to support them with the additional costs of living away from home. Blue data indicates that 89 (or 16 percent of all Partial Awards) CC students have received this higher level of support (Annex I, Table O). As a duty of care, as for overseas students, Partial Level 1 awardees should be required to live in RTO arranged accommodation so that they do not live in inappropriate accommodation.

Explicit data on economic disadvantage is not collected, although applicants are asked to state their employment status in the application form. Only 48% of scholarship applicants responded to the question, of these applicants, 22% stated that they were unemployed (24% in CC and 15% in NCC) (Annex I, Table P)¹⁴. Scholarships have been awarded to at least 280 employed persons, however many of these people are likely to be working on minimum wages in their trade sector. The APTC's flexible training modes enable some CC existing workers to keep their jobs through doing part-time evening and weekend courses. This has particularly

and related technologies courses (most broadly aligned to SACEM). More detailed RTO data at the course level should be used to validate this data

¹¹ The eligibility criteria on the APTC website do however state that applicants must be of sound health. It is suggested that this be reworded so that disabled applicants are not discouraged from applying

¹² As a broad comparison, 20% of the Certificate III 2007 NCVER enrolments in Australia reported a disability

¹³ Over 34% of applicants stated in their application form that they currently live in a town/city (including 69% from NCCs). Given the variation in size of "towns" in the Pacific, this proportion is likely to be affected by definitional issues (Annex I, Table N). The collection of more accurate data on student locations in rural/remote areas needs to be resolved in future application forms

¹⁴ The EOC survey indicated that prior to their APTC training, 45% of the graduates were in paid employment, 28% had no job and 27% did not respond to the question

benefited low (or no) wage workers in the community services sector. It is noted however that some awardees have resigned their jobs to take up their awards. The welfare of such awardees whilst on award and their post-award employment needs to be carefully monitored.

Scholarships Program policy is that there should be an appropriate balance between existing workers and new entrants. Of those awardees for whom data is available, 75% are existing workers. This reflects the deliberate APTC strategy to prioritise the training of existing workers to facilitate the rapid start-up of courses and, through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), earlier achievement of target graduate numbers. Data on the percentage of existing worker entrants in Blue is unreliable although may indicate that the SACEM has a lower proportion of existing workers than the STH/SHCS and with the exception of SHCS, females are less likely than males to be existing workers (Annex I, Table Q).

The Pacific region has a high proportion of young people, with the median age around 21 years of age. The reduction of youth unemployment through appropriate training for domestic and international employment is an AusAID bilateral development focus in several Pacific countries. With the current training focus on existing workers, this is not currently reflected in the Scholarships Program given that the average age of scholarship applicants is 32 years, with no significant variation by gender or School (Annex I, Table R).

The APTC Scholarships Strategy (Section 5.2) should determine whether it is feasible to increase the number of scholarships for younger students with appropriate technical qualifications but not necessarily work experience, especially those from the SIS. With the current global economic crisis resulting in increased unemployment in the Pacific, it is likely that there will also be strong demand for scholarships from applicants with relevant work experience but no current employer. This will place increased demand on the RTOs to arrange work placements, that may not be easy to find. Economic difficulties may also mean that less employers have the funds to pay tuition fees for their employees to attend APTC training, and that this will lead to increased demand for scholarship funded training in the CC.

It is noted that a number of large private and government departments (e.g. the Fiji Department of Works and the Fiji Sugar Cooperation) have benefited from their employees receiving a scholarship. **Clear guidelines need to be developed and implemented regarding the provision of scholarships to employees of large employers, target agencies and partner organisations, as scholarship funding is intended to complement not replace other sources of tuition fee funding.**

4 Scholarship Allocation

4.1 *Scholarship Allocation Model*

APTC scholarships are a regional scheme to allow flexibility to offer awards to reflect course availability, applicant demand and to provide equitable access for all PIF countries. The CO is responsible for developing and implementing agreed guidelines to ensure that scholarships are allocated between countries, Schools and genders in an equitable, transparent and predictable manner. To minimise distributional inequities, a Scholarships Allocation Model was developed which uses a mathematical calculation based on population size and GDP to allocate a higher proportion of awards per person to smaller and less economically developed countries (Annex D). The high-level distributional methodology is appropriate given the greater need for scholarship access by NCC/SIS citizens due to their higher relative cost of attending APTC courses overseas and reduced opportunity to access

employer funded places. Within these country targets, each School was given a proportional number of scholarships to assist them meeting their graduate target. Table 4 below shows the resulting indicative allocation of 1510 Full Scholarship Equivalents (FSEs) which weights the various levels of Partial Awards as a percentage of Full Awards¹⁵.

Table 4: APTC Scholarship Allocation Model

ACEM		STH		SHCS			
Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females		
Full		Scholarship		Equivalents		Country	
50	50	67	67	20	20	273	Fiji Islands
93	93	126	126	37	37	511	Papua New Guinea
19	19	25	25	7	7	102	Solomon Islands
18	18	24	24	7	7	96	Vanuatu
8	8	11	11	3	3	46	Kiribati
6	6	8	8	2	2	34	Nauru
11	11	14	14	4	4	59	Cook Islands
3	3	4	4	1	1	18	Niue
15	15	20	20	6	6	82	Samoa
15	15	20	20	6	6	83	Tonga
4	4	6	6	2	2	24	Tuvalu
10	10	14	14	4	4	58	Palau
9	9	12	12	4	4	50	Marshall Islands
14	14	20	20	6	6	79	FSM
276	276	372	372	109	109	1513	
552		744		217			

Table 5 shows the number of FSE scholarships awarded against the indicative SAM targets. This is illustrative of uptake by country/School only because, as discussed below, the total number of indicative awards per country needs to be recalculated based on updated average scholarship costs. Based on the FSE calculation, 48% of the 1510 FSE awards have already been allocated. There are significant areas of “under” and “over” achievement against these indicative targets. Countries where the highest proportion of awards have already been made are the Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tonga and the lowest proportion are from FSM/RMI/Niue/Palau/Cook Islands. On a headcount basis (with on average three Partial Awards equivalent to one Full Award on an FSE basis), 79% of awards have already been allocated, with the campus countries over-awarded against their SAM targets.

Table 5: Achievement of scholarship targets (FSE)

¹⁵ Partial awards are weighted as a percentage of a Full Award: Level 1 (70%), Level 2 (28%), Level 3 (18%), Pending (0%) and Part-time (50%). Given the number of awards coded as Pending in the database, this would significantly understate the FSE awarded to date

Country	Indicative Target		Committed (FSE)			Remaining (FSE)			
	Total	Per Gender	Female	Male	Grand Total	Female	Male	Total	Total Remaining as % of Target
Cook Is.	58	29	-	-	-	29	29	58	100%
Fiji	274	137	24	149	173	113	12	101	37%
FSM	80	40	1	-	1	39	40	79	99%
Kiribati	44	22	14	27	41	8	-	5	7%
Marshall Is.	50	25	-	-	-	25	25	50	100%
Nauru	32	16	8	7	15	8	9	17	53%
Niue	16	8	-	2	2	8	6	14	88%
Palau	56	28	-	-	-	28	28	56	100%
PNG	512	256	42	80	122	214	176	390	76%
Samoa	82	41	13	43	55	28	2	27	32%
Solomon Is.	102	51	75	119	194	24	-	68	-90%
Tonga	82	41	42	29	71	1	12	11	13%
Tuvalu	24	12	3	-	3	9	12	21	88%
Vanuatu	98	49	12	40	53	37	9	45	46%
Total	1510	755	233	497	730	522	259	780	52%
School									
ACEM	550	275	15	360	375	260	85	175	32%
HCS	218	109	12	5	17	97	104	201	92%
STH	742	371	206	132	337	165	239	405	55%
Total	1510	755	233	497	730	522	259	780	52%

On an FSE basis, SACEM have awarded 68% of their targets, STH 45% and SCHS only 8%. On a headcount basis, SACEM have awarded 111% of their targets, STH 48% and SCHS 35%. A more detailed breakdown of scholarships awarded by School/Country is provided in Annex D.2.

4.2 Expenditure

Expenditure for scholarships recorded on AusAID Aidworks was A\$2.4m as at 31 March 2009 against a budget to date of A\$5.5m¹⁶. This over-estimates actual expenditure as the Coordination Office and RTOs draw funds in advance of a quarter. The CO and Box Hill Institute have expended 68% and 70% of their scholarships budget to date, whereas Sunshine Coast IT had only expended 30%¹⁷. Scholarships expenditure may be A\$2-2.5m less than planned at 30 June 2009¹⁸. This appears to indicate that unless the offer of scholarship awards is ramped up, the scholarship program budget may be under-spent by the end of this phase of the program. However the RTO estimates below do not support that assumption.

Due to the slower than expected commencement of courses and offer and mobilisation of scholarship (particularly NCC) students, a more reliable measure of progress against total program budget is the expenditure committed for the scholarships already awarded (but not necessarily completed or expensed). This cannot yet be estimated based on actual direct scholarship costs¹⁹ as not all courses have completed an intake round for both CC and NCC students. In addition, extraction of actual expenditure data by individuals is not facilitated by the current RTO and CO finance systems which do not record expenditure against individual students. For the indicative purposes of this analysis only, committed expenditure is

¹⁶ Against a 2007/2008 budget of A\$3 m, 2008/2009 A\$2.5 m, 09/10 A\$2.5 million and 10/11 A\$2m

¹⁷ OASIS expenditure data is not recorded against cost item (stipend, airfares etc). MCs record actual expenditure data by cost item against campus country (where the funds were expended) in their separate financial systems.

¹⁸ It is noted that of the A\$10m budget intended for scholarships, some funds have been used for administrative expenses such as for the NCC Country Coordinators. The extent and use of the scholarship budget for such purposes (rather than for direct scholarship benefit to individuals) needs to be ascertained.

¹⁹ The direct scholarship benefit includes international travel, stipend and supplementary training benefit. Total scholarship benefit would also include (subsidised) tuition fees

estimated based on average scholarship cost calculations by School and awardee citizenship as provided for the MTR by RTOs.

Average scholarship cost estimation is made more complex as, for example, it is affected by a number of factors including the length of the course (which may be reduced if an existing worker is granted RPL²⁰), whether the scholarship is a Full award or one of three partial levels, whether or not the stipend is continued whilst the awardee is on work attachment in their home country and the number of flights home between training blocks. There is significant actual cost variation, even for the students from the same course and same home country due to fluctuations in travel cost and exchange rates. Estimated average scholarship costs for a training package vary from \$5987 to \$14050 in the SHT, from between \$7925 to \$17664 in the SHCS, between \$1960 to \$9725 for a SACEM Existing Worker course and between \$3264 to \$16,453 for a SACEM New Entrant course (Annex E.1).

²⁰ Original planning assumptions were that a significant proportion of existing workers would receive RPL, that would reduce the length of training (and scholarship) required. RPL assessment has been done on training commencement, although even awardees with some RPL have requested that they receive the full training package so that they can derive maximum benefit from the APTC offerings

The total estimated committed expenditure is A\$7.8m (against a A\$10m four year budget) with the SACEM indicatively overspent against its allocation, STH on target and SHCS well under-target (Annex E.2). Total scholarship expenditure for citizens of campus countries is 69% of all the expenditure (Fiji 26%, PNG 22%, Samoa 12% and Vanuatu 8%), with Solomon Islands 19% of all expenditure (Annex E.3). This high proportion of expenditure on campus country scholarships is due to the significant number of Full scholarships for attendance at courses in other campus countries made to citizens in these countries. As there is a significant gap between indications from actual expenditure to date that the total scholarships budget may not be able to be expended and the above estimates of already committed expenditure. **It is recommended that AusAID task the APTC to urgently review and refine their committed expenditure forecasts so that the number of awards that can still be offered with two years of the program remaining can be more accurately established.**

4.3 Review of Targets

Management of the offering of scholarships relative to the finite budget needs to be improved. **The top level scholarship allocation between countries needs to be revised to reflect the total amount of Full and Partial Awards that can be allocated within the budget, based on refined estimates of average direct scholarship costs.** This should be done as a matter of highest priority in order to guide student recruitment and scholarship selection for each country. This is particularly important given the long lead times in NCCs and the possible over-allocation of awards in some countries. The achievement of the target scholarship numbers should be reviewed every six months and any significant changes in distribution between country and RTO approved by the CO General Manager.

As indicated above, there has been a relative lack of demand from the FSM/RMI/Niue/Palau/Cook Islands. Provided that this uptake is a reflection of lack of demand and not some other APTC constraining supply factor, it is recommended that the indicative number of awards to these countries be reduced (to a suggested fifty in total). This would be within the current scope of the regional scholarships program which allows awards to be allocated flexibly between countries according to demand (with no bilateral commitments to scholarship numbers by country). Given the overall Scholarship Program objectives, it is further recommended that any "surplus" awards be redistributed to the other NCCs.

The target scholarship allocation between the Schools and by gender needs to be adjusted to reflect differential patterns of unmet demand of applicants, as well as the schedule of course offerings till June 2011. This will include the number of available places on scheduled courses (factoring in those not available due to partnership/full-fee commitments) and where additional courses could be run if approved beyond the current contract scope. Setting achievable scholarship targets needs to be based on improved understanding of real demand (for the training and ability to meet the course entry requirements). In lieu of baseline data, target setting may need to rely on APTC knowledge gained to date, local AusAID and TVET advice on demand and priorities and other analysis of qualified entrant supply from feeder institutions and of labour market and training demand. Given the current and likely ongoing gender imbalance in the offering of scholarships for SACEM courses, it may be that some trading between Schools may be appropriate to facilitate an improved gender balance across countries. For countries which have already exceeded their indicative school or total target, a decision needs to be made as to increasing their target allocation or if this is not possible how APTC marketing and scholarship offers should be approached in these countries in the future.

When approving scholarships, priority needs to be given to applicants who are in the country/gender category where there is the highest relative proportion of under-allocated awards. Blue needs to be able to record the award of scholarships and the associated financial commitment against target and budget (especially nearer to the end of this phase of the APTC). Blue should also be able to adjust committed expenditure for any award variations such as withdrawals and terminations.

In reviewing the SAM, consideration should be given to basing the SAM on a headcount rather than FSE approach, as this would give a more straightforward target for course enrolments and scholarship offers. It would also be a clearer measure of scholarship students trained and post-award impact. In addition, as the current FSE equivalence is based on direct scholarship benefit (travel, stipend and supplementary training) rather than on 'full' cost (including tuition fees), it understates the overall benefit provided to Partial Awardee compared to Full Award students.

4.4 Post-2011

Funding for the APTC has now been rolled into AusAID's baseline funding at the current level, assuring the continuation of the APTC beyond June 2011. The main MTR report examines the impact of this decision on future APTC operations. The RTO course schedules indicate that some courses that commence over the next two years will have completion dates beyond June 2011²¹. Unless extended, the remaining RTO contract period will be significantly less than that remaining for scholarships already offered. A decision will need to be made as to whether scholarship students should be enrolled in such courses, or what alternative arrangements would be made for the awardee if the APTC course is not continued in its current form beyond 2011.

One of the APTC's Operating Principles is that the "evolving training needs and priorities of Pacific Island Forum Countries are at the centre of our practice. As such, there is a need to remain flexible, responsive and data driven". The scoping for the next phase of the APTC should be based on reliable data on training and scholarships demand and costs. Significantly improved data on training demand (for the current APTC courses or other) is key to determining the sustainable level of (scholarships) training of the APTC, particularly from the NCCs.

As indicated in the *APTC Gender Access and Equality Policy Framework*, in order to set well-defined and realistic rather than arbitrary targets, research is required into the number of graduates from Certificate I & II feeder institutes and current employment in targeted industry sectors, disaggregated by home country and gender. This is a proxy for the supply of candidates who will potentially feed into the APTC at Certificate III or IV level. Although RTOs (Schools and trainers) have significantly increased their knowledge of training demand for their particular courses (especially in CCs) since the project's implementation, it is not clear that this knowledge is well recorded or managed.

Given the importance of this data to not only scholarships allocation but across the APTC's activities and wider TVET initiatives in the region, **it is recommended that a more structured approach to APTC knowledge management on training demand be developed, with consideration as to how this knowledge is shared with stakeholders in the region.**

²¹ Some courses for new entrants without work experience can be up to four years long including work attachments between training blocks

5 Governance and Policies

5.1 Governance and Management Responsibilities

Scholarships are high-profile, sensitive and highly sought after and the processes surrounding them thus need to be well governed and transparent. Clear communication channels and responsibilities play an important part in achieving scholarship access and equity. AusAID is the principal Australian Government body responsible for the oversight, overall strategic direction and policy for the APTC Scholarships Program. The management and implementation of the program is contracted to the Coordination Office and the Schools. AusAID Pacific Posts do not take on day-to-day management or coordination of APTC Scholarships, although they are informed on relevant issues. The APTC Advisory Group currently play a minimal role in scholarships policy, although it is suggested that their country-specific knowledge could be better utilised for scholarship targeting, especially in NCCs.

The role of the CO includes scholarships, and its staffing includes a Scholarships Coordinator and Scholarships Assistant located in Fiji, full-time Country Coordinators in Vanuatu, PNG and Samoa and four part-time NCC coordinators responsible for marketing, application dissemination and receipt, as well as awardee mobilisation. Clarification is needed as to Country Coordinator roles (including that of the CCs for other NCCs that are in their region and for promoting the APTC to remote areas within the CC), for improved induction and training of NCC Country Coordinators and for consistent use of their support services and local advice by the Schools. There is also significant collaboration at a more operational level between the School Scholarship Officers who are responsible in the CC for application receipt, data-entry, awardee welfare, visa and travel arrangements and stipend payments. The APTC also has a Student and Scholarship Management Work Team that meets every six weeks, that have been instrumental in continuously improving scholarship policies and procedures. Comments were made that the work of this team could be made more effective, so that the meeting outcomes are more quickly realised.

5.2 Strategy and Policies

A verifiable indicator of the PAF for student management is the development of an Annual Scholarship Strategy with consideration of gender, NCC access and urban/rural distribution across the PIFs (PAF 4.1.1). Although a Scholarships Allocation Model and a related APTC Gender Access and Equality Policy Framework have been developed, the Scholarship Strategy has yet to be finalised. **It is recommended that the CO (with input from the SSMWT) complete the APTC Scholarship Strategy as soon as possible** to inform stakeholders (including the Advisory Group) and guide the work of the MCs in student recruitment/enrolment particularly in the NCCs. The Strategy should also address cross cutting issues such as gender, HIV/AIDs, child protection, disability and environment. The proposed Country Strategies should include country-specific scholarship strategies to address equity and access issues linked to the over-arching APTC Scholarship Strategy.

The Scholarships Program is managed and administered as a stand-alone scheme reflecting specific APTC objectives and course delivery modes. The program needs to reflect TVET Certificate III/IV/Diploma level training, short-term block course training, work placements, in-country and overseas training, full and part-time course delivery. APTC specific policies reflect its non-bilateral funding, private sector targeting, no AusAID or partner government involvement in award selection, training for local, regional and international employment, and awardees not being required to return to their home country for two years at the end of their award to support their country's development.

A draft Scholarships Manual was developed in March 2009 (PAF 4.1.1a) and reviewed with the CO during the MTR. Suggestions were made for clarifications (e.g. on the scholarship benefits) and for the need to include the policies that the APTC has already developed on award variations, student welfare support and second scholarship awards. Current APTC practice is to only approve a second scholarship in special circumstances. Whilst there is a need for the maximum amount of people to benefit from the scholarship funds, this needs to be balanced against the need for students to obtain Certificate IV qualifications to access local and international employment opportunities. **It is recommended that awardees who have successfully completed Certificate III courses, be eligible to be awarded a further scholarship to progress to a Certificate IV course in the same School where available²².** This would be particularly applicable to NCC students who have less employment opportunities in their home country as well as increased costs of taking the higher level APTC course overseas and reduced access to employer or self-funding.

5.3 Award Benefits

APTC's Full Award scholarships are for students needing to travel overseas to train and included the tuition costs and support for travel, accommodation, travel/medical insurance and living expenses. Partial Awards are for students attending the APTC in their home country and included the tuition costs and support for some direct study-related costs. Three levels of Partial Awards were established in 2008 (Annex F) to recognise the diversity in travel and other costs faced by CC students, particularly those needing to relocate from remote locations. Full awards include a Supplementary Training Benefit²³ the cash component of which assists students with the initial costs of setting up in a new location, paying accommodation bonds, textbooks and other essential items. Partial and Full awards also include an in-kind assistance with the provision of compulsory training items such as safety equipment (shoes), uniforms and training manuals.

The revised Partial Awards, although administratively more complex, are appropriate to support students from remote locations and the economically disadvantaged, particularly given the relatively low proportion of awardees who are employed. Given their comparatively high value, Partial Level 1 awards should only be able to be approved by the CO General Manager (on recommendation from the Scholarships Coordinator) for students able to prove that they are currently living/working in isolated areas with no immediate family living near the campus.

Reflecting the shorter term nature of the training, APTC allowances are significantly less than ARDS allowances. APTC allowance have been linked to levels that are comparable with the (minimum) wages paid in the sector in which awardees are employed, with little surplus for any contingencies (such as for students to pay for doctors or medicines in advance of insurance reimbursements). Whilst over 80% of the End of Course (EOC) survey respondents expressed satisfaction with the allowances, as did the majority of focus group participants, it was reported that some students are making considerable sacrifices to attend the APTC (including leaving paid employment). Focus group awardees with families expressed some difficulty in meeting their financial commitments back home, particularly if they had their wages stopped whilst overseas or had to give up employment to attend the APTC. It is noted that Government employees typically had their salaries continued whilst overseas in order to provide ongoing support for their families. Some awardees also mentioned their need to send money home regularly to their families (with attendant costs) at the expense of buying their own food and other items.

²² Blue data indicates that no awardees have to date progressed from one course to the next level

²³ Equivalent in purpose to the ARDS Establishment Allowance

Unless a contingency amount is included in the stipend, there will be a need to closely monitor cost variations and make more frequent stipend adjustments accordingly. The 2008 stipend review agreed consistent rates for allowances between countries and Schools. A standard methodology should be implemented for setting and regularly reviewing the stipend/other allowances. The scholarships design also included the establishment of a discretionary fund that could be used, under appropriate guidelines, to assist students in genuine need. **It is recommended that a discretionary fund be established to provide some supplementary support to students in genuine financial need, with appropriate mechanisms for ensuring its appropriate use by Schools.**

For scholarship management and audit purposes **it is recommended that the scholarship offer and stipend level data on Blue be checked and where necessary updated in line with CO records of approved scholarship offers.** In future, the level of stipend to be paid to an awardee should be approved by the CO and entered into Blue to be included in the scholarship offer letter²⁴.

6 Management Systems and Processes

6.1 Pre-Award

6.1.1 Publicity

The publicity associated with identifying and selecting awardees is an important part of transparency. The CO in consultation with the Schools is responsible for preparing information and marketing on APTC courses and scholarships. APTC information and application form dissemination and receipt are provided to applicants on a continuous basis by Country Coordinators. In countries where there are no Coordinators, course and scholarship promotion has been done annually by the CO/School representatives. The importance of the media publicity was significantly higher for scholarship applicants in NCCs (42%) compared to the CC (24%) where a higher proportion of scholarship applicants had heard of the APTC directly from the APTC or their employer (Annex I, Table S). Advice from Advisory Group members indicates that increased marketing activity is needed in the core NCCs (particularly in Kiribati and Nauru). The MTR team was also advised that to date there had been limited APTC publicity in remote areas in PNG and the Solomon Islands. To overcome NCC target candidate reluctance, marketing also needs to be targeted at parents and employers, who were the main influencers for 60% of EOC survey respondents.

The APTC website, www.aptc.edu.au, provides key information on the APTC for prospective students, including information on courses, scholarships and on-line application forms. The content of this website needs to be updated as, for example, the description of the scholarship selection processes does not match the current process. More use could be made of the website for keeping in contact and providing support to alumni, noting that access to the internet is still costly and unreliable in many areas of the Pacific.

²⁴ The stipend level on Blue is marked as pending for 30% of awardees. Blue also shows 16 people on Full Awards studying in their own country

6.1.2 Application and Assessment

To facilitate access, the application process should not be a barrier or disincentive to candidates. Although the scholarship application process is for the most part integrated with the general course application process, there are separate course and scholarship application forms. There was reported applicant frustration as to the length and complexity of the forms and the amount of accompanying documentation that has to be provided at time of application, at significant cost to NCC and economically disadvantaged applicants. There was also reported concern at least initially in some NCCs that people were encouraged to apply for an APTC place and scholarship when they were unlikely to meet the ELLN or technical skills course entry criteria. To avoid false expectations, all course and scholarship promotion needs to be accompanied by clear statements of entry criteria for each course.

Only 14% of the applicants applied for an APTC course and not a scholarship as well. The completion of separate forms creates additional workload for applicants and for Blue data-entry and is a potential road-block for assessments. **It is recommended that a combined application and scholarship form be developed and that consideration be given to only requiring certified documentation after an applicant has been assessed as meeting course entry criteria.** Where a large number of applications for a specific course are expected to be assessed, an Expression of Interest form could be used to filter out applicants who are not likely to meet the entry criteria. For assessment and reporting purposes, application form data in particular needs to be checked for completeness and consistency and, where necessary, assessed as being ineligible or returned to the applicant for completion.

Scholarship offers to NCCs were initially constrained by the availability of APTC assessors to undertake applicant entrance testing. Since then, the RTOs have developed written and interview skills/knowledge assessments of existing workers. Weaknesses in initial assessment processes meant that some applicants were not adequately skilled to undertake the courses to which they had been accepted. RTOs report that the assessment process has been refined with more accurate assessments²⁵ and less delays in supervising the assessments. Despite this, concerns were still expressed to the MTR team at ongoing delays in application and assessment processing, and in access to assessment in remote areas, such as in PNG outside Port Moresby. Ways to increase remote student access to APTC information and assessment need to be considered. This would include twice yearly roadshow and assessment visits to Kiribati, Tonga, Nauru and the Solomon Islands to fit in with the proposed selection rounds.

Blue does not adequately track application and assessment processing through to award offer and mobilisation. As a result it can be difficult for APTC staff (particularly those in NCCs) to determine the current stage of assessment for an application. This does not reflect well on the APTC, especially when application processing is delayed by many months. The APTC therefore needs to develop improved procedures and time-frames for response to applications, their assessment and scholarship offer. This would be facilitated by having fixed application rounds with cut-off dates for application submission. This would also reduce undue pressure on all parties in managing monthly and last minute enrolments.

Processes need to be developed and implemented in Blue for managing a reserve or “waitlist” of applicants assessed as meeting course entry criteria

²⁵ The validity and rigour of entry testing needs to be subject to ongoing monitoring regarding RPL and graduation outcomes

but not awarded scholarships due to limited places. Management of a waitlist will be increasingly important now that awareness of the APTC has grown and demand is increasing. Policies need to be developed for the movement of applicants that have been assessed as meeting the course entry criteria into the next selection round(s).

6.1.3 *Selection and Award Offers*

Scholarship selection is currently undertaken in a two-stage process by Schools and the Coordination Office. After applicant assessment, the Schools recommend a shortlist of applicants for a course, which is then checked for eligibility and approved by the CO. This process, which replaced the role of a Selection Committee, differs from many other AusAID scholarship schemes where AusAID Posts, partner governments or external experts are typically involved in awardee selection. Whilst not external, the independent role of the CO from the RTOs should provide sufficient assurance of selection objectivity and transparency, provided that the CO has sufficient resources and mandate for making final scholarship selections²⁶. However some suggestions have been made that the CO role in the selection process is not sufficiently understood or recognised.

During initial implementation, in the interest of commencing courses as quickly as possible, some scholarships were reported to have been awarded on a “first come-first served” basis of applicants that meet the entry criteria, rather than through systematically selecting applicants with the highest technical merit. Overall technical merit has been recognised in the award of scholarships, with the technical skills assessment scores of students awarded a scholarship significantly higher than that of those who applied but were not awarded a scholarship²⁷ (Annex I, Table J).

In addition to general media publicity, the Schools have used a de-facto “profiling” approach where they have directly contacted public and private sector organisations with employees who are likely to have the technical skills for entry to the APTC²⁸. Whilst this approach has considerable merit and efficiencies, to ensure merit and transparency, there needs to be safeguards in its extension to scholarship selection. As the APTC training benefits both individuals and their organisations, unless scholarship access is publicised and made available to all individuals and employers with the same profile, this could expose the APTC to perceptions that the scholarship selection process is not managed in a fair or equal manner (particularly where a number of employees from the same company are related). Perceptions of lack of transparency affect not only the reputation of the APTC but also the work AusAID has invested in moving towards transparent merit-based selection for its other scholarship programs in the Pacific. As training and personal associations may, as a valid part of their role, be made between School staff and students/employers, there is a need to clearly separate recruitment activities from scholarship selection to avoid the perception and potential for cronyism, nepotism or corruption²⁹.

Transparent scholarship selection would be enhanced through:

²⁶ Whilst the SSMWT could perhaps undertake the role of Scholarships Selection Committee, there is potential for its independence to be questioned due to its membership of School representatives

²⁷ In due course, APTC completion rates should be assessed against their technical skills and ELLN entry scores

²⁸ In addition, the profile of students targeted for course entry may not necessarily correlate well with that of the profile of students to be targeted for scholarships

²⁹ This will be even more important as increased staff localisation occurs

- publicising the scholarships so that all employees/employers of the same industry/sector are given equal access;
- documenting the “profile” of targeted candidates (from a technical skills, ELLN, work experience and development perspective), or the basis for any “partnerships” with employers, substantiated against the Scholarship Strategy objectives; and
- clear separation of the role of the Schools in applicant recruitment/enrolment and the CO in scholarship selection.

For merit and transparency reasons, to incorporate scholarships equity considerations, and for greater administrative efficiency, a more structured process for attracting and making award offers to scholarship applicants should be implemented as soon as possible. The following processes are recommended:

- Selection be undertaken in pre-determined rounds each year (suggested twice per year for NCC) for scholarships to all APTC courses to be offered in the following period;
- There be a transparent process for advertising and attracting the target profile of applicants, with a deadline for application submission;
- All eligible applicants that are likely to meet the course entrance criteria to be assessed by the relevant School;
- List of all scholarship applicants and RTO recommendations for scholarships in the selection round to be accessed on Blue by the CO GM/Scholarships Coordinator. RTO recommendations to be ranked according to technical scores for each country/course (and meeting the ELLN entrance score cut-off) and including any specific factors for consideration by the CO;
- The CO to check the recommended list of awardees against eligibility and selection criteria and to apply any weightings to the ranking to reflect NCC and gender access requirements³⁰ (in accord with the Scholarships Strategy);
- Award offers to be made by the GM by an agreed cut-off data in sufficient time to mobilise NCC awardees, provide pre-departure briefings and for awardees to make suitable arrangements with their family and employers; and
- Any appeals to be handled independently by the AusAID Regional Education Officer in Fiji³¹.

A standardised selection process and timeline will be especially important as the APTC moves to providing scholarships to the larger pool of new entrants.

6.1.4 *Mobilisation*

Time consuming awardee travel arrangements are undertaken by both the CO (at award start and end) and the RTOs (for multiple block courses). **It is recommended that student travel be undertaken by a CO Travel Officer or outsourced (with cost sharing agreed between the RTOs and the CO).** Consolidating staff and student travel arrangements may make it possible to arrange preferential pricing (currently rack rates are being paid), against a significant APTC cost item. An agent may also be able to gain priority access to seat allocations in peak periods. Given the difficulties still being experienced in the processing of visa applications, particularly in PNG (in some cases, delaying awardee course starts by over six months), it may be that this role should also be coordinated across the APTC or similarly outsourced.

³⁰ Including checking for any special country conditions (e.g. checking of Fiji applications by AusAID Suva)

³¹ The current appeals process is internal

RTOs report a significant level of NCC award deferrals causing difficulties with course scheduling and accommodation arrangements³². Whilst some of these deferrals were due to difficulties in arranging student visas and travel, many were due to the late notice of award offers, impacting on the ability for awardees to be mobilised in time. Late notice offers have meant that many NCC students have not been able to attend pre-departure briefings or arrive late for in-country orientation programs. It also impacts the ability of awardees to provide adequate notice of their departure to employers (not reflecting well on the APTC and potentially affecting employer willingness to release other employees for training) or to make appropriate arrangements for their families while they are overseas.

6.1.5 *Pre-Departure Briefing*

Pre-departure briefings (PDB) play an important part in assisting awardees (and their families) to prepare for life in a new study/living environment. There was a reported lack of consistency and comprehensiveness in the PDB in NCCs. This was said to be due to both lack of pre-prepared materials and lack of time between award offer and departure date. The PDB will be even more important for younger 'new entrants', as experience from ARDS suggests that school-leavers face significantly more problems in adjusting to their new social environment than mature awardees.

Given the challenges faced by awardees, **it is recommended that the APTC develop relevant PDB materials³³ and provide training to the Country Coordinators in their use.** This would assist in improving student learning outcomes and reduce class disruptions and the time that trainers currently spend on providing welfare support to students. The PDB should include sessions that address the difficulties reported by students and staff, including time management, handling homesickness and peer pressure, responding to family demands, health advice including sexual health/HIV Aids and family planning, adapting to post-secondary TVET study, post-secondary study for mature applicants, as well as managing finances. Based on the feedback from the EOC surveys and from focus group participants there is also need for clearer explanation of the terms and conditions of the scholarship, stipend benefits and of the training delivery mode (including the block schedule) of the courses to be undertaken by awardees. It is noted that the SSMWT is also developing a common Student Handbook for use by scholarship and other APTC students.

6.2 *On-Award*

6.2.1 *Accommodation*

Due to the short-term nature of most of their courses and general shortage of accommodation, the RTOs arrange accommodation for NCC awardees. Although the EOC survey showed that more than 80% of students were satisfied with the accommodation arrangements³⁴, some concerns of a relatively minor nature were raised during the focus group sessions. Any increased offering of awards to overseas students from NCCs will need to take into consideration the (limited) availability of suitable accommodation to meet their safety and privacy needs, especially in Samoa. Surplus accommodation should be made available to the Partial Level 1 awardees needing accommodation away from home. Some sharing of accommodation (and other) arrangements between RTOs may be possible in shared campus locations.

³² It was reported that mobilisation delays caused the cancellation of a scheduled STH Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) class in Vanuatu in 2008

³³ The ARDS PDB may be able to be adapted for use by the APTC

³⁴ Student End of Course Survey Report, Survey Batches 1-24, March 2009

6.2.2 *Stipend Payments*

Cash stipends are paid in cash to awardees on a weekly basis, with a standard accommodation allowance deducted automatically from the stipend prior to payment. Overall, the administrative arrangements for the stipend are less streamlined than for other AusAID scholarships. However, if the MCs can absorb this cost, the current structure may be in the better interest of awardees, many of whom are only at the APTC for short blocks of time. It is noted that some awardees reported some confusion regarding their award benefits which needs to be better explained prior to departure from their home country and included in the award offer letter.

To enable students without employers to be able to undertake a compulsory work attachment, their stipend is continued unless they are paid for their work. Given the financial implications of this and the number of awardees without employers, there needs to be strict control over the administration of this entitlement (particularly for Full and Partial Level 1 awardees). As scholarship payments are made locally outside of Blue, the RTO audit processes need to include checks that payments are being made at the correct level to awardees approved by the CO. Once Blue has been updated with award level data, there would be merit in undertaking a general audit across all Schools of scholarship payments made against scholarships approved by the APTC. It is recommended that this be completed by September 2009.

6.2.3 *Student Welfare and Award Variations*

Significant problems are experienced by some awardees with respect to alcohol, sexual health, homesickness, family responsibilities back home, budgeting and inter-racial tensions. The RTOs reported lessons learnt in responding to student welfare issues not typically experienced in their Australian institutions. As a consequence, the RTOs have worked together to develop orientation courses, guidelines for response management, a Student Code of Conduct and a consistent student management policy (e.g. series of warnings, appeals process etc). Prior to commencing operation, RTOs would have benefited from greater briefing from AusAID Posts on the issues that they were likely to experience. RTO administrative and trainer staff demonstrate pro-active care and professionalism for their students welfare, often beyond their core responsibilities and hours. As a consequence, the EOC survey showed high levels of satisfaction with their pastoral care. For more serious problems, the RTOs have now arranged to refer awardees to external professional counsellors.

Whilst data on course retention is to be analysed in the main MTR Report, the RTOs report some significant attrition affecting course efficiency and graduate outcomes, particularly with part-time CC students³⁵. Despite the difficulties faced by many awardees, only four people have had their scholarship terminated.

As political and environmental emergencies may be faced in developing countries, a Security Plan must be developed and maintained for the APTC as a whole, and customised for each School location, to provide guidance for APTC staff and students during an emergency.

6.3 *Post-Award*

Recognition of training completion is being undertaken through high-profile graduation ceremonies in their home countries. APTC students also requested that

³⁵ For example for one STH P/T Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) course, of the 22 places, there were 18 enrolments and only 12 graduates

they receive some formal recognition from the APTC at the end of each block period so that they could demonstrate their achievements to date to employers and families. An alumni association or network can play a number of important roles for the APTC including fostering enduring links between the alumni, the APTC and Australia, helping alumni in the post-award re-integration process and facilitating contact with alumni to monitor and evaluate APTC/scholarships effectiveness. Many alumni are also keen to take on APTC promotional activities, to act as a consultative group to provide input to discussions of matters relevant to APTC training and demand in the country and would be prepared to speak to employers, applicants or awardees prior to their departure. **It is recommended that the APTC develop an active alumni association to improve scholarship and training impact and to keep in contact with alumni to use as “ambassadors” for the APTC.** APTC alumni in NCCs should also be included in local AusAID alumni activities for the ADS/ARDS alumni.

APTC should also institute processes so that alumni contact details are kept up to date on Blue, if necessary supported by regular contact mapping (alumni location, current employer, current job title and contact address/email). It is suggested that the APTC consider establishing a survey centre on their web-site. Graduating alumni would then be sent an email containing a link to the web survey and asked to complete it on-line. By this means, survey data would be able to be collected progressively and be available for analysis when required. Hard-copy forms will still be needed for alumni without internet access. Alumni could also be requested to keep their contact details current through such a survey centre.

Other aspects of post-award support for alumni (such as re-integration into the workforce, advice regarding employment) will be covered in the main MTR report.

6.4 Management Information System

Data management and quality is a key issue for application and scholarships processing and M&E. Whilst the RTOs have separate management information systems³⁶ for their own School enrolment data, these systems are not able to be readily modified to capture APTC specific data. As a result, the APTC data management system (DMS), Blue was developed in July 2008 and now contains extensive application data, some assessment and scholarship offer data, and enrolment data uploaded from the RTO systems. The DMS is a shared resource via internet access by APTC staff and Schools (see Annex G) with centralised data and many transactions for each student occurring in different geographical locations, and with a range of data sources and formats. The late development of a Blue has meant that some scholarship data is not consistently recorded. Data quality is of concern, particularly that of incomplete/duplicate applications, assessment and award level data. Changes should be made to Blue to have better utilisation of drop-down lists and mandatory fields and data-cleansing should be routinely carried out.

Utilisation of the DMS is restricted in some countries (PNG especially) by slow and unreliable internet bandwidth connections which delays data-entry and processing. It is therefore important that efforts are made to reduce (or phase) the entry of non-essential data. The application form should be reviewed and items that are not needed for processing, reporting or M&E deleted³⁷. All APTC documents (e.g. application forms) are scanned and uploaded for storage and access to central folders in Australia. It can take thirty minutes to upload a document to Filezilla. In some cases, the scanned documents have been put onto CD and couriered to Australia. To save time and misplaced documents, there would be merit in

³⁶ ISAS at Sunshine Coast IT and SMART at Box Hill Institute

³⁷ The application form is scanned in, so any data not entered into Blue could be accessed at a later stage if required. Are there courses/locations preferences required?

considering using a simple document management system for indexing, searching and cross-referencing APTC documents that are stored centrally.

It is recommended that improvements be made to the APTC data management system to support application and scholarship processing and M&E. The APTC should:

- Secure funding for the continued development and maintenance of Blue beyond June 2009³⁸;
- Undertake data cleansing on current Blue data and resource ongoing routine maintenance;
- collect employer data for analysing labour market demand and training impact;
- ensure Blue field values are consistent with those in AVETMISS;
- review the amount of application data that needs to be keyed into Blue;
- review Blue to increase its functionality to track scholarship applications through the pre-award processes, enable bulk processing at various scholarship phases and to be more seamless integration with RTO enrolment data.;
- purchase additional software licenses to increase management and reporting access for APTC managers, especially in light of future growth of APTC;
- undertake a technical assessment to determine whether, for scalability and performance, the Access database should be migrated to SQL Server; and
- provide training for all users (given many have little experience in database management) to increase data utilisation.

6.5 M&E

Scholarships M&E is guided by the APTC PAF, in particular the KRA to “administer scholarship procedures that maximise opportunity for students from all Pacific Forum countries to access and successfully complete APTC programs with particular focus on redressing gender, isolation and income discrimination and ensuring that student health and welfare concerns are proactively and professionally addressed” and the associated PAF Verifiable Indicators (Annex H).

Analysis of application, enrolment and scholarship data by citizenship, gender and School are provided in regular reports using data from Blue. As noted above, the quality and comprehensiveness of Blue data needs routine attention to support this reporting, M&E and scholarship processing. Over time, post-award End of Course Surveys (EOC), Tracer Surveys and Employer Surveys will complement the pre and on-award scholarships.

Alumni Tracer and Employer Surveys are soon to be conducted progressively by the CO. In their current (draft) form, these surveys are not able to separately identify scholarship recipients. The surveys should include questions on funding source (including scholarship level) so that they can be used to assess the extent to which the scholarships have opened up opportunities for marginalised students to access training otherwise unavailable to them and the extent to which APTC programs influence employment in non-traditional trades for women.

7 Conclusions and Key Recommendations

Access to the APTC has been facilitated through its Scholarship Program. Over 1,193 scholarships have been awarded, providing financial and tuition fee support to 58% of enrolments, many of whom would not otherwise have been able to afford to train at the APTC. Demand for the APTC training and scholarships has been strong

³⁸ This database was not in the original AusAID contract and its costs are currently shared between the MCs

from the PIF countries with the exception of the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau and the Cook Islands. Lack of demand from these countries is considered by the RTOs to be due to differences in their educational systems and alternative opportunities for sponsored training in New Zealand or America. Of the scholarships awarded to date, 48% are for training at SACEM, 42% for the STH and only 9% for the more recently established SHCS.

APTC scholarship policies and benefits positively favour students from the NCCs. The Scholarships Program is a regional scheme with flexibility to award offers to ensure equitable access by country across the first four years of the scholarships scheme. Access to scholarship funding is critical to NCC students who are faced with the higher cost of having to train overseas and typically do not have access to the same level of employer funded support as CC students. The APTC have developed a Scholarship Allocation Model which provided indicative targets that allocate a higher proportion of scholarships per person to the NCCs compared to CCs.

Despite these policies, the January 2009 Contractor Self-Assessment gives itself an overall score of 2-3 on a scale of 5 against PAF 4.1 “equitable access for under-represented groups including women, citizens of smaller island states, and students with disabilities”. Excluding PNG, the CC have had 56 scholarships awarded per 100,000 population, significantly higher than that of the NCC (40 scholarships per 100,000 population). On this basis, to date, scholarships do not appear to have been preferentially allocated to NCCs. In addition, an estimated 69% of scholarship funding has been awarded to citizens from the campus countries (66% of which has been Full awards for study in another campus country). RTOs report however that despite the current under-awarding of scholarships to NCCs (compared to the indicative targets), there are sufficient qualified NCC applicants to enable RTOs to meet the scholarship targets in Kiribati, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Demand for APTC scholarships varies significantly by country, course and gender, reflecting factors including course availability, gender-based demand for the courses and differences in the number of applicants that meet the technical skills and ELLN course entry requirements. It is also recognised that RTOs have needed to fill course places within short time periods and have contractual accountability for achieving graduate (and not scholarship offer) targets. These factors may work against the offer of scholarships to NCC students, who also need higher levels of resource investment in terms of assessment, travel, accommodation and pastoral care than do scholarship or fee-paying CC applicants. Access and the sustainability of the NCC pipeline of students for the APTC will be at risk unless actions are undertaken to mitigate the known constraints.

Despite a range of initiatives (including scholarship advertisement and selection to promote gender equity in APTC courses), only 32% of scholarships were awarded to female students. Many of the current course offerings, especially in SACEM, are in non-traditional areas of female employment in the Pacific. This has resulted in female participation rates of only 3% in SACEM (broadly mirroring enrolment patterns for similar courses in Australia), compared to 54% in the STH and 99% in the SHCS. APTC disability policies and practices are substantially aligned with those of AusAID.

Only two applicants stated a disability on their application form, and so it is likely that students with a disability are under-represented in APTC enrolments and scholarships. Students from remote areas or economically disadvantaged backgrounds are assisted to undertake APTC training through the Partial Level 1 Award which gives CC students from remote locations the same stipend benefits as Full Award students. Although explicit economic background data is not collected,

22% of applicants stated that they were unemployed. Even those that are employed are likely to be working on low wages in the trade sector.

Effective management of the Scholarships Program needs a coordinated approach between the RTOs (responsible for student recruitment, assessment and on-award management) and the CO (responsible for scholarship selection and offers). Overall scholarship administration has been satisfactorily coordinated, with minimal gaps and duplication considering the rapid start-up to the APTC and the complexities of its regional operations. Although a new role for the RTOs, awardee pastoral care appears to have been pro-actively and professionally managed. Ongoing work is needed, however, to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the application processing and assessment and scholarship selection. Inefficiencies have resulted in avoidable delays in award offers and mobilisation, causing difficulties for APTC staff, awardees and their families/employers. The complexities of estimating scholarships costs have also affected the management of scholarship allocation against a finite budget.

The APTC needs to undertake some urgent tasks to ensure the appropriate award of scholarships against the finite budget. In particular, it is recommended that the APTC:

1. complete the APTC Scholarship Strategy;
2. refine estimates of average scholarship costs by PIF country/courses and use these estimates to review the indicative scholarship allocation between PIF countries and Schools over the four year program
3. review the Schools' committed scholarship expenditure forecasts in order to accurately establish the number of Full and Partial Awards that can still be offered within the remaining budget
4. agree the targeting of scholarships over the next two years to reflect this budget and to redress any imbalances in scholarship allocations to date whilst recognising any course/accommodation scheduling constraints till June 2011
5. determine the strategy for marketing courses in countries where there have been an "over-award" of scholarships compared to original indicative allocations.

To improve access from NCCs and marginalised groups, it is recommended that the APTC:

6. implement a more structured process for attracting and making award offers to scholarship applicants
7. more clearly separate the CO scholarship awardee selection function from the School functions of marketing, application assessment and enrolment
8. allocate a small pool of scholarships for NCC applicants to undertake Certificate II courses at local TVET institutions or APTC partner training institutes
9. undertake a feasibility study as to what ELLN gap training should be provided to technically qualified SIS applicants who do not meet ELLN course entry requirements
10. establish a discretionary fund to provide supplementary support to students in genuine financial need, with appropriate mechanisms for ensuring its appropriate use by Schools.

Additionally, to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness, it is recommended that the APTC:

11. develop a combined application and scholarship form and only require complete certified documentation after an applicant has been assessed as meeting course entry criteria
12. develop APTC specific pre-departure briefing materials and provide training in their use to the Country Coordinators

13. clarify the role of the Country Coordinators and improve their induction and training
14. review the stipend at regular intervals according to an agreed methodology
15. coordinate all student travel through a CO Travel Officer, or outsource it to a travel agency
16. develop an active alumni association
17. make improvements to Blue, the student and scholarship database.

APTC Mid-Term Review: Scholarship Program Analysis Draft Report Annexes

18 May 2009

A	Abbreviations and Acronyms
B	Terms of Reference for the APTC Mid-Term Review
C	APTC School Descriptions
D	Scholarships Allocation Model (SAM)
D.1	Current SAM
D.2	Scholarships allocation by School/Country and Gender as at 31 March 2009 (FSE)
D.3	Scholarships allocation by School/Country and Gender as at 31 March 2009 (Awards)
E	Estimated Average Scholarship Costs
F	Stipend Details
G	APTC Blue Database
H	Student and Scholarship Management PAF
I	Supplementary Data Tables (separate spreadsheet)

Annex A: Abbreviations & Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADS	Australian Development Scholarships
AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
APTC	Australia-Pacific Technical College
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ARDS	Australian Regional Development Scholarships
AUD	Australian Dollars
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information System Standards
Blue	APTC's student database
CC	Campus County
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CO	Coordination Office (of APTC)
DMS	Data Management System
ELLN	English language, literacy and numeracy
EOC	End of Course Survey (APTC)
EW	Existing Worker (APTC applicant)
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GM	General Manager
GoA	Government of Australia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Managing Contractors (APTC)
MTR	Mid-term Review
NCC	Non-Campus Country
NE	New Entrant (APTC applicant)
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
PIC	Pacific Island Country
PDB	Pre-Departure Briefings
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RMI	Republic of Marshall Islands
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SACEM	Schools of Automotive, Construction/Electrical & Manufacturing
SAM	Scholarships Allocation Model
SHCS	School of Health and Community Services
SIS	Smaller Island States
SMT	Senior Management team (of the APTC)
SSMWT	Student and Scholarships Management Workteam (of the APTC)
STH	School of Tourism & Hospitality
TAFE	Technical & Further Education (Australia)
TVET	Technical & Vocational Education and Training
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
USP	University of the South Pacific

Annex B - Terms of Reference for the APTC Mid-Term Review

1. Purpose of the MTR

- 1.1 The purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to advise the Government of Australia (GoA) and through it the Governments of Pacific Island Forum countries (GoPIF), in the context of wider concerns for quality, post-secondary education and training in the region, on progress to date, with a major focus on future options for the APTC and performance to date.

2. Objectives of the MTR

- 2.1 The MTR has two specific objectives.
- (a) To identify options and make recommendations on future directions, the legal status, management and revenue base of the APTC after June 2011 and on a practical continuity plan to ensure APTC service levels are maintained and that the likelihood and impact (risk) of interruptions is minimised.
 - (b) To assess the performance and impact of the APTC to date, and to recommend changes to strengthen its performance for the second half of the planned program duration to June 2011. This assessment should include consideration of design, management and implementation issues, and any contract variations necessary to give effect to recommended changes.

3. Scope of the MTR

In meeting these objectives, the MTR will consider and advise on the following issues.

Policy relevance of APTC

- (a) Advise on the alignment of the APTC's current goals and approaches with:
 - (i) Australian Government and Partner Pacific Island Countries' priorities, including the GoA-initiated Pacific Partnerships for Development and regional economic integration initiatives;
 - (ii) AusAID's Education Policy and its TVET action framework;
 - (iii) AusAID's cross-cutting policies including HIV/AIDS, gender equality, child protection, climate change and disability;
- (b) Consider the current level of commitment of PIF countries to the APTC and implications for the future development of the College;
- (c) Consider the extent to which APTC activities are harmonised with the work of other donors supporting TVET in the Pacific;
- (d) Review the effectiveness of the APTC in complementing and strengthening rather than duplicating the role of local providers and local TVET systems.

Progress and performance of the APTC

- (a) Assess the progress of the APTC towards achieving its stated goals and the outcomes specified in the APTC Performance Assessment Framework (PAF),³⁹ taking account of issues of equity, efficiency and value for money.

³⁹ The PAF identifies 5 Key Results Areas: (i) Marketing, Reputation and Image; (ii) Partnership; (iii) Quality Learning; (iv) Student Management; and (v) Management and Governance

The progress and performance of the Scholarship Program should be given particular attention. Consider the likelihood of the APTC meeting its objectives within the scheduled time frame and with the inputs as planned and budgeted.

- (b) Consider the initial impacts of the APTC, if any, on firm performance and on the labour market and TVET systems in the Pacific region and in individual participating countries.
- (c) In relation to training quality:
 - (i) review the adequacy of current and planned RTO reporting against the Australian National Quality Council's Quality Indicators of (i) learner engagement (ii) employer satisfaction and (iii) competency completion, taking account of findings of any independent training quality audits of the APTC's two RTOs;
 - (ii) review the extent to which APTC programs have been able to contextualise Training Packages to meet local needs while complying with the standards of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).
 - (iii) review the impact of APTC on the local training institutions in respect to quality enhancement and improved services.
- (d) Review the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of current APTC performance monitoring and evaluation and reporting arrangements and identify improvements as necessary.

Scope of APTC training

- (a) Assess whether the current profile of the APTC should be amended in response to changing patterns of demand by:
 - (i) increasing the number of training places for the qualifications currently offered; and/or
 - (ii) withdrawing any of the qualifications currently offered; and/or
 - (iii) adding new qualifications within existing fields of study at Certificate III and above, with particular attention to potential expansion of health and community services training to complement regional health initiatives; and/or
 - (iv) adding new qualifications within existing fields of study at levels lower than currently permitted (i.e. Certificate I and II) that would provide new learning pathways for school leavers and adult learners; and/or
 - (v) adding qualifications in new occupational fields, and/or
 - (vi) diversifying the range of training services provided.

This assessment should take account of the impact that any recommended changes would be likely to have on access and equity, local training supply, the cost-effectiveness of such changes, and whether qualifications should be restricted to GoA immigration visa occupations.

- (b) Assess the demand for APTC fee-for-service training, especially from national and regional firms and local training providers, and the current

capacity of the APTC to respond effectively to this demand. Pricing of APTC courses should also be considered.

- (c) Consider current constraints on expansion of the size and scope of APTC training in terms of:
 - (i) partnerships with local training providers;
 - (ii) training venues and accommodation;
 - (iii) delivery of fee-for-service programs to firms operating regionally;
 and advise on how these constraints might be overcome.
- (d) Advise on whether any new APTC campuses should be established in any non-campus countries and whether access to training by non-campus countries needs to be improved, taking account of the effectiveness of current APTC engagement with non-campus countries, access and equity consideration, and the costs and benefits of expansion.
- (e) Review current delivery modes and provide advice on whether other more flexible modes, including open and distance learning should be incorporated in APTC's delivery model to achieve better learning outcomes and better value for money.
- (f) In the interests of aid effectiveness, identify current and potential links between the APTC and the TVET components of AusAID's sectoral and country programs in the Pacific.

APTC's Governance and Management Arrangements

- (a) Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current "three contractor" model of implementation.
- (b) Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the APTC senior management structure and the impact, if any, of the merging of the roles of CEO and General Manager.
- (c) Comment on the role and contribution of the Advisory Group and identify whether any changes are required.

Lessons learned

- (a) In light of implementation since July 2007, identify the lessons learned and good practices in implementation which should inform the future directions of the APTC

Future Directions and Sustainability of APTC

- (a) Consider whether the original goals and design of the APTC remain relevant in the light of actual and projected changes within Pacific economies, labour markets and TVET systems, and recommend re-orientation where necessary.
- (b) Identify options for improving the governance and management arrangements for the APTC including consideration of (i) whether the APTC needs to have legal status to operate effectively beyond June 2011 (ii) the feasibility of the APTC becoming an Australian Registered Training Organisation; (iii) the desirability and feasibility of the APTC becoming a regional TVET provider post June 2011.
- (c) Assess the possibilities for strengthening partnerships with the private sector and for increased localisation of APTC programs including greater use of

local trainers and delivery and/or assessment by local training providers through licensing or other business arrangements which meet Australia standards for off-shore education and training.

- (d) Identify options for achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness in the APTC Scholarship Program and for strengthening its contribution to achieving APTC objectives, including access and equity and business development objectives.
- (e) Outline a viable business strategy for diversifying the APTC revenue base to improve sustainability while still meeting development objectives and access and equity principles.
- (f) Identify the risks associated with the transition from current arrangements to proposed new arrangements after June 2011, and make recommendations on how those risks should be managed.
- (g) Assess the potential phasing out of the APTC. Upon extension beyond June 2011, explore possible phasing out strategies.

Annex C: Description of APTC Schools

School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH)

The School of Tourism and Hospitality delivers its courses as a single, intensive, full time block of training ranging from 16 to 20 weeks in duration. Some courses can be undertaken on a part time basis and are delivered over a 12-18 month period with weekly classes. The delivery of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is the only exception to this and is delivered using a series of small training blocks interspersed with work place activities between blocks. To obtain entry into a STH course, prospective students need to make application and undertake literacy and numeracy assessment and a skills assessment.

Schools of Automotive, Construction, Electrical and Manufacturing

The Schools Automotive, Construction, Electrical and Manufacturing deliver courses using a modular approach with students attending a number of successive, intensive, full time blocks of training ranging from four to twelve weeks in duration. To obtain entry into an ACEM course, prospective students need to make application and undertake literacy and numeracy assessment and an initial entry skills assessment. If accepted students will attend their first block of training during which a more extensive individual skills assessment will take place where recognition of prior learning is determined and gap training needs identified. An individual training agreement and study plan will be developed for each student requiring them to undertake workplace activities and attend a number of subsequent training blocks. ACEM trainers visit students in their workplace to undertake workplace assessments.

School of Health and Community Services

The School of Health and Community Services deliver the Diploma of Community Welfare course using a modular approach with students attending 5 successive, intensive, full time blocks of training ranging from four to five weeks in duration. Certificate and Diploma in Children's Services are delivered on a part time basis with students required to attend classes weekly over a 12 month period. To obtain entry into an SHCS course, prospective students need to be currently employed in the sector and undertake an LLN assessment and skills interview.

Annex D: Scholarships Allocation Model

D.1 Scholarships Allocation Model by country (Blue Model selected SQ POP and GDP)

			*		*	
	POP	LN POP	LN POP LN GDP	SQ POP SQ GDP	LN POP SQ GDP	LN POP GDP
Fiji Islands	147	131	138	273	149	146
Papua New Guinea	1097	150	143	511	116	77
Solomon Islands	89	126	108	102	69	33
Vanuatu	41	119	112	96	90	59
Kiribati	17	110	95	46	62	30
Nauru	8	89	96	34	114	126
Cook Islands	8	91	109	59	179	303
Niue	6	70	83	18	125	193
Samoa	33	117	109	82	85	53
Tonga	17	110	113	83	111	96
Tuvalu	8	88	88	24	81	64
Palau	10	95	108	58	147	197
Marshall Islands	12	105	101	50	84	57
FSM	19	112	111	79	102	80
	POP DOMINATED		POP + GDP		GDP DOMINATED	

D.2 Scholarships allocation by School/Country and Gender as at 31 March 2009 (FSE)

School	Country	Indicative Target		Committed FSE			Remaining FSE		
		Total	Per Gender	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
ACEM	Cook Is.	22	11				11	11	22
ACEM	Fiji	100	50	2	136	138	48	- 86	- 38
ACEM	FSM	28	14				14	14	28
ACEM	Kiribati	16	8		21	21	8	- 13	- 5
ACEM	Marshall Is.	18	9				9	9	18
ACEM	Nauru	12	6		6	6	6	-	6
ACEM	Niue	6	3		2	2	3	1	4
ACEM	Palau	20	10				10	10	20
ACEM	PNG	186	93	6	39	45	87	54	141
ACEM	Samoa	30	15		33	33	15	- 18	- 3
ACEM	Solomon Is.	38	19	1	72	73	18	- 53	- 35
ACEM	Tonga	30	15		11	11	15	4	19
ACEM	Tuvalu	8	4				4	4	8
ACEM	Vanuatu	36	18	6	40	46	12	- 22	- 10
HCS	Cook Is.	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	Fiji	40	20	3	4	7	17	16	33
HCS	FSM	12	6				6	6	12
HCS	Kiribati	6	3				3	3	6
HCS	Marshall Is.	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	Nauru	4	2				2	2	4
HCS	Niue	2	1				1	1	2
HCS	Palau	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	PNG	74	37				37	37	74
HCS	Samoa	12	6	2	1	3	4	5	9
HCS	Solomon Is.	14	7				7	7	14
HCS	Tonga	12	6	2		2	4	6	10
HCS	Tuvalu	4	2				2	2	4
HCS	Vanuatu	14	7	5	-	5	2	7	9
STH	Cook Is.	28	14				14	14	28
STH	Fiji	134	67	18	10	28	49	58	106
STH	FSM	40	20	1		1	19	20	39
STH	Kiribati	22	11	14	6	20	- 3	5	2
STH	Marshall Is.	24	12				12	12	24
STH	Nauru	16	8	8	1	9	-	7	7
STH	Niue	8	4				4	4	8
STH	Palau	28	14				14	14	28
STH	PNG	252	126	36	41	77	90	85	175
STH	Samoa	40	20	11	9	19	9	11	21
STH	Solomon Is.	50	25	74	47	121	- 49	- 22	- 71
STH	Tonga	40	20	40	18	58	- 20	2	- 18
STH	Tuvalu	12	6	3		3	3	6	9
STH	Vanuatu	48	24	1	0	2	23	24	46
Total		1510	755	233	497	730	522	259	780

D.3 Scholarships allocation by School/Country and Gender as at 31 March 2009 (Awards)

School	Country	Indicative Target		Committed Awards			Remaining Awards		
		Total	Per Gender	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
ACEM	Cook Is.	22	11				11	11	22
ACEM	Fiji	100	50	8	198	206	42	- 148	- 106
ACEM	FSM	28	14				14	14	28
ACEM	Kiribati	16	8		21	21	8	- 13	- 5
ACEM	Marshall Is.	18	9				9	9	18
ACEM	Nauru	12	6		7	7	6	- 1	5
ACEM	Niue	6	3		2	2	3	1	4
ACEM	Palau	20	10				10	10	20
ACEM	PNG	186	93	8	140	148	85	- 47	38
ACEM	Samoa	30	15		93	93	15	- 78	- 63
ACEM	Solomon Is.	38	19	2	72	74	17	- 53	- 36
ACEM	Tonga	30	15		10	10	15	5	20
ACEM	Tuvalu	8	4				4	4	8
ACEM	Vanuatu	36	18	6	43	49	12	- 25	- 13
HCS	Cook Is.	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	Fiji	40	20	43	7	50	- 23	13	- 10
HCS	FSM	12	6				6	6	12
HCS	Kiribati	6	3				3	3	6
HCS	Marshall Is.	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	Nauru	4	2				2	2	4
HCS	Niue	2	1				1	1	2
HCS	Palau	8	4				4	4	8
HCS	PNG	74	37				37	37	74
HCS	Samoa	12	6	2	1	3	4	5	9
HCS	Solomon Is.	14	7	1		1	6	7	13
HCS	Tonga	12	6	2		2	4	6	10
HCS	Tuvalu	4	2				2	2	4
HCS	Vanuatu	14	7	47	1	48	- 40	6	- 34
HCS	Cook Is.	28	14				14	14	28
STH	Fiji	134	67	64	60	124	3	7	10
STH	FSM	40	20	1		1	19	20	39
STH	Kiribati	22	11	14	6	20	- 3	5	2
STH	Marshall Is.	24	12				12	12	24
STH	Nauru	16	8	8	1	9	-	7	7
STH	Niue	8	4				4	4	8
STH	Palau	28	14				14	14	28
STH	PNG	252	126	30	29	59	96	97	193
STH	Samoa	40	20	37	41	78	- 17	- 21	- 38
STH	Solomon Is.	50	25	72	47	119	- 47	- 22	- 69
STH	Tonga	40	20	39	18	57	- 19	2	- 17
STH	Tuvalu	12	6	3		3	3	6	9
STH	Vanuatu	48	24	6	3	9	18	21	39
Total		1510	755	393	800	1,193	362	- 45	317

Annex E: Estimated Scholarship Costs (AUD)

E.1 Estimated Average Scholarship Costs by School

Direct scholarship costs include Stipend, Supplementary Training Benefit, International Travel, Insurance. They do not include tuition fees.

Campus	School Course	SACEM		SHCS			STH		
		Existing Worker	New Entrant	Cert III in Children's Services	Diploma in Children's Services	Diploma in Community Welfare	Commercial Cookery, Patisserie, Hospitality Supervision	Hospitality Operations and Tourism Operations	Hairdressing
Fiji	Full	\$ 9,310	\$ 16,453	\$ 7,925	\$ 7,925	\$ 17,664	\$ 7,198	\$ 6,860	\$ 14,050
	Partial 1	\$ 5,528	\$ 12,671	\$ 6,009	\$ 6,009	\$ 11,868	\$ 5,307	\$ 4,944	\$ 12,134
	Partial 2	\$ 2,821	\$ 5,678	\$ 2,494	\$ 2,494	\$ 4,837	\$ 2,213	\$ 2,067	\$ 4,944
	Partial 3	\$ 2,194	\$ 3,980	\$ 1,615	\$ 1,615	\$ 3,079	\$ 1,439	\$ 1,348	\$ 3,146
PNG	Full	\$ 9,745	\$ 20,501						
	Partial 1	\$ 6,968	\$ 17,724						
	Partial 2	\$ 3,025	\$ 7,328						
	Partial 3	\$ 2,322	\$ 5,011						
Samoa	Full	\$ 8,374	\$ 13,589				\$ 6,691	\$ 5,987	
	Partial 1	\$ 4,592	\$ 9,807				\$ 4,022	\$ 3,318	
	Partial 2	\$ 2,447	\$ 4,533				\$ 1,699	\$ 1,417	
	Partial 3	\$ 1,960	\$ 3,264				\$ 1,118	\$ 942	
Vanuatu	Full			\$ 9,364	\$ 9,364		\$ 9,364	\$ 8,299	
	Partial 1			\$ 6,009	\$ 6,009		\$ 6,009	\$ 4,944	
	Partial 2			\$ 2,494	\$ 2,494		\$ 2,494	\$ 2,067	
	Partial 3			\$ 1,615	\$ 1,615		\$ 1,615	\$ 1,348	

E.2 Estimated Committed Scholarship Expenditure by School (as at 31 March 2009)

School	Campus Country	Estimated Committed Expenditure				Total Adjusted Cost
		Full	Partial 1	Partial 2	Partial 3	
SACEM	Fiji	\$ 1,010,873	\$ 82,237	\$ 11,284	\$ 197,466	\$ 1,301,860
	PNG	\$ 1,064,957	\$ 472,936	\$ 7,328	\$ 243,577	\$ 1,788,798
	Samoa	\$ 1,843,927	\$ 68,649	\$ 78,505	\$ 105,792	\$ 2,096,873
SACEM Total		\$ 3,919,757	\$ 623,822	\$ 97,117	\$ 546,835	\$ 5,187,531
SHCS	Fiji	\$ 194,304	\$ 83,076		\$ 84,438	\$ 361,818
	Vanuatu		\$ 18,027		\$ 72,675	\$ 90,702
	Samoa	\$ 6,691				\$ 6,691
SHCS Total		\$ 200,995	\$ 101,103	\$ -	\$ 157,113	\$ 459,211
STH	Fiji	\$ 463,995	\$ 124,895	\$ 18,749	\$ 114,326	\$ 721,965
	PNG	\$ 20,501				\$ 20,501
	Vanuatu	\$ 732,577		\$ 2,067	\$ 12,119	\$ 746,763
	Samoa	\$ 629,998	\$ 16,590	\$ 6,232	\$ 29,062	\$ 681,881
STH Total		\$ 1,847,072	\$ 141,485	\$ 27,048	\$ 155,506	\$ 2,171,111
Grand Total		\$ 5,967,823	\$ 866,410	\$ 124,165	\$ 859,454	\$ 7,817,852

Note: Committed expenditure estimates based on above average scholarship costs, adjusted for withdrawals, early completions, and other factors.

E.3 Estimated Committed Scholarship Expenditure by Country (as at 31 March 2009)

Citizenship	Estimated Committed Expenditure					% Total Funding
	Full	Partial 1	Partial 2	Partial 3	Total	
Fiji	\$ 1,355,355	\$ 285,264	\$ 30,033	\$ 394,036	\$ 2,064,688	26%
PNG	\$ 1,029,063	\$ 472,936	\$ 7,328	\$ 241,830	\$ 1,751,157	22%
Samoa	\$ 633,976	\$ 65,625	\$ 102,652	\$ 133,289	\$ 935,542	12%
Vanuatu	\$ 499,287	\$ 6,009	\$ 14,085	\$ 86,988	\$ 606,369	8%
Kiribati	\$ 335,672				\$ 335,672	4%
Nauru	\$ 100,044	\$ 5,011			\$ 105,055	1%
Niue	\$ 23,334				\$ 23,334	0%
Solomon Is	\$ 1,482,133	\$ 4,944			\$ 1,487,077	19%
Tonga	\$ 488,378				\$ 488,378	6%
Tuvalu	\$ 20,580				\$ 20,580	0%
Total	\$ 5,967,823	\$ 839,789	\$ 154,098	\$ 856,142	\$ 7,817,852	100%

Note: Committed expenditure estimates based on above average scholarship costs, adjusted for withdrawals, early completions and other factors.

Annex F – APTC Scholarship Stipend Details

F.1 Full Award Stipend

Table 1: Full Award Stipend Payments by Study Country (AUD)

Study Country	Rate as at March 2009	AUD
Fiji	FJD 538	446
Samoa	SAT 700	364
Vanuatu	Vatu 40628	621
PNG	Kina 1116	635

F.2 Partial Award Stipend

Table 2: Partial Award Stipend Levels

Partial Award Level	CC Student	% Full Award Stipend
1	Full Time students who live in remote locations and have to relocate to a APTC campus within the country	100%
2	Full Time students who have to travel some distance to an APTC campus within the country on a daily basis. It includes proportional meal allowance for lunches and also supports additional transport costs.	40%
3	Full Time students who live close to an APTC campus within the country. The level of support is closely related to the equivalent to minimum daily wage standards and is designed to compensate the student of daily expenses, particularly when they have to take leave without pay to attend APTC classes.	25%**

Part-time students are also eligible to receive Level 2 and 3 Partial Scholarships and receive a proportion of the full time benefits according to study load. e.g. A student studying 2 days would receive 0.4 of applicable full time benefits.

F.3 Supplementary Training Benefit

A Supplementary Training Benefit (STB) is provided to all APTC Full Scholarship Awardees to assist with the initial costs of setting themselves up in a new location, paying accommodation bonds, textbooks and other essential items. The STB is a standard AUD\$1150 for all countries. This is provided as a \$500 payment directly to the student and \$650 in-kind goods and services provided by the School.


Partial Award students also receive the in-kind but not the cash component of the Supplementary Training Benefit. Details of this payment are described below.

Table 3: Supplementary Training Benefits by School (AUD)

STB	ACEM	Value
Purchase by student	Refundable Bond Excess Baggage (in/out bound) Dept Tax (Samoa) Pantry & Toilet Start-up kit Passport Med/Police check	A\$500
Provided by the School	Uniform, Safety Equipment, Initial stationary kit Training Materials Text books, Airport transfers (int'l) Medical Insurance (int'l)	A\$650
STB	STH/SHCS	Value
Purchase by student	Refundable Bond Excess Baggage (in/out bound). Departure Tax (Samoa) Pantry & Toilet Start-up kit Passport Med/Police check	A\$500 Allocation: Upfront - \$200.00 Mid-term - \$100 Departure - \$100 Bond refund @ airport - \$100
Provided by the School	Airport Transfers (int'l), Initial stationary kit, Safety Equipment (shoes), Pants – uniforms Training Manuals Medical Insurance (int'l)	A\$650

Annex G: APTC Blue Database

BLUE LIVE 2.0



APTC APPLICATIONS and STUDENTS DATABASE

Main Switchboard

Quick stuff

Overall Applicant Tracking Summary (Count)		
All PDF Uploads	Quick Applicant	Data Checking
List to Graduation	Hyperlinks	Applicants All IDs

HELP

help@aptc.edu.au

23 March 2009

APPLICATIONS				STUDENTS		
0. Applicants / Students <small>Form</small>	1. Admissions Application Form <small>Form</small>	1a. Application Processing by Schools	2. Scholarship Application Form <small>Form</small>	2a. Scholarships Approved	3. Enrolments	6. Graduation / Other Exits

DATA

New Applicant
EDIT Applicant

New Application
EDIT Application

ACEM
STH All
HCS All
UNASSIGNED

New Scholarship
EDIT Scholarship

Process Form
Process Sheet
Quick Sheet Costs

EDIT Enrolment
Enrolment Sheet
Current Enrolmts
Missing IDs

EDIT Exit/Grad
Exited Enrolmts
Missing IDs

REPORTS

Applicants Admission Reports Scholarship Enrolment Reports Exit Reports

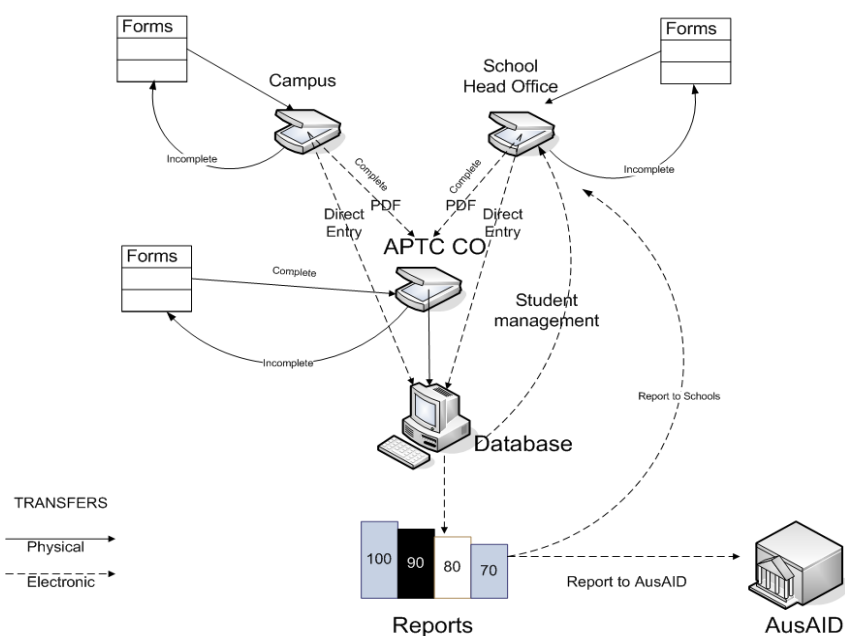
EXPORT TO EXCEL

View Email it View Email it Email ACEM Email STH Email HCS Email Unassigned View Email it View Email it View Email it View Email it

MORE MENUS

AD HOC DATA ACEM MENU STH / HCS MENU Edit Drop-down List Forms Monthly and Country Reports

IMPORTANT: To ensure full function, please ensure MACROS are always ENABLED during use of this database



Annex H: APTC Performance Assessment Framework KRA 4, Contractor Self Assessment January 2009

KRA 4: Student Management

Objective: Administer scholarship procedures that maximise opportunity for students from all Pacific Forum countries to access and successfully complete APTC programmes with particular focus on redressing gender, isolation and income discrimination and ensuring that student health and welfare concerns are proactively and professionally addressed.

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
4.1	Equitable access for under-represented groups including women, "citizens of smaller island states, and students with disabilities" (proposed change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1 Develop, implement and publish the APTC Scholarship Policy and Procedures Manual by July 2009 and review/revise on annual basis including targets for distribution of scholarship awards with consideration of gender, NCC access and urban/rural distribution across PIFs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1 Annual Scholarship Strategy with agreed distribution targets APM 01/09: Score 2-3 (High Priority)SSMWT/SMT 	CO/SMT	Student Database APTC Gender and Equality Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost of reaching under-represented groups Scholarships awarded to students with easiest access and greater financial means Under-represented groups are unable to meet College admission requirements quotas for scholarship and small PIC participation rates 	<p>Develop low cost, high penetration marketing outreach strategies in small island states and remote areas i.e., use of NCC liaison personnel</p> <p>Assist motivated students to become initially engaged in national trades training systems to prepare them for APTC entry in later intakes</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1a Successive Scholarship Manuals compiled including results against targets and lessons learned APM 01/09: Score 2-3 (High Priority) 	SMT appointed Scholarship Committee	Scholarship Design Annual Plans		

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.2 Scholarships scheme benefiting students who would otherwise not have attended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.2 Disaggregated student participation and application data on the following categories: Individually funded; Industry funded; Full and partial assistance APM 01/09: Score 5 4.1.2a 6-monthly reviews of scholarship policy and processes to arrive at equitable allocations of scholarship funds by country, gender and school issues APM 01/09: Score 2-3 (High Priority) 	<p>CO/Schools</p> <p>SMT appointed Scholarship Committee</p>	<p>Student Database</p> <p>Scholarship Design Document</p> <p>Manual versions</p> <p>Student Exit Surveys</p> <p>Tracer Studies</p>	<p>not achieved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in admission due to travel documentation Numbers of applicants do not allow for genuine selection Documentation of students past local qualifications not available or not adequate Students may perceive selection processes is inequitable or biased 	<p>Scholarship awards require assessment of financial means and ensure equitable distribution throughout PIFs</p> <p>Visa and entry protocols developed in all sending and receiving PIFs</p> <p>Marketing programme design against target application rate</p> <p>Selection process decisions and accessible to students on request</p> <p>Marketing and admissions strategies strive for an appropriate balance between local and incoming</p>

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
							students
4.2	Admission, appeals and grievance processes comply with AQTF 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2.1 Admissions, appeals and grievance process are documented and readily available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2.1 School Admission Process and Records APM 01/09: Score 4 	CO/Schools compile College-wide -policies for admission, grievance and appeals	Student Database APTC Grievance and Appeal Policy AQTF 2007	Student, government or industry appeals are not transparent and become politicised	Establish complaints handling process Students given access to records and complaints handling system in place
4.3	Students able to make the most of their study opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.1 Students receive access to support services to meet their individual needs and achieve training outcomes as required by AQTF 2007 and APTC welfare policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.1 Orientation documentation and sign-off checklists, incident reports APM 01/09: Score 5 4.3.2 Campus Scholarship/ Welfare Officer employed, providing and reporting on services provision APM 01/09: Score 5 4.3.2 Effective mechanism for coordination of CO/Schools Scholarship officers in place APM 01/09: Score 4 4.4.3 Student 	Schools Schools/CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AQTF 2007 APTC Gender Access and Equality Policy APTC HIV/AIDS Framework Policy AusAID Child Protection Policy Minutes of Regional Gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High proportion of incoming students means student support services stretched Complexity of student travel causes problems for overseas students RTO motivation or capacity to provide support services is limited, or not equipped for culturally appropriate responses RTO/CO Staff 	Schools develop specific procedures for handling overseas student arrivals and departures. Learning and student support funded as an integral part of program delivery Schools to recruit suitable staff for student support roles, utilising local training partners

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
			Satisfaction Surveys APM 01/09: Score 4 APM 01/09: Score 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.4 Staff feedback APM 01/09: Score 4 4.4.5 Agreements in place with local service providers APM 01/09: Score 5 		and HIV/AIDS Advisory Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of Scholarship Coordinator Meetings 	duty of care obligations breached 	extensively to ensure responses are culturally sensitive . Guidelines provided by Schools to staff on duty of care requirements and formally addressed as part of pre departure briefing and in regular meetings and in staff appraisals.
4.4	Students receive support in APTC-to- “work transition” to “work enhancement” (Proposed change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.4.1 Programs embed and/or include work placement components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.4.1 Work placement records, career fairs, training plans APM 01/09: Score 3 	Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Reports Student Data Base 	Insufficient labor market knowledge by graduates 	Dedicated student services resources with access to labour market research, and integrally involved in employer partnerships.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.4.1a Relevant approvals in place to facilitate work placement APM 01/09: Score 2 (High Priority) 	SMT	Exit Surveys	Insufficient awareness of employers to student competencies Graduates not ready for the study-to-work transition	On-campus employer presentations and interview

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1b Relevant insurance policies taken out and maintained to cover students in work placement APM 01/09: Score 5 		Tracer Studies		Employee partnership arrangements (see Component 2)
4.5	APTC students comply with Code of Conduct and Student Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5.1 Develop, implement and review APTC wide Student Code of Conduct and Student Rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Code of Conduct and Student Rules endorsed by SMT and publically available APM 01/09: Score 3-4 (not publicly available) 	Schools/CO SMT	APTC Code of Conduct and Student Rules	<p>Students engage in inappropriate behaviour (including inappropriate or dangerous sexual behaviour) compromises student safety and College reputation</p> <p>Inconsistency across the College in dealing with breaches in Student Rules creates disharmony and inequity</p>	<p>Student Code of Conduct established by Schools (with appropriate disciplinary procedures), with briefing during orientation and constantly reinforced</p> <p>Number and type of breaches documented and reported to SMT</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5.2 Students sign to confirm that he/she will comply with the Code of Conduct and Student Rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5.2 Student records APM 01/09: Score 5 	Schools	Student Files		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5.3 Non-compliance with Code of Conduct issues are recorded by the School and addressed with the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5.3 Incident Reports APM 01/09: Score 3-4 4.5.3a Consolidated report on number and type of incident provided by Student Management Working Group to SMT APM 01/09: Score 2 High Priority 	Schools CO	School Records		

Ref	Outputs	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Data Source	Risks	Risk Management
4.6	Efficient Student Data Management Systems in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.6.1 Development and maintenance of a robust and functional consolidated database that produce accurate and rapid reports on: applications, enrolment, graduate and drop-out numbers, disaggregated by: course, school, campus, citizenship, age and gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.6.2 Data base generates student information reports: Enrolment data on a monthly basis APM 01/09: Score 5 4.6.2a All students enroll on individual RTO databases APM 01/09: Score 5 4.6.2b RTO's transfer application data in an agreed format APM 01/09: Score 5 	CO	Data Management System Report (April 2008) and updates in CO Six-Month and Annual Plans	<p>Schools do not enter information preventing up-to-date, accurate reporting on student applications, enrolments and completion</p> <p>CO does not properly maintain or properly report on consolidated student data</p> <p>IT problems interfere with access and reliability</p> <p>Student data management does not comply with APTC privacy policy</p>	<p>Security provisions in place to safeguard confidential student data</p> <p>CO provides reliable, high speed access to database for end-users</p>

Annex I: Supplementary Data Tables

See separate Excel workbook