Afghanistan − Australia Development Scholarships

Scoping Study Report

Final

20 December 2010

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADS	Australian Development Scholarships
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
AQF	Australian Qualification Framework
ASG	Australian Scholarships Group
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CPS	Country Program Strategy
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses
CTAP	Civilian Technical Assistance Programme
DAFA	Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan
DAP	Desired Applicant Profile
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Australia)
ELBP	English Language Bridging Program
ELT	English Language Training
GoAf	Government of Afghanistan
IAP	Introductory Academic Program
IEP	Intensive English Language Program
IELTS	International English Language Test System
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MAEPA	Malaysia-Australia Education Project for Afghanistan
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MC	Managing Contractor
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education

MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MTR	Mid-term Review
MUFY	Monash University Foundation Year
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NOOSR	National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition
NZ	New Zealand
OASIS	Online Application Scholarships Information System (AusAID)
PCE	Pre Course English
PDB	Pre-Departure Briefing
PG	Postgraduate
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SCA	Short Course Award
SPDA	Study and Professional Development Award
SSR	Scoping Study Review
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UG	Undergraduate
UK-NARIC	National Recognition Centre for the United Kingdom
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Summary

This Scoping Study Report covers the outcome of a review of the current Afghanistan ADS program to identify lessons to inform the development of a new program phase. It scopes options and provides recommendations for an expanded and more broadly based Australian Development Scholarships program for Afghanistan from 2012.

The ADS program currently has a high profile across key Ministries. The SSR found support for a more diversified program of scholarships. Ministries receiving scholarships expressed a keen interest in the continuation and expansion of scholarships that fund Postgraduate study in Australia targeted to their employees. There was also interest in targeted Short Course Awards and there was support for study awards at Undergraduate level at the Malaysian campuses of Australian tertiary institutions.

The SSR proposes that these additional scholarship mechanisms be included in the next phase of an expanded scholarship program. Carefully targeted Short Courses may address training needs that complement other AusAID initiatives. Courses at Australian campuses in Malaysia will allow AusAID to trial an Open Category of awards available to applicants from the government, private and civil society sectors on a competitive basis.

The SSR also proposes that two additional Ministries be targeted for Postgraduate scholarships in Australia – the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Mines.

Reintegration of graduates into their former Ministries may prove difficult in practice and, at senior levels, reintegration of graduates into productive work anywhere with the Afghan economy is viewed as a satisfactory outcome. There is constant movement between Ministries and the public and private sectors. The SSR therefore proposes a simplified goal and objectives that reflect these realities coupled with a simple but effective monitoring and evaluation strategy to confirm achievement of the proposed objectives.

> Program Goal: *A scholarships program contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in Afghanistan.*
>
> Program objective 1: *Australia awards alumni applying their new knowledge and skills in Afghanistan in areas related to their fields of study.*
>
> Program objective 2: *Recognition of Australia as an active partner in the economic and social development of Afghanistan.*

Donors consulted by the SSR freely shared information about their scholarship programs but there was no interest in any formalised alignment or harmonisation approaches. Each donor has different objectives, priorities and selection processes and there is inevitably a degree of competition. Donors are interested in sharing lessons learned about their programs.

Preference is currently given to provincial candidates during the selection process but the program has found it difficult to identify an adequate number of suitable candidates. There have been no candidates from Uruzgan, a particular priority area for AusAID. Some of the enhancements proposed by the SSR will help to address this issue, notably a more extensive advertising process but ultimately the more diverse types of awards proposed will offer mechanisms that may attract more provincial candidates for Australian scholarships. More attention will need to be given to gender equity issues in the next program phase.

The SSR proposes a range of strategic and operational enhancements designed to maximise the effectiveness and impact of a larger and more diverse program of awards.

Recommendations

Key recommendations arising from the findings of the Scoping Study Review are shown below, cross-referenced to relevant sections of the Report.

A. Strategic recommendations

(A) (i) Ministry capacity building priorities

That Ministries be encouraged to determine their own training needs and that the program no longer give any particular preference to civil servants in the selection process. **[Section 1.3.1]**

(A) (ii) Targeting Ministries

That the four Ministries currently targeted for PG scholarship awards in Australia (MRRD, MoE, MoPH, MAIL) continue to receive targeted support at least for several further intakes, and that two additional Ministries be included: MoF and MoM. **[Section 1.3.2]**

(A) (iii) Award levels

That awards in Australia be limited to Masters level studies but that should PhD awards be approved in exceptional cases, these only be made available to senior researchers. **[Section 1.4.1]**

(A) (iv) An 'Open' Undergraduate awards category at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities

That the next phase of the program include a new awards category covering scholarships for Undergraduate study on an 'Open' basis available to eligible applicants from the public, private and civil society sectors subject to a range of fundamental criteria. **[Section 1.4.2.1]**

That these awards be available at the Malaysian campuses of three Australian universities subject to eight specific recommendations detailed in Section 1.4.2.2. **[Section 1.4.2.2]**

(A) (v) Short Course Awards

That targeted SPDA-compliant Short Courses be included in the next phase of the Program. **[Section 1.4.3]**

(A) (vi) Gender equity

That a series of potential measures be considered in the next program phase designed to foster gender equity and to help increase the number of female candidates and awardees. **[Section 1.5.1 & Annex 9]**

(A) (vii) Disability

That apart from ensuring through various measures a disability-inclusive scholarships program consistent with Australian policy, the new program include an 'Access and Equity Fund' that may be accessed <u>by awardees</u> with specific accessibility issues which may impact on their ability to successfully complete their studies. **[Section 1.5.2]**

(A) (viii) Anti-corruption

That the program support good practice and model anti corruption by ensuring transparent application and selection processes including through an Independent Selection Committee directly managed by AusAID. **[Section 1.5.3]**

(A) (ix) Goal and objectives

That the goal and objectives of the next phase of the scholarships program be adjusted as shown in Section 2.1 to place less emphasis on institutional capacity building and strengthening, acknowledging that this would be both difficult to achieve and measure and is not viewed as an overriding priority by senior leaders in Afghanistan. **[Section 2.1]**

(A) (x) Delivery options

That the new program phase combine various training programs that offer the scope for linkages and economies of scale including a provision for a small 'Contingency Funding Mechanism' to manage supply-driven ad hoc activities. **[Section 2.2 & Annex 8]**

(A) (xi) Partnerships and donor coordination

That no attempt be made to seek formalised alignment or harmonisation arrangements with other scholarship donors but that provision be made in the design for joint arrangements with New Zealand in the selection of PG level candidates subject to New Zealand confirming its ability to participate. **[Section 2.3.1 & 2.3.2]**

(A) (xii) Working through government systems

That current scholarship governmental partnership arrangements be maintained, especially the roles of MFA and MoHE in the independent selection process. **[Section 2.3.3]**

B. Operational recommendations

(B) (i) Timeframe for program implementation

That the design cover a tender process for a 5-year program commencing with an initial three-year phase with implementation of the second two-year phase subject not only to satisfactory MC performance but also to a programming decision by AusAID to proceed with a second program phase. **[Section 3.1]**

(B) (ii) Transition strategies

That the transition strategies discussed in Section 3.2 designed to ensure a smooth handover to an incoming contractor be included in the design. **[Section 3.2]**

(B) (iii) Governance arrangements

That consideration be given to including a Senior Reference Group in the design as a key mechanism to ensure responsiveness to Afghan government requests and to reflect emerging foreign policy and whole-of-government priorities. **[Section 3.3]**

(B) (iv) Review mechanisms

That the design incorporate a review process after 2.5 years to determine whether to exercise an option for a further 2 years and that provision be made for a TAG. **[Section 3.4]**

(B) (v) Desired Applicant Profiles

That the new program incorporate 'Desired Applicant Profiles' (DAPs) for different target groups and awards. **[Section 3.8.3]**

(B) (vi) Selection

That an independent selection process continue but that the composition of the current Selection Committee be reviewed including the role of AusAID and the MoF and that multiple Committees be considered in the context of adjustments to numbers and types of awards. **[Section 3.8.4]**

(B) (vii) English language testing and training

That current part-time in-country English language modules not be continued in the next phase of the program for awardees with an IELTS score of 5.0 or higher and eligible for entry into in-Australia PCE courses. **[Section 3.8.6]**

(B) (viii) Placement and course advice

That current course advice and placement arrangements unique to the Afghanistan ADS program continue in the next phase of the program subject to enhancements and risk management approaches and that these be adequately resourced and included in the design for the next phase as discussed in Section 3.8.7 and Annex 5. **[Section 3.8.7 & Annex 5]**

(B) (ix) Enhanced pre-departure briefings

That the new program phase include extended (5 days full time) family-friendly pre-departure briefings that incorporate enhanced and extended cultural orientation modules combined with extracts from current 'English for Academic Purposes' modules together with guideline material issued by ASG and as detailed in Section 3.8.9. **[Section 3.8.9]**

(B) (x) Visas

That the new program phase include a process that involves regular dialogue between A-based AusAID staff in Kabul and in Islamabad, supported if necessary by AusAID and DIAC staff in Canberra, including face-to-face on at least an annual basis prior to each annual intake. The objective will be to improve dialogue, obtain a clearer understanding of the constraints faced by each agency in implementing government policy and to discuss measures to deal with such constraints. **[Section 3.8.8]**

(B (xi) On-award monitoring by MC staff

That on-award monitoring by the MC continue and be appropriately resourced in the next program phase but that it should be annual; conducted by Australia-based staff; include modified objectives; focus on particular student groups; include mechanisms covering a systematic approach to addressing recommendations including reporting to AusAID; and that it be subject to periodic review. **[3.8.10]**

(B (xii) Monitoring and evaluation strategies

That the program incorporate a simple but effective monitoring and evaluation strategy to confirm achievement of the proposed simplified objectives as well as key outputs along the lines illustrated in Annex 12.A. The strategy would not be based on reintegration plans but rely on Alumni Surveys supplemented as necessary by Case Studies. **[Section 3.8.5, 3.8.11 & Annex 12]**

1 Analysis

The Afghanistan-Australia Development Scholarships Program currently provides 25 Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) to four Afghan Ministries: the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). All of the scholars undertake Masters level studies in Australia. Additionally, Afghanistan receives a small number of Australian Leadership awards for study in Australia at Masters or PhD level.

This Scoping Study Report covers the outcome of a review of the current ADS program to identify lessons to inform the development of the next phase of the program. It also scopes options and provides recommendations for an expanded and more broadly based Australian Development Scholarships program for Afghanistan from 2012.

The Scoping Study Review (SSR) was conducted by a consultant with inputs from AusAID staff in Canberra and Kabul. Further details including agencies consulted are in *Annex 14*.

1.1 Country & sector context

1.1.1 Origin and relevance in the country context

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) was launched in June 2008 at the Afghanistan Support Conference in Paris. Australia supports the ANDS as a unified framework for international assistance. The ANDS notes that:

> *'Capacity – human and institutional – is a major constraint facing all aspects of the implementation of the ANDS. Low capacity leads to wastage, underutilisation of resources, inefficient and ineffective interventions, and suboptimal outcomes.* (Afghanistan National Development Strategy. 2008-2013)

> *'Participants welcomed the Government of Afghanistan's development agenda, which is focused on job creation and … the development of a skilled labour force…'* (Kabul Conference Communiqué July 2010

Capacity building at all levels is therefore clearly a high GoAf priority, and highly appropriate for funding by AusAID through various types of scholarships for study overseas.

The SSR found strong ongoing interest in the opportunities offered by Postgraduate studies in Australia and a recent Mid-Term review of the Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan (DAFA) found that the positive elements of ADS (and the Malaysia-Australia Education Project for Afghanistan (MAEPA)) have provided a foundation upon which to build a deeper partnership with GoAf.

1.1.2 Program scale up and complementary scholarship options

This Scoping Study addresses various types of scholarships all classified as *'Study and Professional Development Awards' (SPDAs)*. All such awards apply a consistent and recognised Australian standard of award provision which distinguishes them from other ad hoc capacity building programs. These types of awards are further discussed in *Annex 2*.

Ministries consulted by the SSR all expressed a keen interest in the continuation of the current *Australian Development Scholarships* program involving Postgraduate study in Australia.

There was also keen interest in targeted *Short Course Awards,* which are currently being piloted by AusAID in a number of countries. Finally, there was support for study awards at Undergraduate level at the Malaysian campuses of Australian tertiary institutions. *The SSR proposes that these additional SPDA mechanisms be included in the next phase of a scholarship program in the context of a decision to scale up the program.*

Carefully targeted Short Courses may address training needs that complement other AusAID initiatives. Courses at Australian campuses in Malaysia will allow AusAID to trial an Open Category of awards also available to applicants not in the government sector and offering a number of advantages not attached to PG study in Australia. Each mechanism is discussed in greater detail in *Section 1.4* below

Other training options include the continuation of the MAEPA training program in Malaysia potentially extended to other sectors including health as well as scholarships at Malaysian universities. These options are not covered by this Scoping Study.

1.2   Interaction with AusAID strategies and programs

Scholarships reflect the overall objectives of Australia's overseas aid program. Through scholarships Australia seeks to develop the capacity and leadership skills of awardees so that they can contribute to development in their home countries and build people to people linkages at the individual, institutional and country levels. A sectoral focus helps to facilitate synergies between the sectoral themes and pillars of the overall Afghanistan program.

AusAID's development assistance activities in Afghanistan are not currently covered by a *Country Program Strategy* but by an *Afghanistan Development Assistance Framework 2007-2010.* It provides a framework for decision-making from 2007 to 2010 on the Government's assistance to Afghanistan. A key objective is '… *to contribute to targeted capacity building in key education, health, agriculture and rural development institutions.'* Scholarships targeted to four key Ministries active in these sectors meet this objective.

The current program of scholarships in Afghanistan while not large relative to some other donors (*Annex 3*) has a very high profile in Afghanistan and provides high quality support mechanisms designed to ensure that scholars will succeed in their chosen fields of study and contribute to their country's development in their chosen fields of study on return.

There is currently no direct interaction with other AusAID programs in Afghanistan but a more diversified program of scholarships as proposed by the SSR will offer greater opportunities for scholarship initiatives to complement other AusAID-funded or supported activities.

In terms of Australia's capacity to assist, the Australian higher education sector has a strong commitment to internationalisation. Innovative programs designed to facilitate the academic and cultural transition of newly enrolled scholars are offered to ensure that the formal programs of study can be undertaken successfully. The quality of Australian courses is recognised as world-class.

1.3   Partner government discussions and Ministry targeting

The SSR met with Ministers and staff of each of the four Ministries currently receiving ADS scholarships. The ADS program has a high profile across Ministries and the SSR received only positive feedback about the value of the program. As noted above, all of the participating Ministries would like additional ADS awards and also supported a more diversified program

of scholarships that includes Short Course Awards and Undergraduate Third Country Awards.

1.3.1 Ministry capacity building priorities

The current program has developed good practice approaches to the targeting of a small number of Ministries. The process is complex and involves three separate meetings between DAFA staff and staff of each of the four Ministries as well as three separate meetings of an independent Selection Committee. The process is detailed in *Annex 4.*

While it is too early to judge what proportion of graduates will return to their Ministries it is important not to overstate the significance of institutional capacity building through individual scholarships. *By their nature scholarships only contribute skilled individuals to institutional strengthening, but cannot deliver integrated institutional strengthening approaches to any one Ministry.*

The recent MTR of DAFA found that at senior levels, reintegration of graduates into productive work anywhere within the Afghan economy is seen as a satisfactory outcome. Ministers again expressed these views to the SSR. At selection, each Ministry currently adopts a different approach. Some give considerable weight to a candidate's commitment to a particular Ministry while others only look for a commitment to *'the ongoing development of Afghanistan'.* The program has tended to give preference to civil servants on the assumption that they are more committed to their Ministry and more likely to return. Ministry views vary. Some favour this approach while others prefer to select contractor staff. The SSR was told by one Deputy Minister that contractor staff are actually more likely to return and have entered into an agreement to provide their services to the Ministry on return equal to half of the time spent overseas on sponsored training. Civil servants in the same Ministry (MRRD) have no obligation to return and are more likely to seek lucrative positions elsewhere including in the private sector. The situation is fluid and dynamic with constant movement between the public and private sectors.

The SSR therefore proposes that the program no longer give any particular preference to civil servants in the selection process. Since approaches in Ministries vary, they should be able to determine which category of employee to favour.

It should also not be necessary for a MC to help Ministries identify their capacity building/training needs. It is unrealistic to assume that a MC can do this effectively for a large Ministry and Ministries consulted by the SSR confirm that they are able to do this independently and have essentially done so in the past..

1.3.2 Targeting a limited number of Ministries

A case could be made for discontinuing support targeted to a small number of key Ministries and instead shifting to an approach where sector and sub-sector priority areas are specified that would inter alia cover many of the fields of study selected by the four Ministries. In other words, an 'Open' category for Postgraduate awards similar to that proposed for the in-Malaysia UG program. On balance, based on the relationships established with these Ministries through DAFA; their close knowledge of the scholarship cycle; their commitment to maintaining transparency and supporting the ongoing improvement of what is generally already a good practice application and selection process; and given that the core functions of the Ministries are broadly in line with the strategic pillars of AusAID's development assistance program to Afghanistan and GoAf developmental needs, *the SSR proposes ongoing targeted support to these Ministries for study in Australia at Masters level.*

However the new design, whether based on a 3 or 5 year program, will need to incorporate a review mechanism after around 2.5 years (*Section 3.4*). It will be important to task such a review with a careful examination of the ongoing need to target particular Ministries and the desirability of moving to an entirely sector and sub-sector-based approach. At that time data will be available on graduates who have or have not returned to their former Ministries. It will also be possible to make some early assessments of the effectiveness of the proposed 'Open' UG program in Malaysia.

The current approach detailed in *Annex 4*, while good practice, is complex and can only effectively support a limited number of Ministries. However, some modest expansion is feasible covering an additional two, or at most three, Ministries.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has for some time sought to be included. Its mandate covers areas that relate to AusAID's strategic program pillars, notably governance. MoF also plays a critical role in the implementation of post-Kabul Conference initiatives including the Civilian Technical Assistance Program (CTAP).

The Ministry of Mines (MoM) has also been identified as a potential participant in targeted sectoral areas. The Ministry has a new Business Plan and the Minister of Mines confirmed to the SSR his Ministry's keen interest in such support. The Minister provided clear priorities for Australian scholarship assistance: mining engineering; mining contracts law and governance; and natural resource economics. The MoF as the aid coordination agency strongly supported the inclusion of that Ministry. *The SSR proposes that favourable consideration be given to including both MoF and MoM as targeted Ministries to be allocated awards for PG study in Australia.*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), consulted by the SSR about the selection process in which it plays a key role, did not request scholarships for its own staff but suggested that the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) should also be targeted. Both Ministries play important roles in the program through their participation on the independent selection panel. It would be reasonable to assume that all Ministries in Afghanistan would benefit from scholarship support and for the reasons noted above *the SSR does not recommend adding even more Ministries to the targeted Masters program.* These Ministries may benefit from and participate in other proposed new program components, namely the 'Open' category UG program in Malaysia and targeted Short Courses. MFA expressed support for these types of programs.

1.3.3 *Regional targeting including Uruzgan*

Ministries are currently responsible for all advertising and publicity. This needs to be expanded and monitored to ensure that information is provided to staff in the provinces. Additionally it is proposed that in the new program the MC undertake some separate advertising in suitable media to supplement the efforts of each Ministry.

Preference is currently given to provincial candidates during the selection process but the program has found it difficult to identify an adequate number of suitable candidates. There have been no candidates from Uruzgan a particular priority area for AusAID. Discussions with students currently in Australia suggest that only one of the four targeted Ministries has given particular attention to advertising in the provinces. However all Ministries agree that this is an area where improvements are needed. Giving provincial candidates access to a proposed program of Ancillary Awards (*Section 1.5.1)* may also help.

More fundamentally, the proposed new types of Australian scholarships – UG awards at Australian university campuses in Malaysia and targeted Short Course Awards will provide mechanisms that may attract a greater range and number of provincial candidates for Australian scholarships and help address provincial targeting objectives. MAEPA-type programs conducted in Malaysia can also play an important role in supporting staff based in the provinces.

1.4   A more diversified awards program

1.4.1   Award levels

Study at PhD level, requested by the MoF could be considered in exceptional cases and is already available under the ALA program. The SSR notes AusAID policy that under ADS PhD awards are normally only available *'where the applicant occupies, or is expected to occupy a senior position requiring individual research or the supervision of other researchers.'* It is suggested that this requirement be strictly enforced should it be determined to allow PhD studies under the ADS program.

Experience has shown that scholarships in Australia are most effective at Masters level both on cost-effectiveness grounds and to match the priority needs of targeted Ministries. It also reduces the scope for upgrade demands. *It is proposed that Postgraduate awards continue to be provided in Australia.*

There is however a keen interest amongst Ministries in a more diversified program that also allows for some UG awards to be funded – but not at the expense of Masters awards since all Ministries consulted requested an increased number of Postgraduate study opportunities in Australia.

1.4.2   An 'Open' Awards Category

1.4.2.1   Undergraduate awards

It is proposed that the next phase of the program include a new awards category covering scholarships for Undergraduate study. *It is also proposed that these awards be available on an 'Open' basis to eligible applicants from the public, private and civil society sectors.*[1] Most other AusAID scholarship programs allow scholarship access to the private and civil society sectors. The ALA program already covers all sectors and other western donors such as the US and UK adopt a similar approach. It will help promote linkages not only as at present with government but also at commercial and civil society levels.

The SSR was told by Minsters and senior Ministry officials that there is constant movement of qualified staff between Ministries and the public and private sectors. This further strengthens the case for an 'Open' category of awards.

It will be essential to specify a range of eligibility criteria – if only to avoid the program being swamped with applications but also to ensure a degree of targeting that matches AusAID development assistance priorities in Afghanistan. Initial criteria will need to be specified in the design but the proposed Senior Reference Group (*Section 3.3)* will need to review the initial criteria based on the outcomes of the first intake proposed for 2013.

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[1] The July 2010 Kabul Conference Communiqué highlighted the importance of a strong private sector enabling environment.

Some of the criteria could cover the following:

- Courses of study to match sectoral priorities as far as practicable to be detailed in the design but also subject to annual review and adjustment.

- A fixed number of years work experience (say from 3 to 5 years) in the public, private or civil society sectors in an area related to the proposed course of study. This would help ensure that awardees are well placed to apply their new knowledge and skills to benefit their country on return, consistent with the proposed broad program objective. Applicants would not need to be employed when they apply but for those who are, the employer's endorsement and comments would be required. There would be no formal reintegration plans.

- An age limit (say 40 years), lower than that proposed for applicants for Masters study in Australia (50 years). In other words, the program could be seen as one that is available for a younger group of individuals who may later in their careers have the opportunity to upgrade their skills further through Postgraduate studies.

- Setting a minimum IELTS level higher than that set for the Masters program. UG awards cover a longer period and it would be preferable to minimise the need for extended PCE and Foundation Award study at the training institutions.

- Exclusions would need to be considered. For example, MC or Australian embassy employees could be declared ineligible. Also employees of multinational organisations.

Desired Applicant Profiles (DAPs) will be needed to ensure effective targeting. A sample DAP is in *Annex 10*.

1.4.2.2   *Study at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities*

As mentioned in *Section 1.1.2*, Ministries consulted by the SSR expressed support for study awards at Undergraduate level at the Malaysian campuses of Australian tertiary institutions.

The SSR assessed the capacity of each of the three Malaysian campuses (Monash, Curtin and Swinburne Universities) to provide such awards to Australian standards and concludes that an annual intake of say 15 awardees (5 at each of the 3 campuses) would be feasible and could be considered a reasonable package of awards to pilot the proposed Open Category of awards in a cost effective manner.

Annex 13 provides a comparison table that describes the Scoping Mission findings by institution and summarises the conclusions drawn.

There would be substantial cost savings (at least 2 scholarships could be funded at the cost of an equivalent scholarship taken in Australia – even if some semesters are taken in Australia).[2] 'Duty of care' requirements can be addressed and it should be easier to encourage female candidates to study in Malaysia. Degrees meet all Australian quality standards and are ultimately indistinguishable from those awarded in Australia. A sectoral approach is not feasible except in a limited range of fields. All of the institutions are prepared to develop appropriate management arrangements where these do not currently exist to meet AusAID requirements – all already manage some scholarships for donors. All of the institutions have PCE and Foundation courses that would allow Afghan students to undertake preparatory

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[2] It is assumed that Australian stipend rates would not apply (a stipend approaching half of the current ADS rate would probably be generous) except where semesters are taken in Australia.

studies leading to direct entry into UG programs. On-campus accommodation is readily available especially for female students. Semesters can be taken at the parent institution in Australia, for 'cultural' reasons and/or to broaden field of study options eg in mining.

Challenges will be how to assess Afghan qualifications to determine equivalence to institutional entry requirements although some principles that could apply have already been identified and are shown in *Annex 13.*

A key issue will be how to divide the number of places available between the three institutions. *Rather than leaving it to student choice it is recommended that an agreed number of students be allocated to each institution.* Since this will be a pilot program this will most effectively help to determine the ability of each institution to manage such a program effectively.

The Scoping Study findings support additional recommendations:

(i) *Restricting eligibility to candidates who can achieve an IELTS score of 5.5.* Two of the campuses in Malaysia specify this as the minimum entry level for admission to preparatory programs and an adequate number of quality applicants should be available given that the program will have a significantly expanded reach in Afghanistan.

(ii) *Ensuring access at each campus to a part-time AusAID Contact Officer-type position dedicated to AusAID students.* One campus (Monash) has recently created such a position for existing scholarship students but as contracts are negotiated with each institution the need for a management fee component to cover such arrangements would need to be explored.

(iii) *Funding an IAP-type course for Afghan students.* The institutions are prepared to cooperate and manage an IAP-type course jointly.

(iv) *Specifying very broad fields of study that match some of the key courses available but that in effect exclude certain courses such as medicine and pharmacy that are not traditionally funded by AusAID.* Some of AusAID's key sectoral priority areas are not covered (eg education and agriculture) but there are valuable courses available that would meet GoAf needs at country level. Applicants would need to specify how they would use their new skills and qualifications to benefit their country.

(v) *Limiting overall course length to 4 years including up to 12 months of preparatory course work.* This would preclude double majors and upgrades to Masters (most of which are by research only). For engineering courses which are 4 years, applicants would need to have an IELTS score of 6.5 and meet other requirements for direct entry to an UG course. Past experience with Afghan scholarships suggests that it will be essential to specify maximum periods of study and the exclusion of upgrades at the outset. This highlights the importance of unambiguous 'Desired Applicant Profiles'.

(vi) *Specifying at the beginning of each award, options for taking semesters in Australia and limiting these to 2 semesters where required for academic reasons (taking key subjects in the final year where not available in Malaysia) or to one semester where taken for 'cultural' or other reasons.* Also, these should not be seen as entitlements but should be subject to performance and other requirements already set by the institutions as having to be met by 'exchange' students.

(vii) *Where courses are offered that closely match AusAID sectoral priorities and stated GoAf priority needs, allocating a fixed number of awards to be taken at a campus that may uniquely offer such a course.* Mining is a new sectoral focus for the program and at the Curtin campus a science degree in geology could be of particular value to that sector especially when taken as two years in Malaysia concluding with a final year in Australia. Here for example, say 2 awards could be allocated for that course specifically. Such awards would be covered by a specific Desired Applicant Profile and advertised accordingly.

(viii) *Should an early start be considered important, commencing preparatory work on the proposed program in 2011 and as necessary tasking the current DAFA MC to undertake such work to ensure that an initial cohort of students may start their courses in Malaysia in 2013.* For example, unless detailed administrative arrangements are agreed with each campus, contracts negotiated etc (which will require a level of commitment about numbers) before a new MC is selected early in 2012, it may not be possible to undertake this work and to select a student cohort for entry either into UG courses or preparatory courses starting January/February 2013.

1.4.3   Short Course Awards

These cover opportunities for formal study or training, generally for periods ranging from 6 to 12 weeks and delivered by an approved Australian higher education provider or an Australian Registered Training Organisation. This will at least result in either a formal transcript of a complete unit (or subject) offered within a course under the Australian Qualifications Framework or a formal Statement of Attainment in relation to a skill or competency covered by Australian nationally-registered Vocational Education or Training material. These types of SPDA-compliant awards are further discussed in *Annex 2* with indicative costings in *Annex 11*.

Ministries consulted by the SSR all expressed strong interest in these types of awards. They are costly and to maximise impact will need to be carefully targeted to participants likely to derive real benefits and able to apply their learnings in the workplace as soon as they return.

Examples of potentially effective courses could include a course targeted to employees of the Ministry of Mines provided by Australian mining institutes. This was requested by the Minister and reflects a sound understanding of Australia's comparative advantage in particular skill areas.[3] An example of a course that might have limited impact (and impact could not be realistically monitored) would be a general management course targeted to mid-level civil servants in a range of Ministries.

The SSR proposes that targeted SPDA-compliant Short Courses be included in the next phase of the Program.

1.5   Initial observations around cross-cutting themes

The design will need to address in detail a range of issues including child protection, disability, environment and anti-corruption. Legislative and cross-cutting AusAID policy requirements common to all AusAID programs will need to be described highlighting MC

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[3] ASG has developed a panel of short course providers. Mining is not currently covered but if there is demand it should be possible to broaden the range of contracted providers. Alternatively, the MC could undertake a separate tender process.

responsibilities and good practice approaches. This Section provides observations about approaches in several key areas where lessons learned from implementing scholarship programs in Afghanistan and elsewhere suggest some initiatives that could be pursued in a new phase of the scholarships program to improve outcomes.

As far as practical, the program would be expected to incorporate a principle of equity in access to the award opportunities offered by the program. Equity does not mean treating everyone equally. The principle of equity seeks to ensure that all desired applicants (including women and persons living with disabilities) are offered equivalent opportunities to win awards. This means actively assisting historically disadvantaged groups to compete with the already privileged. Hence, assistance would need to be tailored to the specific needs of particular applicants to ensure that inappropriate historical or social privileges are overcome. This does not mean that sub-standard applicants would ever be 'allowed through' selection processes. Only those applicants who meet all necessary requirements (once assistance has been applied) would be offered full awards.

The Afghan government is committed to reverse the historical disadvantage of women in Afghan society and the ANDS provides a framework for mainstreaming gender interventions across all sectors to address women's position in society, their socio-economic condition, and access to development opportunities.

1.5.1   Gender

Consistent with the principles of gender equity noted above, in a situation where in the last three intakes 14% of awardees were women, the new program would seek to actively assist historically or socially disadvantaged women to compete with privileged males with resource application tailored to the specific gender-related needs of applicants.

There is currently a shortage of female candidates and those who do apply often do not have the minimum IELTS entry requirement for PCE training in Australia which is limited to 12 months. Potentially eligible female candidates may not apply for cultural and other reasons. *The SSR has identified a series of potential measures that could be considered and that are designed to foster gender equity and to help increase the number of female candidates and awardees.* These measures, to be developed in more detail during the design process are summarised in *Annex 9.* They include 'Ancillary Awards'; improved advertising; exploring the use 'Student Guardian Visas'; Ministry workshops; special accommodation arrangements; and establishment of an Access and Equity Fund.

1.5.2   Disability

Australia's strategy *Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009-*2014 commits Australia to ensuring that people with disability are included in and benefit from Australia's international development assistance which includes Australia's scholarships programs.

The program design will need to specify that the program is accessible to women and men with disability, that partner institutions are encouraged to abide by their obligations to facilitate the inclusion of awardees with disabilities, and that adequate and appropriate information is disseminated to people with disability. Award application processes will need to be adapted to ensure accessibility. For example assistance will as far as practicable need to be provided in the preparation of applications and in accessible formats if requested. Travel information and potential travel assistance will need to be covered in guidelines and promotional material and covered in the advertising process.

While studying in Australia, AusAID and the Australian institution will need to ensure 'reasonable' support is offered to an awardee in line with AusAID's policy on reasonable adjustments for awardees with disability.

In addition to the services offered by institutions in Australia, the SSR proposes that the new program include an 'Access and Equity Fund' that may be accessed <u>by awardees</u> with specific accessibility issues which may impact on their ability to successfully complete their study. The Fund, to be further detailed in the design, would address travel and communication issues as well as appropriate services and/or equipment not available through the awardee's OSHC or course provider, but fundamentally required to ensure the academic success of the awardee. AusAID is currently developing a policy and guidance of reasonable adjustments in AusAID's scholarships program. The Fund would be guided by this new policy.

1.5.3   Anti-corruption

The program design will need to provide that the new program will support good practice and model anti-corruption. To facilitate this, candidates would need to be selected from targeted agencies and sectors with clearly developed selection criteria including Desired Applicant Profiles. While targeted agencies would have a role in commenting on preferred candidates, applications would be submitted direct to AusAID's MC and selection would be by an Independent Selection Committee directly managed by AusAID.

1.6   Key lessons learned

Key lessons that will inform the development of the next phase of the scholarships program are summarised below. All of these lessons have been addressed in this Report, to be further developed in the full design. Referenced against each point below is a brief comment highlighting how and where the lesson has been addressed in the current Report.

- Applicants and awardees require high levels of support during all phases of the ADS management cycle particularly in course selection
  - *current informal arrangements that have been effective should continue subject to further enhancements (Section 3.8.7)*

- Pre-departure briefings for awardees are of critical importance and require continuous improvement based on feedback from scholars on award
  - *substantial enhancements of current arrangements are proposed (Section 3.8.9)*

- Post-award monitoring and evaluation arrangements covering Ministry employees and associated tools such as reintegration plans need to realistically reflect the structure of the Afghan civil service particularly the likelihood or otherwise that employees will return to their former Ministries
  - *reintegration plans are not proposed for the next program phase and M&E arrangements are to be simplified (Sections 3.8.5 & 3.8.11)*

- Program objectives and desired outcomes need to be realistic and achievable and should aim for modest success not spectacular failure – having graduates return to their home country and able to use their new skills and knowledge productively may be a modest outcome but should be acknowledged in the Afghanistan context as a significant achievement
  - *proposed new goal and objectives reflect this approach (Section 2.1)*

- The program has achieved an effective and transparent application, selection and placement process but this is necessarily resource intensive and could not realistically be applied to a significantly larger number of Ministries
  - *only two additional Ministries are proposed for inclusion in the PG Masters program (Section 1.3.2)*

- More attention needs to be given to ensuring that scholarship opportunities are known to potential female and provincial candidates
  - *MC advertising to supplement Ministry efforts (Sections 1.3.3 & 1.5.1)*

- Successful candidates for study in Australia at Postgraduate level will continue to need ongoing substantial English language and academic preparation support in order to meet the entry requirements of Australian tertiary institutions but such support needs to be carefully targeted with clear objectives and outcomes
  - *current in-country ELT to be radically altered and targeted to female and provincial candidates with improved IELTs scores a key objective but in-Australia PCE to continue (Section 3.8.6)*

- Sending students to Australia for up to four years to study at Undergraduate degree, diploma or certificate level has not been a great success and alternative arrangements for study at Undergraduate level should be actively explored
  - *retain PG awards for Australia only with UG awards proposed for study at Australian universities in Malaysia (Section 1.4.2.2)*

- Active monitoring of scholars on award in Australia by MC staff has been effective in helping to identify problems early and is supported by institutional staff
  - *Proposed continuation of these arrangements but streamlined to focus on particular cohorts and covered by staff based in Australia (Section 3.8.10).*

Annex 1 provides additional key lessons learned from other scholarship programs that are relevant for the design of a future scholarships program for Afghanistan. It includes some lessons that should influence the design of a more diverse program including for example Short Course Awards. It does not at this stage include lessons derived from Trilateral Training activities, for example MAEPA, should it be decided to incorporate MAEPA-type programs in a broader 'Training Program'.

2   Program Description

2.1   Goal, objectives and key outcomes

The SSR proposes that the goal and objectives of the next phase of the scholarships program be adjusted to place less emphasis on institutional capacity building and strengthening, acknowledging that this would be both difficult to achieve and measure and is not viewed as an overriding priority by senior leaders in Afghanistan.

A proposed revised goal and objectives for the next phase of the scholarships program are:

Program Goal

A Scholarships Program contributing to the achievement of sustainable development   in Afghanistan.

Program objectives

To meet the goal the program will provide nationals of Afghanistan with access to educational opportunities which better equip them to lead or support achievement of the following objectives:

Objective 1

Australia awards alumni applying their new knowledge and skills in areas related to their fields of study in Afghanistan.

Objective 2

Recognition of Australia as an active partner in the economic and social development of Afghanistan.

Evidence covering the key outcomes (defined as representing 'achievement of objectives') will be gathered by the program's M&E Framework as shown in *Annex 12*.

2.2   Potential delivery options and operational management models

The DAFA MTR Report discusses overall management options for future training programs and in presenting two options for consideration details the advantages and disadvantages of each and describes some of the potential design risks.

The two options proposed for consideration by the MTR and still considered relevant are:

Option 1:   A 'Training Program' with two distinct components: (i) 'Scholarships' (broadly defined[4]) and (ii) 'Trilateral Train-the-Trainer Initiatives' (MAEPA and clones of MAEPA extended to other sectors and potentially other partner countries). There would be one design, tender process and contract.

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[4] Also including scholarships covering UG study at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities and targeted short courses.

Option 2: Firstly a 'Scholarships program' covered by a stand-alone program design, tender process and contract. Secondly a 'Trilateral Training Program' also covered by a separate design, tender process and contract.

Given issues raised during this Scoping Study and the outcomes of deliberations in Malaysia about the future of MAEPA and related training programs, *the SSR now proposes adoption of an option that combines the various training programs and that offers the scope for linkages and economies of scale.* Under both options provision could be made for the inclusion of a small contingency funding mechanism to manage supply-driven ad hoc activities.

An extract from the MTR Report that addresses the advantages and disadvantages of each approach and discusses linkages as well as potential design risks is included in *Annex 8* together with SSR comments that reflect the findings of this Scoping Study Review.

2.3 Potential partnerships

2.3.1 Co-ordination with other donors

Donors consulted by the design team freely shared information about their scholarship programs. There was no interest in any formalised alignment or harmonisation approaches. Each donor has different objectives, priorities and selection processes and there is inevitably a degree of competition. Donors generally agreed that periodic meetings to share lessons learned would be useful. *Annex 3* describes the practices of donors consulted by the SSR and provides statistics about scholarship numbers.

2.3.2 Co-operation with New Zealand

The SSR discussed with the NZAID representative stationed in Afghanistan, New Zealand's interest in participating in the Australian selection process with a view to taking four suitable applicants from that process for Postgraduate awards at New Zealand universities, primarily in agriculture but with a secondary interest in education and health. There is an ongoing strong interest in such an arrangement, but the approach is currently stalled because NZ has signed a UNHCR Convention that would not allow it to ask Afghan graduates to leave NZ and return to Afghanistan. Discussions are ongoing between the NZ MoFA, NZAID and the NZ Department of Immigration to find a way around this problem.

The SSR has assessed the detailed arrangements envisaged by NZ in terms of application, selection and processing and concludes that it would be feasible to incorporate such a joint arrangement in the design for the new scholarships program. It was also clarified that a reference to the 'justice' sector in previous communications with NZAID should be ignored since any training support in this sector would be covered through Short Courses that would be organised independently by NZAID. It was further clarified that once applicants for PG awards have been selected, NZAID would negotiate with universities in NZ to arrange placements. NZ would be interested in participating in any pre-course in-country training activities for its candidates eg ELT. Finally, NZ has recently decided to no longer pay special allowances to students bringing their families, in line with Australian practice.

2.3.3 Working through government systems and in-country stakeholders

Scholarship donors are expected to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of scholarship numbers annually and that Ministry in turn notifies the MoHE and MoE. These Ministries are members of a *National Scholarships Council* which in turn has a *National Scholarships*

Committee that seeks to play a role in selecting and nominating candidates to donors – whether public or private sector. It is understood that only India works through this Committee process. MFA commended to the SSR Australia's independent selection process where both the MoHE and MFA are members of an independent Selection Committee that makes recommendations about the final selection of candidates for Australian awards. MFA did not propose that AusAID should work through the National Scholarships Committee but mentioned that Cabinet was currently reviewing scholarship coordination mechanisms. MFA also indicated that if Australia's scholarship numbers were to increase then it would like to play a role in proposing additional targeted Ministries which would include the MoHE.

MoF told the MTR team that ADS cuts across Ministries and that it would be appropriate to continue to administer scholarships through a parallel mechanism at a time when other forms of aid such as technical assistance should be administered through national budget mechanisms such as the Civilian Technical Assistance Programme (CTAP).

The July 2010 Kabul Conference Communiqué while emphasising the need for donors to transfer funds to the GoAf, highlighted the ongoing importance of off-budget development assistance that should also increasingly align with the prioritized Afghan National Development Strategy: '*The Government of Afghanistan recognizes the importance of established and successful bilateral development programmes and projects, which are in line with the Afghan development priorities and that fulfil the criteria for effective off-budget development finance and form crucial elements to meet Afghanistan's reconstruction and development needs*'.

AusAID scholarship programs meet these requirements and *the SSR does not propose any changes to current scholarship funding and partnership arrangements while noting the importance of maintaining the roles of MFA and MoHE in the independent selection process.*

3 Design, implementation and resourcing

Described below are the main factors affecting how the proposed program may be designed and potentially delivered.

3.1 Timeframe for program implementation

AusAID envisages a three-year program commitment commencing from March 2012. On that basis the design could cover a three-year period which would imply that should it be decided later to extend the program a new design and tender process would probably be required. *An alternative approach, proposed by the SSR, is a tender process for a 5-year program commencing with an initial three-year phase with implementation of the second two-year phase subject not only to satisfactory MC performance but also a programming decision by AusAID, at its absolute discretion, to proceed or not proceed with a second two-year program phase.* The advantage of this approach would be to encourage a wider range of potential bidders interested in a more substantial program and secondly to obviate the need for a new design and tender process should it be decided to continue the program after three years.

3.2 Transition strategies

Management of ADS is a continuous process with fixed deadlines that requires a smooth handover to an incoming contractor following an international tender process. *Ideally, there should be a transition phase between the in-coming and out-going MC to ensure a smooth transition process.* Options that could be explored in the design include:

- Enabling through a Deed of Novation, the transfer of any key staff contract from the outgoing to the incoming MC. The incumbent of the position would work for the new MC for a limited period when the MC would exercise an option to either extend the appointment or find a replacement.

- Tasking the current MC to develop an Exit Strategy.

- Ensuring that the current MC finalises a comprehensive Afghanistan ADS Procedures Manual that may be handed to an incoming MC. No such manual exists at present but it is noted for completion this year in the MC's current Implementation Plan.

- Allowing for a handover period (say two weeks) where key MC staff work with the current Contractor to ensure smooth handover arrangements.

- Ensuring a period of knowledge transfer to the new Contractor involving AusAID staff in Kabul and Canberra and key staff from the current Contractor. This knowledge transfer would not cover basic management systems, process mapping of the scholarship cycle or the required levels of service delivery: the MC would have been required to demonstrate these attributes as part of the tender. There would be a focus on training in the use of OASIS and in confidentiality and security arrangements; key contacts; and visa processing related issues including the respective responsibilities of DIAC, AusAID and the MC. It would not at any time be AusAID's responsibility to provide any ongoing training.

These options are not mutually exclusive and all or most may be appropriate.

It may also be appropriate to task the current MC to undertake preparatory work for new initiatives to ensure an early start. This could cover, for example, the proposed UG awards program to be offered at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities *(Section 1.4.2.2).*

3.3 Governance arrangements

The complexities of the new Program will determine the nature of possible governance arrangements. *Potentially a Senior Reference Group would provide a key mechanism to ensure responsiveness to Afghan government requests and to reflect emerging foreign policy and whole-of-government priorities.* Issues for review could include the targeting of different types of awards; sectoral adjustments; and the review of program outcomes and achievements including those relating to recognition of the Australian Government as an active partner in Afghan development. Particular attention would need to be given to issues such as target groups and adjustments to the sectoral focus of the program to ensure emerging areas of demand (from partner government or Australian policy perspectives) are able to be addressed. The Group would not be involved in operational matters. Membership of the Group led by AusAID could include for WoG perspectives a representative of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and as the GoAf aid coordination agency, a representative of the GoAf MoF. The design would specify roles and responsibilities.

3.4   Review mechanisms

The three-year duration of the Program does not warrant a dedicated Mid-Term Review embedded in the program design. However, there may be a need to review progress after 3 years and the SSR proposes (*Section 3.1* above) that the tender process and program design be based on a 5-year program option with a 3-year program commitment. *Should this proposal be accepted, a review will be needed after 2.5 years to inform a decision on whether to activate an option to extend the program for a further 2 years.* Alternatively, with a program design and tender process for a 3-year program, AusAID may again need to scope and design a new scholarships program as early as 2 or 2.5 years after program commencement.

It is proposed that consideration be given to a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) mechanism used by other programs that have substantial programs and complex targeting arrangements. While the Afghanistan program may not have large numbers of awards it may have a wider range of awards and training programs than any other current AusAID program of this kind and would certainly be complex. *The SSR therefore proposes that serious consideration be given to including a TAG mechanism in the design.*

3.5   Design process

DAFA ends February 2012 and AusAID will launch a design and tender process in 2011 to select a new contractor.

A draft Scoping Study Report was submitted to AusAID on 29 November 2010. This was followed by a quick assessment of Australian University campuses in Malaysia and their capacity to manage AusAID-funded scholarships for Afghan students. This final Scoping Study Report incorporates the findings from that assessment.

Other training options include the continuation of the MAEPA tripartite master teacher training program in Malaysia potentially extended to other sectors including health as well as scholarships at Malaysian institutions. These initiatives are not covered by this SSR and are being scoped separately.

All of these studies will inform the design process due to commence in January 2011.

3.6   Funding envelope

Some initial comment on budgetary issues and on the longer term cost implications of an expanded scholarships program are in *Annex 11*. The design will need to include full costings where these will be the responsibility of a Managing Contractor.

3.7   Critical risks and risk management strategies

There are risks in all aspects of the scholarship implementation cycle. Some of these risks are inherent in all scholarship programs and others are unique to the Afghanistan scholarships program. The most significant implementation risks with brief comment about mitigation steps are in *Annex 7. Risks discussed include failure to meet GoAf needs; low numbers of quality applications; visa processing capacity problems; difficulties achieving transparency and equity objectives; nepotism in targeting public sector awards; inability to obtain PG award offers; graduates failing to return; returning graduates unable to apply their new skills.* The design document will need to include a full Risk Matrix that describes the potential impact of each risk, rates each risk, indicates how it has been addressed in the design and describes the actions to be taken if the risk happens.

There was some discussion of potential design risks associated with basic management and design options in the recent DAFA MTR. These risks have been reproduced in *Annex 7* with annotations reflecting the more recent SSR findings.

Annex 12 provides an indicative M&E Framework for the ADS program which also includes some preliminary discussion of risks and their treatment for each program objective and program output.

3.8   Other significant implementation issues

3.8.1   Introduction

Both the ADS and ALA program cycles are described in detailed Manuals and related Guidelines issued by AusAID's Scholarships Group. The program design will describe each element of these program cycles in some detail, cross-referenced to Manuals and Guidelines and including a comprehensive Roles and Responsibilities Matrix; Implementation Schedule; Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; Risk Matrix; and Scope of Services for the Managing Contractor.

This Section does not canvass all elements of the program cycle but addresses issues relating primarily to the ADS program where departures from standard approaches are proposed to address issues and complexities unique in the Afghan context. Some of these add new elements to the standard program cycle while others involve some simplification of processes adopted elsewhere but not considered appropriate for the next program phase. It also picks up all of the issues highlighted in the Scoping Study ToRs where these have not been addressed elsewhere in this Report. Implementation issues relating to the new UG program in Malaysia are summarised in *Section 1.4.2.2* and described in detail in *Annex 13*.

3.8.2   Current program cycle

As already noted briefly above, the program has developed an approach that is relatively complex involving for each of the four targeted Ministries a series of meetings between MC and Ministry staff. These cover firstly, an initial briefing on the year's intake (including a briefing for MOF and MoHE reflecting their co-ordination responsibilities); secondly, meetings to help each Ministry identify capacity gaps; thirdly, preliminary short listing meetings covering the applications received by the MC who sends copies to each Ministry; and fourthly, a series of final short listing meetings. This is followed by three meetings of the Independent Selection Committee. Details are in *Annex 4*.

Candidates selected receive course advice and other forms of assistance standard for ADS programs. Approved candidates with an IELTS score between 5 and 6.5 participate in part-time ELT of up to 20 weeks that includes element of academic and cultural preparation as well as IELTS preparation. All candidates participate in a 1-day pre-departure briefing session.

These arrangements were strongly supported by all of the Ministries consulted. The SSR concludes that the process is fundamentally sound. While complex and protracted it meets transparency objectives, has yielded the required number of candidates from each Ministry, responds to each Ministry's priority training needs and has addressed (albeit with limited success) issues such as gender balance and access for provincial candidates. Elements of the process are considered good practice. However, as already noted, continuation of these arrangements would not be feasible should the number of targeted Ministries expand beyond two or at most three additional Ministries.

While the process is fundamentally sound, there is room for significant improvement in a number of key areas. The enhancements proposed are described below.

3.8.3   Desired Applicant Profiles

By clearly defining *'Desired Applicant Profiles'(DAPs)* for different awards, and by separately targeting these profiles in promotional, selection and support activities, a program may capture both efficiency and effectiveness gains. It is proposed that DAPs be developed for the new Program. *Annex 10* provides a sample DAP covering PG awards for targeted Ministries to be taken in Australia. Also included is a second DAP covering UG awards in Malaysia reflecting the outcomes of scoping work in Malaysia and assuming acceptance of recommendations detailed in *Section 1.4.2.2.* DAPs will need to be reviewed annually by the MC working closely with AusAID to ensure that desired targeting approaches are reflected appropriately.

3.8.4   Selection

Shortlisted candidates are interviewed by an independent Selection Committee comprising representatives of MoF, MoHE and MFA together with a DAFA staff member representing AusAID. The Committee recommends the targeted number of candidates including reserves to AusAID. The selection process meets transparency objectives and was commended by all of the Ministries and by students interviewed by the SSR.

It will be important to maintain an independent selection process along these lines in the next phase of the program but adjustments will be needed. MoF will be a beneficiary and should it continue to serve on the Panel its independence may be called into question. It will also be important for AusAID to be directly involved. This was not feasible when AusAID had no in-country representation. If necessary, AusAID staff from Canberra could join the panel. The MC should provide secretarial support. As discussed in *Section 3.8.7* below, a specialist course adviser could participate in the final selection process either as a member of the Selection Committee or in an advisory capacity. As the program expands and other types of scholarships are added, one or more additional Committees may be needed to handle a greater volume and diversity of applications. The design will need to describe these arrangements.

3.8.5   Reintegration plans

Reintegration Plans link current employment, the planned course of study and ongoing employment on return to the graduate's home country. They promote effectiveness by placing the applicant's career and academic aspirations in the context of the human resource development priorities of their employing organisation. Monitoring and evaluation strategies that have been developed by DAFA rely significantly on reintegration plans. However these are problematic in the Afghan context and are unlikely to meet stated objectives. Positions in Ministries are filled after 12 months; most awardees are contractor staff who may have no specific position to return to and there is constant movement of staff between Ministries and the public and private sectors. Supervisors have found it difficult to sign reintegration plans that commit a Ministry to the reintegration of alumni whose positions will not be vacant when they return.

Reintegration plans are not therefore considered appropriate for the Afghanistan program. The SSR has instead proposed simplified and realistic program objectives (*Section 2.1*) and an 'Alumni Survey' (*Section 3.8.11*). The ASG M&E Guidelines concede that such a monitoring tool may be appropriate in situations where reintegration plans are not expected to work.

However, given that Ministries would in principle like to be able to offer employment to graduates on return, the proposed selection process would continue to incorporate a requirement that employers confirm in the application form the importance of the field of study chosen by each applicant.

Applicants will in the next program phase be required to explain in their application why they want to undertake a particular course of study and how they expect to apply their new knowledge and skills on return either in the targeted Ministry or in Afghanistan more broadly. The employer will need to confirm the importance to the agency or to the country of the course of study proposed by the applicant. This approach does capture some of the benefits expected from the use of reintegration plans.

3.8.6   *English Language testing and training*

The MC has arranged in-country part-time English language training for students selected for placement. There are three modules: *English Language proficiency; English for Academic purposes;* and *IELTS preparation.* Awardees are divided into three groups based on their IELTS scores and take all or some of these modules part-time over a 20 week period covering a total teaching time ranging from 120 to 240 hours. There is no IELTS testing upon completion of this training. Since the last intake, all participants have had an IELTS score of at least 5 and qualify for entry into courses in Australia including where necessary up to 12 months of PCE at their host institution. These PCE courses have high levels of academic preparation and some universities do not subject participants to further IELTS testing before they enter their Master course. However they must achieve other performance targets.

The in-country courses have at times been poorly attended and aspects of the course work were criticised by students interviewed in Australia as part of this Review. In 2009 but not in 2010, the ELT course provider also delivered a four-hour *Cultural Orientation Training Module.* Students interviewed in Australia found this type of training particularly valuable although they criticised the module used. For ELT there is clearly a significant degree of duplication given the commonalities between the in-country and the in-Australia PCE. For some students the IELTS preparation module is entirely unnecessary since even with a low IELTS score they may not have to face another IELTS test.

The SSR proposes that these part-time in-country English language modules not be continued in the next phase of the program for awardees with an IELTS score of 5.0 and eligible for entry into in-Australia PCE courses. The SSR also proposes that the Cultural Orientation Module be enhanced and extended in the new program. This is further discussed in *Section 3.8.9* below. Full-time in-country English Language Training for female and provincial candidates with IELTS scores of 4.5 and possibly 4.0 is discussed in *Section 1.5.1* and *Annex 9.*

Current EL testing arrangements, especially the preliminary EL testing which is a key feature of the short listing process should continue. IELTS testing is an unavoidable program feature and no particular problems were identified by the SSR. The British Council of Afghanistan provides these tests on a regular basis in Kabul. TOEFL tests are also available in Kabul but are not accepted by DIAC for Afghan student visas. They are accepted by the Malaysian campuses of Australian institutions.

3.8.7   *Course advice and placement in Australian universities*

The current program has found it necessary to engage in extensive informal negotiations with university staff about placement given some of the challenges in having universities assess

and accept applicants' prior qualifications. The process that is used by DAFA is detailed in *Annex 5.A.* It is understood that this process was initiated during an earlier phase of DAFA by the previous MC but it has been further refined by the current MC. *The process has not until now been documented in detail, highlighting again the urgent need for an ADS Afghanistan Procedures Manual.*

The SSR draws lessons and conclusions from the current process. These are detailed in *Annex 5.B.* Key conclusions are that the process is not fully consistent with generic ADS guidelines but that if the guidelines had been strictly applied as many as 15 of 25 ADS candidates might not have been successfully placed. *While the SSR supports continuation of the current approach[5] in the next program phase there are risks.* A key risk relates to the MC exercising undue influence regarding choice of institution. *Annex 5.B* describes how these risks can be managed, involving well documented and transparent processes; adequate resourcing of specialist course advice; and MC annual reporting to AusAID on the application of documented processes.

3.8.8   Visa issues

The Visa application process in Afghanistan is wholly managed by staff of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) located at the High Commission in Islamabad. Despite the use of extended ADS cycle timelines, visa issue delays have had a significant negative impact on the effective management of the program – resulting in missed opportunities to participate in orientation and IAPs, unplanned second semester intakes or awardees from one year's intake still waiting for a visa and required to join the following year's intake. Visas have not been formally 'refused' on health or security grounds but there have been processing delays (up to nine months), documents have been lost and there has been a general lack of responsiveness to both DAFA and AusAID Kabul communications.

Concerns about these and related issues were raised with the SSR at Deputy Minister level. *The SSR proposes a process to improve communication that involves regular dialogue between A-based staff in Kabul and in Islamabad supported if necessary by AusAID and DIAC staff in Canberra including face-to-face on at least an annual basis prior to each annual intake. The objective will be through improved dialogue, to obtain a clearer understanding of the constraints faced by each agency in implementing government policy and to discuss measures to deal with such constraints.* This includes steps to be taken by the MC in the next phase to ensure that documents submitted meet the quality requirements specified by DIAC. It will therefore be important that a new MC in the next phase of the program have early discussions with DIAC staff to help build effective working relationships. Consideration could also be given to inviting DIAC staff to a briefing session of ADS awardees to help explain visa processing requirements. It will also be necessary to explore arrangements with DIAC for the issue of visas to Afghan students at Australian campuses in Malaysia where these students will undertake some studies at the Australian parent institutions. (*Annex 13*).

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[5] The SSR also concludes that similar approaches will be needed for the proposed UG program at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities given that they adopt placement standards and arrangements similar to those of their parent institutions.

3.8.9   Enhanced pre-departure briefings

Awardees currently participate in a pre-departure briefing session of one day's duration. Discussions with students currently in Australia suggest that the content and scope of the pre-departure briefing session needs to be enhanced. For example, more information is required about living conditions in Australia including accommodation. *In the next phase of the program the MC will be expected to ensure that the pre-departure sessions are fully compliant with the provisions of Section 3.1.6 of the ADS Handbook.* ASG has produced a Power Point presentation with detailed accompanying Notes to help Posts conduct quality pre-departure briefings.[6]

A Pre-Departure DVD and Guidebook is now available for Students to assist them in preparing for their arrival, living and studying experiences in Australia and the Australian institution must provide each Student with an Institution Information Kit. *The MC will be required to ensure that every student has access to this material, preferably prior to the pre-departure briefing session. Family-friendly arrangements will need to apply at pre-departure briefing events to make it easier for women to participate in relevant modules. A fundamental requirement will be to involve alumni in the pre-departure briefings.* This will be easier to arrange from 2012 as more alumni return to Afghanistan.

As discussed in *Section 3.8.6* above, the current part-time pre-departure ELT programs provided to awardees is not considered effective. In 2009 the program included a Cultural Orientation Training Module (limited to 4 hours) which covered the following:

- To familiarise awardees with stages of adjustment in cultural transition and to identify strategies, resources and support networks.

- To provide a cultural orientation to Australian society, cultural values and lifestyles.

- To expose awardees to features of Australian spoken English and everyday speech.

- To provide an overview to Australian higher education environments.

This module was not repeated in 2010 and feedback from students in Australia suggests that more of this type of training would be beneficial. *It is proposed that in the new program phase, the MC be required to arrange a 3-day course that includes enhanced and extended versions of the Cultural Orientation module supplemented by other material extracted from the extended 'English for Academic Purposes' training module covering issues such as academic protocols; expectations and success factors; essay writing; research techniques and addressing plagiarism.* [7] *The 3-day course would precede the extended 2 day Pre-departure briefing and would be presented as a 5 day enhanced Pre-departure Session compulsory for all awardees.* All would benefit including those who proceed directly into a Masters course preceded only by the IAP and those receiving up to 12 months of PCE in Australia or Malaysia. The latter will be exposed to further extensive English for Academic Purposes training during their PCE, but the 3-day module should enable them to integrate more effectively into their PCE course. The SSR was able to confirm that there are

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[6] Special briefing sessions will be needed for students expected to travel to Malaysia to study at UG level at the campuses of Australian universities. The design will need to describe in detail the types of sessions that may be shared by all awardees and those only suitable for those travelling to Australia and for those travelling to Malaysia.

[7] The 3-day session should be equally suitable for students travelling to Malaysia to study in Australian campuses although some additional material may need to be included either here or in the 2 day pre-departure briefing. Total numbers and related logistics may however preclude joint sessions

institutions in Kabul able and willing to provide this type of training (eg the American University and Silk Road Solutions, the current ELT provider.)

3.8.10   On-award monitoring by MC staff

MC ADS staff based in Kabul (supported by an ADS monitor based in Melbourne) undertake two monitoring visits annually (June and September this year). These monitoring visits include discussions with University staff and individual interviews of ADS students. The most recent visit covered 13 current host universities and 2 universities expected to host students from the 2011. All 34 ADS students currently in Australia were interviewed. (*Annex 6.A* shows current student locations). At the universities, interviews covered staff directly responsible for international and AusAID sponsored students, admissions and administrative staff, welfare monitors, academics and relevant faculty representatives. The stated objectives of these visits are to monitor the academic and social progress of mobilised ADS awardees; monitor the institutional and academic support provided by universities; identify 'at risk' awardees, as well as current and emerging program issues; identify lessons learned to apply to the management of current and future cohorts; assess universities' suitability for future ADS cohorts; and make recommendations for the management of issues and the improvement of the ADS program.

University staff interviewed by the SSR supported the monitoring visits. Despite additional workloads in helping to organise such visits including student interviews they saw benefits and felt that Afghan students benefited from the additional support provided.[8]

The SSR has reviewed the reports produced and finds that they are comprehensive and while there are recommendations about future improvements, there is no evidence of any systematic approach to considering and where justified implementing what is recommended.

Some elements of the monitoring objectives are questionable. For example, monitoring the institutional and academic support provided by universities should not be a MC role given that ASG undertakes such monitoring based on its contractual arrangements with each university. There is also the risk, highlighted in *Annex 5.B*, of the MC exercising undue influence over the choice of institution by students.

ASG manages its own monitoring responsibilities in part through two annual student surveys: (i) an Arrival Student Survey – to obtain perception/satisfaction of students with the selection/mobilisation processes, pre-departure briefing, Introductory Academic Program and the quality of courses taken at academic institutions; and (ii) an Ongoing Student Survey – to obtain perception/satisfaction with services and programs provided by academic institutions and experiences in Australia. A review of the most recent surveys available and conducted in September 2009 covered many of the issues addressed by MC monitoring but the Afghan student response rate on key questions was so low (often 2 students) that it presented a misleading picture of the known real situation. This should improve in later surveys as student numbers increase.

The SSR proposes that these types of MC surveys should continue in the next program phase and that they should be appropriately resourced and incorporated in the program design. However they should be less elaborate and the following enhancements are proposed:

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[8] This is not of course a reliable sample since it covered the three universities hosting the largest number of students.

- Monitoring should be annual and should be conducted by MC staff based in Australia.

- The objectives of such monitoring exercises should be modified (to be detailed in the design) and should not for example, include assessments of institutional performance in providing essential services to students.

- The focus should be monitoring of students in their first year of study to identify settling in and other problems including requests to change institutions or courses and then again in say the last six months of study to help identify any issues regarding return to productive employment in Afghanistan.

- The design (and subsequently the program's Procedures Manual) needs to describe a mechanism that ensures recommendations are systematically addressed and reported to AusAID.

- The ongoing need for such monitoring should be reviewed periodically based on monitoring outcomes.

Appropriate monitoring arrangements will need to be developed by the new MC for students at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities.

3.8.11   *Monitoring and evaluation strategies*

Graduates have not yet returned to Afghanistan and there has been no evaluation of ADS outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation strategies have been developed. These rely significantly on reintegration plans which are problematic in the Afghan context as discussed in *Section 3.8.5. The SSR proposes a simple but effective monitoring and evaluation strategy to confirm achievement of the proposed objectives. The strategy will rely on periodic Alumni Surveys and allow for 'Case Studies' that could yield other useful information.*

Section 2.1 proposes a set of realistic and measurable program-level objectives. A comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will need to be developed in the Design Document. An indicative Framework that describes how information will be collected against each of the two program objectives as well as for six key program outputs is shown in *Annex 12.A*. Each objective and output has suitable indicators to gauge performance and to monitor progress. The Outline also shows indicative data sources and collection methods (including identification of who will be responsible for collecting and reporting on performance). Some key risks to success and how to manage them are included for each objective and output.

Impact will not be measured at goal level but the M&E Framework will be structured to collect evidence representing the achievement of objectives and thereby demonstrating some contribution towards the goal.

Annex 12.B provides a description of the key features of the proposed Alumni Survey and outlines an approach for periodic evaluations/case studies and longer-term surveys.

4   Recommendations

The analysis in this Concept Review Document and the outcomes of the Scoping Mission confirm that a diversified awards program for Afghanistan is feasible, relevant and appropriate and meets partner government expectations.

It is recommended that the approaches described in the Scoping Study Report be approved in principle. *Twelve strategic and twelve operational recommendations arising from the*

findings of the Scoping Study are listed in the Executive Summary, cross-referenced to relevant sections of the Report.

Annex 1   Lessons learned

Supplementing the lessons in *Section 1.6*, this Annex provides key lessons learned from other scholarship programs that are relevant for the design of a future scholarships program for Afghanistan. Additionally, there are several lessons covering Short Course Awards.

It does not at this stage include lessons derived from Trilateral Training activities, for example MAEPA, should it be decided to incorporate MAEPA-type programs in a broader 'Training Program'.

▪ There is a critical need to define clear and practical objectives for award programs and M&E frameworks must be able to demonstrate effectiveness beyond basic output and process measures
   o *The design must define clear and measurable objectives that cover all award categories and beneficiary groups, are broadly aligned with any new Afghanistan Country Program Strategy and reflected directly in an M&E Framework.*

▪ AusAID needs to maintain substantial involvement in programs of this kind to ensure transparency of processes, effectively manage relationships with partner governments and to promote foreign-policy related objectives.
   o *In the new phase of the program AusAID would be expected to continue to exercise responsibility for partner government relationships while managing the selection process with the Managing Contractor assisting and providing strategic advice.*

▪ By clearly defining applicant profiles for each award program objective and separately targeting these profiles in promotional, selection and support activities, programs can capture both efficiency and effectiveness gains.
   o *The design will need to incorporate 'Desired Applicant Profiles' and these will need to be separately targeted during implementation.*

▪ Any alignment between long-term study awards and program strategies will be coincidental rather than strategic where selection is based entirely on individual merit and no consideration is given to preferred fields of study or where relevant the priority needs of employer agencies.
   o *Fields of study should relate to agreed priority sectors and as far as practicable the priority needs of employers. A skilled course adviser can help ensure that courses and fields of study can match these requirements.*

▪ Award integrity must not be compromised by ineffective, inefficient or unskilled MC staff.
   o *This design must give particular attention to staffing requirements and provide a comprehensive indicative staffing package that covers all program management elements. AusAID will need to carefully consider MC staffing arrangements and quality assurance measures as part of a tender evaluation process.*

▪ Unless the scope of an awards program is constrained to a small set of recipient organisations, or where these organisations are large, to designated areas within such organisations, and where complimentary targeted support mechanisms are available, such programs can only contribute to institutional strengthening of organisations by providing opportunities to strengthen the capacities of specific individuals within them.

o *For the new Afghanistan scholarships program given the number of scholarships likely to be available and a range of organisational constraints, the impacts on institutional strengthening are likely to be limited to those achievable through strengthening of individual employees.*

Lessons that apply specifically to short course awards drawn from AusAID-funded short course training projects:

▪ Action plans developed by participants in conjunction with supervisors should improve program impact.

▪ The involvement of senior people in supervisory positions should facilitate support for short-course awardees in the work place.

▪ The clustering of awardees from one agency, possibly in conjunction with repeat courses may help provide the critical mass that will improve program impact.

▪ Courses and associated action plans may need to be targeted to participants who hold key positions and responsibilities and who are better placed to apply their new skills in the work place.

▪ If institutional change is a desired outcome, apart from the clustering of participants, a two-step approach may be needed, involving skill delivery followed by action plan development and supplementary training and support.

Annex 2 Study and Professional Development Awards (SPDAs)

Maintaining award standards in the context of untying ODA

In 2006 the Australian Government's Overseas Aid Program was untied. It excluded Australian Development Scholarships and Australian Leadership Awards repackaged within *Study and Professional Development Awards (SPDAs).* This particular exclusion to untied aid commitments was created by AusAID in direct recognition of the Australian Government's foreign policy (creation of linkages) objectives associated with this type of ODA. Preferential use of Australian course providers is thereby permitted, but this does not extend to the Managing Contractor of a program that manages such awards.

AusAID generally undertakes two forms of capacity-building exercises targeting individuals. The first is formal education, training or experience, which incorporates a recognised standard of content and delivery. The second is informal instruction, which may be of varying standard due the ad-hoc nature of its sourcing and application. Both of these forms of capacity-building are important tools.

All AusAID SPDA programs have dual development and foreign policy aims, and have therefore consistently adhered to offering formal education, training and professional experience. Because of the recognised quality standards involved, recipient governments place a high value on these formal opportunities. This provides SPDA programs with a level of 'prestige', ensuring higher quality applicants while also maximising usefulness for foreign policy applications.

AusAID therefore requires unambiguous but flexible standards by which to consistently define SPDA Programs to render this exclusion workable from a contracting perspective and to clearly distinguish these awards from ad-hoc capacity building. Various SPDA award types therefore need to adhere to Australian-based quality standards previously associated with Australian Development Awards (ADS) and Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) in relation to both course content and delivery of awards.

Types of awards

Two types of awards that may be classified as *Study and Professional Development Awards* are being considered for the future Afghanistan scholarships program. These are Long Term Awards (LTAs – 'traditional scholarships') and Short Course Awards (SCAs). These two types of awards are sufficiently flexible to allow for several delivery options for the future Afghanistan program. While this could in theory include the in-Afghanistan delivery of both SCAs and LTAs or their components (eg sandwich course, joint research supervision etc) through partnerships with Australian standard providers, in practice both forms of awards will need to be delivered off-shore and mainly in Australia. However, as discussed in *Annex 13.B.6*, courses delivered by Australian universities through their campuses in Malaysia may also qualify as *Study and Professional Development Awards* given that these awards meet all Australian quality standards, are listed under the AQF and are ultimately indistinguishable from those awarded in Australia.

In summary the specific natures of the two types of awards that may be offered under the Afghanistan scholarship program are as follows:

(i) Long Term Awards (Traditional Scholarships)

These are awards which result in a formal academic or vocational qualification listed under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). This allows for potential for both in-Australia and delivery of relevant courses in the partner country where these are the result of partnerships between partner country and Australian course providers (eg sandwich courses, jointly offered degrees, etc.).

(ii) Short Course Awards

Opportunities for formal study or training, being generally less than 3 months duration and delivered by an approved Australian higher education provider or an Australian Registered Training Organisation (RTO). [9]

This will at least result in either a formal transcript of a complete unit (or subject) offered within a course under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) or a formal Statement of Attainment in relation to a skill or competency covered by Australian nationally-registered Vocational Education or Training (VET) material. In all cases, compliance with this level of quality assurance requires a recognised standard of both course content and course delivery. Delivery in the targeted partner country or in a third country is possible and adaption of Australian material to the partner country context is feasible.

SPDAs and institutional strengthening

SPDA programs are intended to deliver individual awards. By their nature they only contribute skilled individuals to institutional strengthening, but cannot deliver integrated institutional strengthening approaches.

To apply such broader capacity building approaches is the role of AusAID's sector-based initiatives, which may draw on SPDA programs or other informal capacity building facilities to assist as required.

Were SPDA programs to try to wholly co-opt such approaches, this would only provide opportunities for duplicative or uncoordinated efforts. It would be entirely unrealistic to expect to realise significant cumulative effects within particular organisations in Afghanistan.

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[9] Approved Australian higher education providers are listed in Table A, B and C of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

Annex 3   Other scholarship donors

The table below describes how several key donors manage their Postgraduate scholarship programs for Afghanistan. It was possible to interview only three donors – two face-to-face (UK and US) and one by phone (South Korea). Tentative arrangements had been made to meet with staff of both the Indian and Turkish embassies to discuss their scholarships programs but it was not ultimately possible to confirm the arrangements that had been made.

Part 1: Nature of program, application and selection

Donor / Program	Size of program	Targeting	English language	Applications and selection	Gender
USA / Fulbright Scholarships **(Post graduate)**	▪ Expanding: 36 awards currently but increasing to 50 for the September 2012 intake	▪ Open program covering all sectors, Ministries, private sector and NGOs – only exclusions are direct hire US embassy employees ▪ Afghanistan needs more skilled foreign trained graduates at Postgraduate level in all sectors ▪ Accordingly no point in targeting Ministries or in expecting graduates to return to any particular employer	▪ An initial basic 'I TOEFL' test – reduces 200 preselected candidates to 120 ▪ A full TOEFL test is conducted after the interview process for those selected as potential candidates ▪ 60 candidates selected for 50 awards ie 10 alternates ▪ No in-country ELT for those selected but not meeting US University EL requirements but up to 6 months intensive ELT in the US for those that have received awards ▪ If number of alternates proves inadequate number of awards granted is reduced because there is insufficient time to process other candidates for that year's intake – no second semester	▪ 840 applicants for 50 awards ▪ All applications are on-line direct to the US embassy ▪ Up to 14 selection panels comprising staff from various parts of the embassy ▪ Only external panel members are Fulbright alumni considered experts in specialised fields eg engineering who will ask technical questions during the selection process – 10 to 12 panels might include alumni	▪ The program encourages women to apply but many female applicants do not have required levels of English for entry to intensive ELT in the US. ▪ No special measures to remedy this but US funds substantial EL programs at high school level which is expected to improve EL across the country including for women ▪ Much attention is given to ensuring women have access to information including information sessions for women and assistance with completing applications – a local-hire Education Adviser visits universities and other institutions across the country to publicise the

Donor / Program	Size of program	Targeting	English language	Applications and selection	Gender
			intakes		program
UK / Chevening Scholarships **(Postgraduate)**	▪ Reduced from 10 to 9 awards and pending a review holding off on launching the next intake ▪ Might be reduced further as impacted by UK budget cuts which includes related activities eg freeze on government advertising	▪ Open program covering all sectors, Ministries, private sector and NGOs ▪ No targeting of Ministries ▪ In selection focus is on an applicant's vision and ambitions on how they will contribute to Afghanistan after graduation not how they may contribute to any particular agency	▪ There is a full IELTS test for short listed applicants ▪ There is no PCE in-country or in the UK	▪ All applications are online ▪ 600 applications are shortlisted to 100 in the embassy ▪ Those on the short list are IELTS tested ▪ 30 having the required IELTS scores are interviewed ▪ Once awards are approved visas are issued in UAE – awardees attend a very brief interview combined with biometric testing and visas are usually issued in 48 hours or at most within 1 week	▪ Aim for 50/50 gender balance ▪ 1/3 of applications are from women. ▪ At short listing get this ratio up to 50/50 ▪ Of 9 awards 1 was for a female candidate ▪ No particular measures to encourage more women to apply
South Korea **(Postgraduate & Undergraduate)**	▪ 3 awards funded by the Ministry of Education – 1 PG & 1 UG ▪ Up to 4 PG awards funded by KOICA from a global program ▪ The embassy	▪ Both programs are 'Open' – not targeted to particular agencies or sectors	▪ The KOICA-funded program covers awards delivered in English – there is no provision for EL training ▪ The MoE-funded program allows for 12 months of Korean language training in Korea	▪ The embassy contacts the MoHE (PG) and the MoE (UG) through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs annually and asks Ministries to publicise the program ▪ Applications are direct to the Korean embassy – there are no Ministry 'nominations' ▪ The embassy shortlists the applications and 'selects' twice the number of scholarships available and forwards	▪ There are no particular gender strategies

Donor / Program	Size of program	Targeting	English language	Applications and selection	Gender
	(MFA) acts as a 'conduit' for the MoE-funded program			the shortlisted applications to Seoul ▪ There are no formal interviews but agencies in Korea may contact shortlisted applicants and conduct short interviews and to clarify issues raised in the applications	

Part 2: Post-award aspects

Donor / Program	Over stayers	Alumni Association	M&E	Donor coordination
USA / Fulbright Scholarships **(Post graduate)**	▪ Graduates must return to Afghanistan and are unable generally to apply for a return visa for 2 years ▪ Might have one graduate annually who does not return but found that even these return after a few years	▪ The overall program has elaborate and very active web-based alumni arrangements and Afghanistan has an active local chapter that organises events	▪ No formal M&E at country level – the global program might conduct periodic surveys ▪ However there is an excellent data base with alumni contact details, active alumni chapter and alumni events – seen as self-monitoring	▪ As a global program donor coordination even if considered desirable would not be feasible ▪ At country level always prepared to meet with other scholarship donors to share experiences and lessons learned
UK / Chevening Scholarships **(Postgraduate)**	▪ While visas cover only the period of study there is no particular requirement to return to Afghanistan ▪ Graduates could apply for another non-student visa or go elsewhere ▪ In practice most graduates return to Afghanistan	▪ The embassy maintain a list of alumni ▪ There is no funding support – the alumni association is expected to be self-sustaining – and is currently stalled ▪ Some funding is available for events and the embassy may assist in providing facilities	▪ There is no country-specific M&E ▪ Surveys may be conducted on a global basis	▪ It is a global program and donor coordination would not be feasible ▪ There is necessarily a degree of competition between donors ▪ Would be prepared to meet periodically to share lessons learned
South Korea	▪ There are no particular issues regarding over stayers	▪ The embassy maintains lists of graduates but there are no alumni	▪ There is no M&E	▪ Prepared to meet to share

Donor / Program	Over stayers	Alumni Association	M&E	Donor coordination
		strategies		experiences and lessons learned

Other donor programs

Reliable scholarship statistics are not published but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided information to the SSR about scholarship numbers for the largest scholarship donors.

India

Provides 1000 scholarships annually:

- 100 are for PG studies (Masters and PhD)
- 400 for UG studies
- 500 for short courses.

Pakistan

Has pledged 2000 UG scholarships over a 5-year period:

- 200 scholarships last year
- 250 scholarships this year.

Kazachstan

Has provided 157 scholarships this year for UG study.

Turkey

Has provided 111 scholarships this year for UG study. Awards are for 5 years including 1 year of Turkish language study.

Japan

Provides 500 scholarships over a 5-year period with 80% at PG level and 20% at UG level.

Other donors

'Numerous' other donors provide smaller numbers of scholarships.

Annex 4   Step-by-step selection process

These steps are standard but dates and statistics are based on the 2011 ADS intake. The process involved 4 meetings with each of the 4 targeted Ministries and 3 meetings of the independent Selection Committee.

Step 1 – determining training needs

- DAFA staff met separately in December 2009 with each of four Ministries to help these Ministries identify a set of capacity development needs to which ADS should align.[10]

- Each Ministry identified a broad set of 4 to 5 capacity development needs expressed in terms such as natural resource management; monitoring and evaluation, education policy development and rural energy engineering.

Step 2 – preparation of promotional material

- DAFA staff prepared promotional material for each of four Ministries.

Step 3 – promotion

- Ministries advertised in December 2009 and January 2010 with an application closing date of end January 2010.

Step 4 – receipt of applications

- DAFA staff received 221 applications direct from applicants.

Step 5 – eligibility assessment

- DAFA staff assessed applications for eligibility and in February 2010 forwarded 213 eligible applications to each relevant Ministry.

Step 6 – preliminary short listing

- In February 2010 DAFA staff met separately with each Ministry to assess eligible applications based on each applicant's employment history, educational background, qualifications and other relevant criteria.

- As a result of that stage 114 applicants were selected to proceed to the next stage (between 25 and 30 from each Ministry).

Step 7 – preliminary English language testing

- DAFA staff arranged with a contracted ELT provider to test 114 applicants between 14 and 18 February 2010 to determine general English language proficiency.

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[10] Ministries told the SSR that in practice DAFA staff do not play a significant role in this step and that outside assistance is not required. Ministries are able to specify their needs as required

Step 8 – short listing

- Between 21 and 25 February DAFA staff met separately with each Ministry to shortlist candidates based on the preliminary EL test results (a 60% score was needed in the preliminary EL test to be considered for the next stage).

- The objective of each meeting was to shortlist to between 16 and 17 candidates from each Ministry.

- Two Ministries were represented at Deputy Minister level

Step 9 – IELTS testing

- 64 candidates were scheduled to undertake an IELTS test in March 2010 conducted by the British Council of Afghanistan (1 was exempted with an existing valid IELTS score and 2 took the test in New Delhi)

Step 10 – Independent Selection Committee – short listing

- The Independent Selection Committee members comprising representatives of MoF, MoE , MoHE and the MC reviewed applications independently over a 2 week period in April 2010

- Only candidates achieving an IELTS score of 5.0 are considered eligible

Step 11 – Independent Selection Committee – 1st meeting

- The Independent Selection Committee met on 24 April 2010 to agree a short list of candidates for interview.

- 36 candidates were selected for interview ranging from 8 to 10 for individual Ministries

Step 12 – Independent Selection Committee – interviews

- The Independent Selection Committee interviewed for 5 consecutive days at the beginning of May 2010.

Step 13 – Independent Selection Committee – 3rd meeting

- The Independent Selection Committee met on 5 May 2010 to review interview results and agree a on the final 20 candidates (5 for each Ministry).[11]

- The Committee also recommended 1-2 reserve candidates for each Ministry

Step 14 – AusAID delegate approval

- The AusAID delegate approved the final scholarship awards

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[11] An additional 5 awards became available later and were distributed amongst the 4 Ministries resulting in a total of 25 approved awards for the 2011 intake.

Annex 5   Placement of Afghan students in Australian universities

A: The current placement process

1   Afghanistan context

- Academic qualifications obtained in Afghanistan are universally considered to *not* be equivalent to Australian qualifications, or qualifications gained in most other developing and developed countries.

- The two databases used by Australian universities to check foreign qualifications - the Australian-based NOOSR and the UK-NARIC both confirm this.

- For example, an Afghan 3 or 4-year bachelors degree (BA, BSc, BEng, etc) is equivalent only to an Australian diploma.

- Likewise, an Afghan Masters degree (of which there are very few – and most involve partnerships with foreign universities) is equivalent to an Australian bachelor's degree.

- An exception is that some Australian universities consider a 7-year Afghan Medical degree to be equivalent to a 3-year Australian Undergraduate degree.

- Additionally, the SSR found that the three universities with campuses in Malaysia could accept students from Afghanistan for direct entry to an Undergraduate degree if they have completed the first one or two years of a university course from a recognised university (Kabul university) with an average of 90% (with just one year of university) and the required IELTS scores. Those without university education would be expected to complete a Foundation Year. (See *Annex 13*)

2   The placement process as described in the ADS Handbook (extracts)

*"The **choice of Institution** at which the applicant wishes to study is entirely up to the applicant. Applicants are encouraged to access various Institution resources including websites, handbooks and in-country information sessions, and to consult Posts to assist them in making an informed decision on the course they wish to undertake.*

Although Posts should ensure that an applicant's course selection is in accordance with country program strategies, Posts must not influence their choice of Institution or recommend/specify which Institutions the relevant country's ADS students will be allocated to.

After the in-country selection of an applicant, the Post seeks placement at an Institution by creating a new application in OASIS and notifying the Institution. Posts are to include any relevant details of country specific conditions set by the partner Government. The Institution is notified via email that a record is in OASIS awaiting placement processing."

*"An **articulated study program** is a program that combines a lower and higher level course of study, leading to an award of the higher qualification. Examples include … a Graduate Diploma leading to a Masters.…"*

*"AusAID will not accept applicants unless they have reached, or can reach, the **minimum standard of English language** required for their chosen course, as determined by the institution. Posts will determine if pre-course English (PCE) will be undertaken in Australia or in-country. "*

3   DAFA's four-step placement process for the 2010 and 2011 intakes

Step i

- DAFA staff initially conduct group (by Ministry), followed by individual, course counselling sessions. Information is provided on selecting an appropriate university and Masters course (rather than focusing on the most 'prestigious' university).

- Awardees are advised to consider:

  (i)) their Ministry's capacity development priorities

  (ii) the location and character of the university - what it does and does not offer students

  (iii) each course's particular pre-requisites

  (iv) their own personal and professional background and interests.

- Each person receives between 4 and 12 hours of course counselling, over a number of sessions, primarily with the DAFA ADS Manager.

Step ii

- Each awardee selects two course preferences, in preference order, in consultation with the DAFA ADS Manager who double-checks course prerequisites and alignment with the Ministry's stated capacity development priorities before 'signing off' on each awardee's preferences.

Step iii

- The DAFA scholarships team prepares two INFORMAL applications for each awardee and submits these to the universities. Each application includes a cover letter from DAFA, which outlines the awardee's qualifications and professional background and nominates the preferred course. Applications are supported with certified copies of educational qualifications, employment letters, IELTS certificate and any other relevant documents.

- Informal applications are sent to each university's primary ADS contact person, typically the International or Sponsored Students Co-ordinator.

- University staff typically by-pass the standard admissions procedure and ask relevant faculties/departments to assess each application and if they are willing to accept the awardee, propose a pathway leading to the preferred Masters degree.

- The DAFA scholarships team liaises with counterparts at each university to ensure that the application is being directed to the relevant faculty/department and to provide any additional supporting documentation that may be required.

Step iv

- Universities advise the DAFA scholarships team of each positive or negative response from the relevant faculty/department.

- In some cases, pathways towards the Masters degree are discussed in detail. The university advises the DAFA scholarships team of the exact pathway (preparatory courses, duration and conditions) required for each awardee to progress to their chosen Masters degree.

- The scholarships team advises the awardee of the proposed course – structure and duration – and obtains their acceptance.

- The DAFA scholarships team advises the university that the awardee will accept the proposed course and formally enters the preference in OASIS.

- The university then formalises the offer on OASIS.

- The scholarships team then processes the offer to contract stage, generates each contract and meets with each awardee individually to review and sign their contract.

4 **Universities that have according to DAFA been willing to engage informally to process Afghan ADS applications as described above include:**

- La Trobe University

- University of Melbourne

- University of Canberra

- University of Tasmania

- Australian National University

- University of Queensland

- Curtin University of Technology

- James Cook University

- Queensland University of Technology

- University of Technology Sydney

5 **Universities that have not according to DAFA been willing to find alternative entry pathways for Afghan ADS awardees include:**

- University of Western Australia

- University of New South Wales

- RMIT University

- Monash University[12]

B: Scoping Study Review Assessment

The SSR draws the following lessons and conclusions from the implementation of this process, based on discussions with the DAFA ADS team and with several Australian universities.

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[12] A review of DAFA Monitoring Reports highlights that these assessments (based on October 2010 monitoring activities) need to be interpreted cautiously. For example, Monash University has a wide range of pre-course pathways and was assessed by DAFA (in April 2010) as being well suited to hosting students from Afghanistan. In discussion with Monash University staff in Melbourne it was made clear that while the University has high entry requirements it is very willing to engage informally and to consider appropriate entry pathways for qualified Afghan students.

(i)   The process is not fully consistent with generic ADS Guidelines (relevant extracts are shown above)

(ii) If the formal process had been applied, potentially as few as 5 of 25 candidates for Masters degrees might have been successfully placed in Australian institutions. This is because only 5 candidates had Bachelor degrees from foreign universities. There were no candidates with Masters degrees from Afghan universities. Possibly another 5 might have been placed because they have 7-year Afghan Medical degrees which some Australian universities recognise as being equivalent to a 3-year Australian Undergraduate degree. As many as 15 candidates might have been rejected. [13]

(iii) On this basis, the unique circumstances in Afghanistan necessitate a more flexible and innovative approach along the lines of that currently being used by DAFA.

There are risks in applying this more flexible approach. Under ADS Guidelines Posts and their Managing Contractors should not influence applicants as to their choice of institution. However, MCs are expected to ensure that the choice of course meets country-specific requirements. It would also be reasonable to expect a MC in providing guidance and advice to applicants to take into account the known policies and practices of particular Australian universities in recognising/not recognising Afghan tertiary qualifications.

Ten Australian universities that have been willing to engage informally with the program and to develop alternate entry pathways (eg an articulated program covering a graduate diploma leading to a Masters) for students from Afghanistan, and four universities that have not (according to DAFA) been willing to engage with the program informally are listed above. Most students have been placed in the former group but at least two students in each intake have been placed in the second group. In other words, applicants have not been prevented from studying at universities not prepared to engage informally with the program. As noted in *Section A* above, such assessments need to be undertaken with a great deal of care and could unreasonably 'penalise' some universities.

The risks can be readily managed in a new phase of the program but it will require:

(i)   The approaches being followed must be transparent, detailed in an ADS Procedures Manual, with clear guidelines and approaches that are designed to ensure compliance with fundamental principles enshrined in the generic ADS Guidelines which in turn reflect contractual arrangements between AusAID and the Australian universities participating in the ADS program. The approaches and their rationale must also be highlighted in the program design and in the Contractor's Scope of Services.

(ii) The new design must adequately resource the course and placement function. A specialist familiar with the complexities of the Australian University admissions system and with the types of courses available and with proven experience in this and related areas must be available in Afghanistan during critical times in the program cycle. While this will depend on total numbers of scholarships,

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[13] For the 2010 intake 8 from 20 candidates had foreign degrees including 2 Masters degrees from Pakistan universities. Additionally 4 had Kabul University Bachelor of Medicine degrees. There were no local Masters degrees.

tentatively an input of three months annually may be required to manage the PG award placements. This could include participation in the final selection process either as a member of the Selection Committee or in an advisory capacity.

Similar approaches and resources will be required to place students in the campuses of Australian universities in Malaysia to undertake Undergraduate studies. The Malaysian campuses adopt placement standards and approaches similar to those of their parent institutions. There will be additional complexities given that the proposed program will potentially cover awardees across the public sector as well as from the private sector and civil society organisations. Additionally, students once placed may undertake some of their studies in Australia. Specialist resources will be needed to address these issues and to liaise with campuses in Malaysia on an ongoing basis. It will therefore be necessary to consider a full-time position for this type of work and the design will need to include a detailed position statement.

(iii) The new MC being tasked to review these arrangements on at least an annual basis and being required to report to AusAID periodically on the outcome of such reviews. A key objective will be to seek to simplify and improve the effectiveness of current arrangements. For example, it may be possible over time to reduce the time taken for individual course counselling (up to 12 hours over a number of sessions) and it may be possible to streamline some of the negotiations with particular universities most familiar with and supportive of the current arrangements.

Other scholarship programs benefit from in-country information sessions where key Australian universities provide course advice and related information at annual 'road shows' to scholarship applicants. A small number of universities currently receiving most of the Afghan students or keen to provide 'special' support to Muslim students (eg Latrobe University) could be persuaded at some stage to conduct such sessions in Kabul. However it would be unrealistic in the design to assume that this will be feasible at least during the initial years of the new program phase.

Annex 6 Current ADS cohorts

A: ADS Students currently on course in Australia

Institution	2009 Cohort	2010 Cohort
ACT		
Australian National University	5	4
University of Canberra	0	1
NSW		
University of Sydney	0	2
University of Technology Sydney	1	0
QLD		
Queensland University of Technology	1	0
University of Queensland	1	1
TAS		
University of Tasmania	1	0
VIC		
La Trobe University	5	4
University of Melbourne	0	3
Monash University	2	0
RMIT University	1	0
WA		
Curtin University of Technology	1	0
University of Western Australia	0	1
TOTAL	**18**	**16**

B: The 2011 cohort including fields of study

Institution	2011 Cohort	Master - Field of study	Ministry
ACT			
Australian National University	1	Social Research	MAIL
University of Canberra	1	Community & Educational Leadership	MoE
NSW			
University of Sydney	1	Public Administration	MAIL
QLD			
University of Queensland	7	Agribusiness	MAIL
		Governance & Public Policy	MoPH
		Development Practice	MRRD
		Development Practice	MRRD
		Development Economics	MRRD
		Integrated Water Management	MRRD
		Rural Systems Management	MRRD
James Cook University	1	Tropical Veterinary Medicine	MAIL
VIC			
La Trobe University	4	Education – Curriculum Studies	MoE
		Educational Leadership & Management	MoE
		Educational Leadership & Management	MoE
		Health Administration	MoPH
University of Melbourne	9	Public Policy & Management	MAIL
		Public Policy & Management	MAIL
		Assessment & Evaluation/Information Systems	MoE
		Assessment & Evaluation	MoE
		Public Health (Sexual Health)	MoPH
		Public Health (Health Economics/Evaluation)	MoPH
		Public Health (Health Economics/Evaluation)	MoPH
		Public Health (Health Economics)	MoPH
		Epidemiology	MoPH
RMIT University	1	Electrical Engineering	MRRD
TOTAL	**25**		

Annex 7   Critical risks and risk management strategies

The most significant implementation risks with brief comment about mitigation steps are summarised below. The design document will need to include a full Risk Matrix that describes the potential impact of each risk, rates each risk, indicates how it has been addressed in the design and describes the actions to be taken if the risk happens.

▪ The program is not perceived as meeting priority partner country training needs impacting negatively on achievement of program objective 2:

  o *Periodic dialogue with key coordination agencies such as the Ministry of Finance to review and where practicable adjust the use of a flexible suite of training mechanisms including ADS as well as targeted Short Course and Third Country Training Awards in the context of bilateral and other program commitments.*

▪ Low number of applications from quality candidates across the board and/or from targeted Ministries:

  o *Develop targeted promotion strategies, review these annually and review and remove barriers to candidate participation in the program.*

▪ Visa processing capacity in DIAC is unable to cope in a timely manner with program demands:

  o *Liaise regularly with DIAC both centrally and with DIAC staff in Islamabad (and potentially in Kuala Lumpur) about visa processing requirements including timelines and ensure the processing cycle allows adequate time that reflects challenges associated with visa processing in the region.*

▪ Transparency and equity objectives prove difficult to achieve:

  o *Maintain and review transparent selection processes at least annually and strengthen as necessary and similarly adopt and review specific gender and disability initiatives and enhance these as needed.*

▪ Nepotism in targeting awards in the public sector:

  o *Ensure that public sector individuals will be able to apply direct (with employer support) and while targeted Ministries may be involved in short-listing (an over programmed number) of the most suitable candidates based on agreed and transparent eligibility and selection criteria as well as Desired Applicant Profiles, selection is undertaken through a transparent AusAID-managed process.*

- Applicants for Postgraduate study in Australia and/or Undergraduate study in Malaysia are unable to obtain award offers:

  - *Enhanced course counselling and informal (but transparent) engagement with universities in Australia and their campuses in Malaysia to develop alternate entry pathways for students holding local qualifications not formally recognised together with or Foundation studies as needed.*

- Awardees travelling to Australia and/or Malaysia breach visa requirements or otherwise fail to return to Afghanistan:

  - *Thorough interview process together with comprehensive pre-departure briefing processes and backed by in-Australia and in-Malaysia monitoring to identify potential problems early.*

- Graduates return to Afghanistan but are unable to apply their new skills and knowledge in the manner intended:

  - *Ensure that priority sectors/sub-sectors specified for the Open Category meet human resource gaps at country level and that the fields of study selected by Ministry candidates meet employer needs and review where M&E processes reveal difficulties.*

Annex 8   A broader training program – design options and risks

This Annex covers material that appeared in the recent DAFA Mid-Term review report – mainly in Annex 7. Given its ongoing relevance, it has been included here for ease of reference. However, added as 'Notes' (in italics) are additional comments reflecting SSR findings that impact on the conclusions drawn by the MTR..

Design options

The program arrangements proposed by the MTR will require both scoping and design work. When the scoping work has been completed a decision will be needed on whether to design and tender for a broad program covering all of the proposed components or whether two self-standing stand-alone projects may be more appropriate. Each option offers advantages and disadvantages as outlined below.

> *[Note 1: The SSR has scoped the scholarships component including additional Scoping work in Malaysia covering ADS-type awards in Malaysia. Separate scoping work has been commissioned covering future MAEPA-type tripartite training initiatives.]*

Option 1: Training program with 2 components plus a Contingency Funding Window and one MC

This approach would facilitate linkages between scholarship and trilateral training and also offer some economies of scale. There would be some cost savings in commissioning and managing a single design and tender process. Scholarships and trilateral training activities have peaks and troughs in terms of administration and workloads and a combined program could therefore offer some administrative savings.

The scoping work for both scholarships and trilateral training will address new approaches that could be expected to add complexities to current scholarship and trilateral arrangements. These potential complexities could militate against a single design.

> *[Note 2: The SSR has not identified issues that would prevent a single design, although it would be multi-faceted and potentially complex with some risks, but it should be possible to address these in the design.]*

Option 2: Two self-standing programs with 2 MCs plus a Contingency Funding Window attached to the Scholarships Program

An argument in favour of separate programs is that under a combined program approach the MC selected could give undue attention to one component at the expense of the other because of profile, skills or for other reasons. Two programs and tenders might attract a wider range of contractors with specialised skills suited to the management of scholarships or trilateral training. While this would not necessarily prevent the same bidder winning both contracts, the competition this would inject might help ensure that neither component is treated by the MC as the 'poor cousin' of the other.

Should Option 1 be preferred, AusAID would reserve the right to negotiate separate contracts with top ranked bidders who are strong in one category but less so in another.

This would however not be the most desirable outcome overall and bidders would be expected to give equal attention to all program components in their proposals.

A further argument in favour of Option 2 is that for scholarships a 5 year design and contract could readily be justified. For a trilateral training program there would be less certainty about the most appropriate future management arrangements. However, this could be managed under Option 1 with one component having a shorter life than the other.

> [*Note 3*: AusAID favours a 3-year design for the scholarships component and this consideration is no longer relevant. Consideration may still be given to an optional contract extension for say 2 years to avoid having to retender should it be decided after 3 years to continue one or both of these components. This is the approach recommended by the SSR.]

Linkages and governance arrangements

Under both options, linkages could be developed between the two programs. For example, the original MAEPA design proposed that to improve ADS targeting, some ADS education sector awards be reserved for high level study in Australia under ADS in the field of 'teacher training'.

Governance arrangements will need to be developed during the scoping and design phases and could also serve to facilitate linkages between the two programs. For example, with separate programs and managing contractors a single Steering Committee which would not need to include representatives from all of the stakeholder Ministries could be responsible for setting overall priorities and broad strategic directions.

> [*Note 4*: The SSR has proposed a Senior Reference Group that would include WoG representatives and the MoF. At this stage, the SSR proposal only addresses governance arrangements for the scholarships component of the new program. An overall design will need to reflect broader requirements – for example it may be important to find a role for MoE given its involvement in MAEPA.]

Risks to be addressed in future scoping and design work

There are potential risks that will need to be addressed in the scoping and design work covering potential post-DAFA training activities.

For an expanded scholarships program risks include:

- A potential loss of focus if scholarships are made available to a wider range of agencies.

  > [*Note 5*: The SSR recommendation to limit expansion of the PG program to 2 Ministries and to address UG awards through an Open Category would help minimise this risk.]

- Duty of care issues if relying on regional tertiary training institutions not subject to Australian quality controls.

[Note 6: The three Malaysian campuses of Australian universities must meet both Malaysian and Australian quality standards. These campuses have extensive support mechanisms for students. Additional arrangements comparable to those applying to the ADS program in Australia can be negotiated with these campuses.]

- A potential loss of Australian identity if scholarships are provided in regional locations.

  [Note 7: This risk is minimised if scholarships are restricted to the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities especially when combined with an option to undertake some study in Australia at the parent institutions.]

- A potential loss of impact should scholarships be made available for study at Undergraduate level.

  [Note 8: Some of the risks inherent in an UG award program are reduced when studies are undertaken in Malaysia rather than in Australia. A SSR proposal that UG award applicants should have some work experience further minimises the potential risks.]

- Additional language constraints if scholarships are funded in regional countries.

  [Note 9: This is not a risk if such scholarships are limited to study at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities where English is the language of instruction.]

- Targeting and other challenges should some future scholarships be provided as *Short Course* or *Professional Development Awards*.

  [Note 10: These risks remain but can be managed and will have to be addressed in the full design drawing on experience elsewhere where these types of awards have been introduced. Professional Development Awards which include work attachments in Australia are not proposed.]

- Inability to maintain current highly labour intensive but reasonably transparent selection and placement processes should the program expand significantly.

  [Note 11: For PG awards only two new ministries are proposed. For other types of awards different arrangements will be needed and these should be streamlined as far as practicable.]

For an expanded MAEPA program risks include:

- Potentially committing on a long-term basis to a parallel program in the post-Kabul Conference environment.

- Potential loss of impact if the program moves from 'train-the-trainer' approaches.

- Weak institutional capacity in new trilateral partner countries may need substantial capacity building before benefits accrue to Afghan trainees.

- Absence of relevant off-the shelf training programs in new trilateral partner countries may require disproportionate Australian inputs swamping those of the new partner countries.

- Language constraints in new trilateral partner countries.

- New partner countries unwilling to share costs and provide other essential inputs.

- New challenges as the program expands to other sectors including finding suitable trainers with appropriate language skills, reaching out to new ministries and liaising with other donors active in these sectors.

Annex 9   Gender initiatives

Consistent with principles of gender equity, in a situation where in the last three intakes 14% of awardees were women, the new program would seek to actively assist historically or socially disadvantaged women to compete with privileged males with resource application tailored to the specific gender-related needs of applicants.

There is currently a shortage of female candidates and those that do apply often do not have the minimum IELTS entry requirement for PCE training in Australia which is limited to 12 months. Potentially eligible female candidates may not apply for cultural and other reasons. *The SSR has identified a series of potential measures that could be considered and that are designed to foster gender equity and to help increase the number of female candidates and awardees.* These measures, to be developed in more detail during the design process are, are summarised below.

- *Introduction of an 'Ancillary Awards'[14]* program for female candidates (but also for provincial candidates) with an IELTS score of 4.5 (or as low as 4.0) and assessed by the Selection Committee as suitable but needing ELT and Study Skills training before they could enter a 12 month PCE training course in Australia. Study would be full time in Kabul for a period of up to six months. These candidates would additionally, if selected for study overseas, receive support available to all candidates such as course advice and enhanced pre-departure training.

- Improved advertising whereby the MC supplements the advertising currently conducted within Ministries to ensure that female candidates understand support mechanisms that will be available.

- Exploring options (in consultation with DIAC staff in Canberra) for the use of 'Student-Guardian' visas for single female staff of Ministries who are qualified but who for cultural reasons are not willing or otherwise unable to travel and live overseas.

- Workshops conducted by the MC in conjunction with Ministry staff for potential female candidates to encourage those that may be qualified to apply. The workshops would highlight the family-friendly aspects of the ADS program and allow a range of issues of particular concern to women to be addressed.

- Exploring with a select number of universities (eg Latrobe University in Melbourne which has developed special programs for Muslim students) whether special arrangements could be made for female students from Afghanistan. For example, finding appropriate home stay opportunities for Muslim female students needing such support. (Issues such as quality of housing and the safety of living and studying in Australia are key issues of concern to all students but especially women).

- Establishment of an *'Access and Equity Fund'* modelled on similar arrangements incorporated in other recent scholarship designs. Funds would be set aside to allow quality candidates equitable access to the program. This would cover female candidates and potentially candidates based in regional locations as well as women or men with a disability. It could cover initiatives to ensure equitable access (application, selection and

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[14] This type of award would be very loosely based on similar arrangements adopted for the recent scholarship initiatives in Pakistan and Africa. Some key features would not apply given differences in scale and context.

ELT) as well as on-award assistance. The latter would be identified by the Selection Committee and the former by the MC. Applicants would not apply directly for assistance and the assistance provided could vary from case to case.

Female candidates not proceeding to Australia but interested in UG study at the campuses of Australian universities in Malaysia would also benefit from some of these initiatives including the *'Ancillary Awards'*. Since it is proposed to allow both NGOs and the private sector access to this new program, it may be found that a significantly greater number of qualified female candidates will apply for study in Malaysia and these candidates may already have the required level of EL needed for entry into courses in Malaysia. All of these Malaysian campuses have on-campus accommodation suitable for female students.

The training capacities of local providers are quite limited but SSR discussions with the American University, the British Council[15] and the current ELT provider (Silk Road Solutions) suggest that all could potentially provide the *'Ancillary Award'* course in Kabul to the required standard. While the design would provide further specifications, the new MC would be tasked to confirm the feasibility and cost effectiveness of such courses and to review options for conducting such courses in-country on an ongoing basis. In other words, while it is proposed to incorporate this type of program in the design, it would not be a fundamental program component given that it will not be possible to assess its viability until implementation has commenced.

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[15] Unlike other providers, the British Council has no facilities where courses could be conducted and these would need to be identified/provided by the MC.

Annex 10 Indicative Desired Applicant Profiles

The DAPs provided here are indicative and may need to be reviewed and adjusted as necessary for the 2013 intake. Profiles must be reviewed annually and updated as required.

Larger scholarship programs are able to develop quite specific profiles for each sector and incorporate outputs and targets for any one profile eg for say government personnel in a sub-sector in agriculture, the number of researchers, policy makers, field staff etc. This may be very useful to meet country or regional program objectives especially where the awards are expected to complement other bilateral initiatives in the same sector. Given the relatively small number of potential awardees in any one sectoral area or Ministry in the Afghanistan program, there is no scope to include such output targets or even to specify a desired number of applicants in any one sectoral area.

Not detailed in the profiles below but to be issued and/or cross-referenced simultaneously to an appropriate AusAID Website including to the ADS Handbook website link would be:

(i) General ADS eligibility criteria (ADS Handbook) [Profile 1 only]. Equivalent new documentation would need to be developed by the MC for the Malaysia program [Profile 2]

(ii) ADS entitlements (ADS Handbook) [Profile 1 only]. Equivalent new documentation would need to be developed by the MC for the Malaysia program [Profile 2]

(iii) Summary of student responsibilities (ADS Handbook) [Profile 1 only]. Equivalent new documentation would need to be developed by the MC for the Malaysia program [Profile 2]

(iv) More detail on assistance available for students with a disability (including while in Australia or Malaysia)

(v) More detail on English language testing and training assistance including special arrangements for female and provincial candidates.

Targeted advertising in Ministries and supplemented by the MC would utilise the appropriate DAP. Where it may be inappropriate to include the DAP in full, a link should be provided to a Website that includes expanded information on the Afghanistan Australia Awards program.

The sample DAP 1 covers all of the targeted Ministries as a group. Consideration could be given to producing a separate DAP for each targeted Ministry. This would be of particular value if one or more of the Ministries chose to determine priority fields of study prior to the start of the annual ADS cycle. For example, the Minister of Mines nominated three fields of study to the SSR: mining engineering; mining contracts law and governance and natural resource economics. Specifying fields of study in this way would ensure employees of that Ministry focus on courses in these fields rather than choosing general study fields such as 'Public Administration' or 'Public Policy and Management' that could apply to any government agency (see *Annex 6.B* for 2011 intake choices).

The sample DAP 2 covers all potential Undergraduate awards. As discussed in *Section 1.4.2.2,* a separate DAP may be needed to cover, for example, proposed awards for a mining course at the Curtin campus in Miri coupled with a final year of study at Curtin University in Perth

The level of specificity of DAPs may vary, but they should never become so general as to be ineffective as a meaningful basis for targeting. Specifying fields of study for each

Ministry where practicable, helps to achieve this objective and improves the effectiveness of the DAP approach.

Desired Applicant Profile 1

AUSTRALIA POSTGRADUATE AWARDS FOR AFGHANISTAN DESIRED APPLICANT PROFILE FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES OF TARGETED MINISTRIES	
Profile covers	Personnel employed by one of the following Ministries: ▪ Ministry of Education ▪ Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development ▪ Ministry of Public Health ▪ Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock ▪ Ministry of Finance ▪ Ministry of Mines
Priority fields[16]	▪ Fields of study will reflect the capacity development needs of each of the Ministries in the areas of health, agriculture, rural development, education, mining, finance and governance ▪ Ministries will be responsible for identifying capacity gaps that may be addressed through Postgraduate study awards in Australia
Eligibility	▪ You are an Afghan citizen and not resident in Australia ▪ You have not held an Australian-government funded scholarship in the preceding 2 years at time of application[17] ▪ You are not already studying at an Australian institution at time of application
Target Group	▪ You are a mid-career public sector professional working in the government sector ▪ You are currently employed by one of the targeted Ministries either as a civil servant or as a contractor ▪ You wish to undertake a Masters degree in Australia in a field of study supported by your Ministry ▪ You have a clear vision for how you will use the knowledge gained through the Masters degree to improve policy or practice in Afghanistan in your proposed field of study
Eligibility/Selection	▪ You must be an employee of one of the Ministries working in a research, policy making, extension or management role related to

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[16] Where possible, specify priority fields by Ministry in separate Ministry DAPs

[17] Currently 12 months

Criteria	your chosen field of study
	▪ You must be no more than 50 years of age at the date of your application[18]
	▪ You must meet the general minimum eligibility criteria for Australian Development Scholarships (attached)
	▪ You must meet Australian tertiary institution entry requirements
	▪ You must have a minimum of two years post-graduation relevant work experience in your selected study field
	▪ You must have the support of your current employer to undertake your proposed field of study
	▪ You must be willing to make a commitment to return to Afghanistan for a period of at least 2 years following completion of your award
	▪ You must have English proficiency of a standard at least equivalent to IELTS 5.0 or 4.5 if you are a female candidate or working in the provincial office of one of the targeted 6 Ministries.
	▪ Female candidates are encouraged to apply.
	▪ People with a disability are encouraged to apply.
Support Service Options	▪ Provision of IELTS tests for shortlisted candidates
	▪ Provision of Pre-course English language training in Australia (up to 12 months) for successful candidates at an IELTS level between 5.0 and 6.5
	▪ Course advice
	▪ Special needs assistance as deemed appropriate on a case-by-case basis
	▪ Standard ADS support conditions for awardees
Special cases	▪ Preference will be given to applicants for Masters degrees
	▪ Applicants meeting <u>all</u> of the requirements of this profile and seeking to study at PhD level could be considered if they occupy or are expected to occupy, senior positions requiring individual research or the supervision of other researchers in a public sector research organisation.[19]

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[18] The age limitation should be reviewed and could be adjusted with each intake.

[19] To be included if a decision is taken to allow (limited) PhD level study.

Desired Applicant Profile 2

<table>
<tr>
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AUSTRALIA UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS FOR AFGHANISTAN IN MALAYSIA

DESIRED APPLICANT PROFILE FOR GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR EMPLOYEES

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<tr>
<td>**Profile covers**</td>
<td>

Personnel employed by:

- Afghan government agencies

- Afghan private sector organisations

- Afghan civil society organisations

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<tr>
<td>**Study fields**[20]</td>
<td>

Three-year Bachelor degree courses offered by Australian universities in Malaysia including:

- Business and Commerce including Accounting; Banking; Entrepreneurship and Marketing; Human Resource Management; Finance

- Information Technology and Computer Science

- Science including Environmental Management; Applied Geology; Biotechnology

Four-year Bachelor degree courses offered by Australian universities in Malaysia restricted to Engineering and including:

- Mechanical

- Electrical

- Chemical

- Computer Systems

- Civil and Construction

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<tr>
<td>**Eligibility**</td>
<td>

- You are an Afghan citizen and not resident in Australia

- You have not held an Australian-government funded scholarship in the preceding 2 years at time of application

- You are not already studying at an Australian institution at time of application

- You are not employed by the Australian government or by an Australian government contractor

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<tr>
<td>**Target Group**</td>
<td>

- You are currently employed

- You wish to undertake a 3-year Australian Undergraduate Degree (4 years for engineering) at the Malaysian campus of an Australian University in a field of study supported by your current employer

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[20] Effectively excludes courses in Medicine; Pharmacy; Medical Bioscience and various double degree courses. Could include various 'Arts' courses.

	▪ You have a clear vision for how you will use the knowledge gained through the Undergraduate degree to improve policy or practice in Afghanistan in your proposed field of study
Eligibility/Selection Criteria	▪ You must be a public, private or civil society sector employee working in a role related to your chosen field of study
	▪ You must be no more than 40 years of age at the date of your application
	▪ You must meet the general minimum eligibility criteria for Australian Development Scholarships in Malaysia (attached)
	▪ You must meet the entry requirements of the Australian campuses in Malaysia of Australian tertiary institutions
	▪ You must have a minimum of 3 years (preferably 5 years) work experience related to your selected study field
	▪ You must have the support of your employer to undertake your proposed field of study
	▪ You must be willing to make a commitment to return to Afghanistan for a period of at least 2 years following completion of your award
	▪ You must have English proficiency of a standard at least equivalent to IELTS 5.5 for a 3-year course or 6.5 IELTS for a 4-year Engineering course
	▪ Female candidates are encouraged to apply.
	▪ People with a disability are encouraged to apply.
Support Service Options	▪ Provision of IELTS tests for shortlisted candidates
	▪ Provision of Pre-course English language training and/or Foundation studies at the Australian campuses in Malaysia (up to 12 months total) for successful candidates at an IELTS level between 5.5 and 6.5 applying for a 3 year degree course
	▪ Course advice
	▪ Special needs assistance as deemed appropriate on a case-by-case basis
	▪ Other support conditions for awardees as separately specified
Special cases	▪ Preference will be given to applicants who are currently employed
	▪ Applicants not currently employed but meeting other requirements of this profile and who have been employed in recent years for at least 3 years in an area related to their selected study field may also be considered.
	▪ Such applicants must have a very clear vision for how they plan to use the knowledge gained through the Undergraduate degree to improve policy or practice in Afghanistan in their proposed field of study.

Annex 11   Funding envelope

Some initial comment on budgetary issues and on the longer term cost implications of an expanded scholarships program is provided in this Annex. The design will need to include full costings where these will be the responsibility of a Managing Contractor.

The number of staff positions – international professional (full-time and part-time) and locally engaged – will depend on the range of training activities to be included under the new program. An analysis of current DAFA costings will help to guide such calculations. Administration costs in Afghanistan are high. For example, the DAFA Facility Manager (international professional staff) is currently costed at $0.5 million pa. The fixed <u>monthly</u> fee currently paid to the DAFA contractor is $4 million which covers a range of staff and administration costs but not including the Facility Manager and a number of other staff positions that are separately funded as reimbursables. A locally recruited expatriate ADS Manager, also funded separately was costed at around $110,000 pa including tax.

In-country costs that will need to be costed for the design are restricted to EL tests and medicals, in-country language training and pre-departure briefing costs, internal travel and per diems for provincial candidates and single airfares to Australia for awardees. For the 2011 ADS intake (25 awardees) these totalled $200,000 including $50,000 for awardee fares to Australia and $75,000 for in-country ELT.[21]

A MC will not be responsible for ADS scholarship fees and allowances and return airfares as these are managed by ASG which makes payments to Australian universities. They would not therefore be included in detailed design costing schedules except possibly in a summary table.

Masters ADS awards in Australia

Assuming an expansion of the number of ADS awards for PG study in Australia from the current 25 to 30 pa, and assuming that the program is to conclude after 3 years, the actual ADS scholarship costs over a three year period are broadly as follows:[22]

	Year 1 $'000	Year 2 $'000	Year 3 $'000	Year 4 $'000	Year 5 $'000
In-Australia scholarship costs	2,100	3,900	5,700	3,600	1,800
In-Afghanistan direct scholarship costs	200	200	200	0	0
MC staffing costs	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	0	0
Other MC costs	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	0	0

These amounts do not cover the in-Australian costs of existing student cohorts. Not included are the potentially very substantial staffing, management and administration costs

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[21] Includes some ALA awardee costs that may be reimbursed to the program by ASG.

[22] Based on a 3-year Masters course with 12 months of PCE costed at $190,000. A review of actual costings for the 2011 Afghan intake shows that course costs very between universities and that some awards with no PCE involve an 18 month study period and a total cost of $95,000. Other awards are costed at $180,000. The costings in the table are therefore very much on the high side and should be seen as an absolute maximum.

attributable to the MC. These increase as other types of award and training programs are included in the new program but economies of scale will clearly apply.

These costings highlight that while a three year program covering 90 new PG awards over the period may conclude at the end of year 3 with no further MC management costs, there would be ongoing scholarship costs over the following 2 years totalling $5.4 million.

UG awards in Malaysia

Basic cost data for these awards is shown in *Annex 13*. It is not clear at this stage whether fees and per diems could be managed under current contracts with the parent institutions and paid by AusAID (as with ADS) or whether these would need to be managed by the MC and thus included in design cost schedules. Cost estimates will depend on numbers and start dates.

The table below provides some indicative costings. They assume a pilot program of 15 awards annually for 2 years commencing in 2013 with no intakes after year 2 (2015); that all costs are paid by the MC; an annual stipend and establishment allowance at half of the Australian rate (this is possibly too high) while in Malaysia; 5 students at each campus with course (UG and preparatory) averaged between campuses and courses; living costs including accommodation similarly averaged between the 3 campuses; all awards are for 4 years (ie 4 years for engineering and no preparatory courses and 3 years plus 12 months of PCE/foundation for all others); and all awardees undertake 1 semester in Australia in their 4th year.

	Year 1 (2013) $'000	Year 2 (2014) $'000	Year 3 (2015) $'000	Year 4 (2016 $'000	Year 5 (2017) $'000
In-Malaysia course costs including preparatory courses	130	260	260	200	65
In-Malaysia stipends	185	370	370	280	90
In-Malaysia settling-in allowances & other	45	45	20	20	20
In-Australia course costs	0	0	0	200	200
In-Australia stipends	0	0	0	180	180
Fares including return to Australia	25	25	0	70	70
Additional MC staffing costs	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	0	0
Other Additional MC costs	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	0	0

These costings show that a two year pilot program in Malaysia covering 30 awards might cost around $1.1 million over the initial 2 year period with ongoing costs of around $2.2 million over the next 3 years before all of the awardees graduate and return to Afghanistan.

Short course awards

Short course costs will vary based on location, duration and numbers. A Short Course Award program currently being piloted by ASG involving training in Australia for between

15 and 20 participants and for between 6 and 12 weeks is costed at around $0.5 million (at a cost per participant of $35,000 based on estimates received for a Pakistan agricultural course). On that basis say 2 short courses in Australia for up to 40 participants from Afghanistan may cost $1 million.[23] Given that short-course providers have already been contracted by ASG the impact on MC staffing resources, covering primarily selection, pre-course preparation and post-course M&E would be minimised.

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[23] Short course awards that meet SPDA requirements do not have to be conducted in Australia. They could be conducted in Afghanistan or in third countries.

Annex 12   Monitoring and evaluation

A: Indicative M&E Framework (Scholarships program component)[24]

Program goal	
A Scholarships Program contributing to sustainable development in Afghanistan	Impact will not be measured at goal level but information collected representing the achievement of the objectives will help to demonstrate some contribution towards the goal.

Program objectives – desired effects	Tangible outcomes	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main risks to achieving outcomes	How to manage the risks
Objective 1 *Australia Awards[25] alumni applying their new knowledge and skills in Afghanistan in areas*	**Outcome** *Australia Awards alumni returning to Afghanistan and contributing to the*	▪ Number of alumni remaining in Afghanistan	First compiled end 2012	▪ ADS database ▪ Australia	▪ MC (M&E Specialist)	To be developed through the design process	To be developed through the design process but including:

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[24] The goal may need to be adjusted if other training programs not able to be classified as scholarships are included. The indicative objectives and outputs relate to scholarship programs. Other training programs that may be included in the overall *'Training Program'* would be shown as separate program component(s) with separate objective(s) and outputs.

[25] Terminology will need to be reviewed and updated as necessary during the design process. Current terminology assumes that all AusAID scholarships (ADS and ALAs) fall under the *"Australia Awards"* banner and are described as such in this Framework. Scholarships at the Malaysian campuses of Australian universities could potentially also fall under this banner, especially where some semesters are taken in Australia and given that the degrees awarded are Australian degrees.

Program objectives – desired effects	Tangible outcomes	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main risks to achieving outcomes	How to manage the risks
related to their fields of study.	*development of policy and practice relevant to their fields of study*	▪ Number of alumni applying their new knowledge and skills on a regular basis ▪ Number of alumni reporting alignment between knowledge and skills gained and demands of their jobs ▪ Number of alumni utilising their new skills and knowledge to contribute to policy, management or operational change and practice		Awards (ADS) Survey		but including: ▪ Low number of quality applications ▪ Alumni unable to apply their skills effectively on return	▪ Review/enhance targeting approaches and promotional strategies
Objective 2 *Recognition of Australia as an active partner in the economic and social development of Afghanistan*	*Personal, published or official references to this awards program [and complementary broader program activities], and directly implying positive recognition of the Australian Government's effort*	▪ Number and list of personal, official and published comments made about the program to AusAID staff or staff from WofG partners implying <u>positive recognition</u> of Australia's efforts towards engaging in Afghanistan	Compiled periodically	To be developed through the design process but including: ▪ AusAID files ▪ Periodic	▪ AusAID staff in Afghanistan ▪ MC To be further developed through the design process	▪ Award numbers and allocations fail to meet partner government expectations ▪ Program not perceived as meeting priority training needs	To be developed through the design process but possibly: ▪ Review allocations, sectors and themes and consider adjustments consistent with bilateral commitments and availability of funds

Program objectives – desired effects	Tangible outcomes	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main risks to achieving outcomes	How to manage the risks
	towards engaging in development efforts in Afghanistan	development ▪ Number and list of personal, official and published comments made about the program to AusAID staff or staff from WofG partners implying <u>negative recognition</u> of Australia's efforts towards engaging in Afghanistan development		surveys ▪ Media monitoring			▪ Consider use of complementary assistance mechanisms

Key program outputs	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main Risks to achieving targeted outputs	How to manage the risks
Key Output 1 *Adequate number of eligible applications received and applicants interviewed, selected and placed*	▪ Number of applications – disaggregated by sector, desired applicant profile, gender ▪ Number of eligible applicants shortlisted – disaggregated by sector, desired applicant profile, gender ▪ Number of applicants interviewed – disaggregated by sector, desired applicant	Compiled annually	▪ OASIS database ▪ Post interview records and ADS database	▪ MC	▪ Applicants unable to obtain award offers	▪ Review/improve promotional and marketing strategies ▪ Review/improve placement strategies and approaches

Key program outputs	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main Risks to achieving targeted outputs	How to manage the risks
	profile, gender ▪ Number of applicants offered awards – disaggregated by sector, desired applicant profile, gender					
Key Output 2: *Effective pre-departure support and arrangements*	▪ Number (and percentage) of awardees completing medicals in a timely manner ▪ Number (and percentage) of awardees obtaining visas in time for 1st semester entry ▪ Number (and percentage) of applicants satisfied with pre-departure arrangements ▪ Number (and percentage) of departures occurring within 3 weeks of originally notified (to candidate) departure date ▪ Number (and percentage) of awardees arriving in Australia (or Malaysia) prior to commencement of IAP or other equivalent course	Compiled annually	▪ OASIS database ▪ Post records ▪ ASG (Orima Research) Arrival Survey ▪ MC monitoring visits	▪ MC ▪ ASG	▪ Visa processing in DIAC unable to cope in timely manner with program demands	▪ Liaise with DIAC and if necessary adjust processing timelines
Key Output 3 *Higher education institutions meeting their performance obligations*	▪ Number (and percentage) of awardees commenting positively/negatively on services provided by their institutions ▪ Number of extension requests ▪ Number of terminations	Compiled annually	▪ ASG (Orima Research) Arrival Survey ▪ ASG	ASG (Australia) MC (Malaysia) – to be confirmed	Scholars do not succeed in their studies	▪ Manage award variations if scholars' progress requires ▪ Review effectiveness of course advice arrangements

Key program outputs	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main Risks to achieving targeted outputs	How to manage the risks
			(Orima Research) Ongoing Survey			
Key Output 4 *Scholars graduate and return to Afghanistan*	▪ Course pass rates ▪ Number of scholars leaving Australia and Malaysia ▪ Number of scholars returning to Afghanistan	Compiled annually	▪ Canberra-based databases ▪ Post records ▪ Malaysia-based databases	▪ MC ▪ ASG	Awardees breach visa requirements	▪ Review effectiveness of pre-departure briefing process ▪ Liaise closely with DIAC in Australia ▪ Apply appropriate sanctions as a deterrent to others
Key Output 5 *Alumni participate in M&E surveys and other alumni activities*	▪ Number of alumni responding to post-award Survey Questionnaire ▪ Number of alumni participating in alumni events organised by the Post	Compiled annually	▪ Post records	▪ MC (M&E Specialist)	▪ Poor response to Surveys ▪ Poor participation in alumni events	▪ Review effectiveness of alumni activities on at least an annual basis ▪ Review/adjust survey techniques

Key program outputs	Indicators of success	Collection	Information source	Responsibility for collecting data	Main Risks to achieving targeted outputs	How to manage the risks
Key Output 6 *Gender and disability and other relevant overarching/cross cutting issues are addressed*	▪ Number (and percentage) of applicants provided 'specific assistance' derived from equity measures (disaggregated by gender) ▪ Number (and percentage) of awardees commenting positively/negatively on how the program has promoted gender, disability and other cross-cutting issues (disaggregated by gender) ▪ Number (and percentage) of women and men with disability who apply and become awardees	Compiled annually	▪ ASG (Orima Research) Arrival Survey ▪ ASG (Orima Research) Ongoing Survey ▪ Australia Awards (ADS) Survey ▪ Interview records and ADS /Malaysia awards database	▪ MC ▪ ASG	▪ Transparency and equity objectives difficult to achieve	▪ Transparent selection processes reviewed periodically and strengthened as necessary ▪ Specific gender and disability initiatives reviewed and enhanced as needed.

B: Post award M&E – Other issues

Alumni questionnaire – Key features

The design will need to include a template – which may be further refined by the MC – for the proposed Annual Survey of scholarship outcomes. A typical survey form would cover the following:

- Biographical information

- Scholarship details

- Scholarships and the workplace – key questions to assess how the new skills are being applied

- Relevance of the scholarship studies

- Scholarships and the future – key questions to assess expectations as to the value of the studies

- Study in Australia and Malaysia – small number of questions about the study experience, rounding off what may have been collected previously through the ASG-managed annual Surveys and through MC monitoring in Australia and Malaysia

- Cultural experience – one or two questions about cultural impact

- Suggestions – on how the ADS program could be improved (application, pre-departure, in-Australia, on-return)

Periodic evaluations/case studies

The Alumni Survey responses covering program outcomes may be extended to *'Case Studies'* designed to yield other useful information. They would make more detailed qualitative assessments of how graduates have contributed to a particular sector and organisation and would also involve employers and targeted agencies. The number, timing and focus of such case studies would be considered during program implementation after the results of the first Alumni Surveys have been analysed. Such surveys would help inform arrangements for any subsequent program phase, taking care to protect the confidentiality of alumni responses.

Longer term surveys

The program's outcomes monitoring would cease after 2 years. This is deliberate, as attribution of AusAID award influence on an individual becomes tenuous beyond this length of time. However, if a longer-term follow-up is required (possibly at 5 and 10 year points if the program is extended), a *Modified Survey Approach* could be adopted. This would require a means of tracking alumni over the intervening period, or tracing them on demand.

Annex 13   Australian university campuses in Malaysia

A: Comparison table

The table below summarises commonalities and differences between the three Australian campuses reviewed in Malaysia.

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
Course basics and costings			
UG Bachelor Degree Courses (excluding Medicine, Pharmacy & Medical Bioscience) All 3 years except where shown	▪ Engineering (Chemical; Electrical & Computer Systems; Mechanical; Mechatronics) (4 years) ▪ Business and Commerce ▪ Information Technology ▪ Computer Science ▪ Science (Environmental Management; Biotechnology; Food Science & Technology) ▪ Communication ▪ Arts ▪ Arts (Global) ▪ Various double degree options – 4 years ▪ Monash Melbourne advises that course content is frequently reviewed and could be adjusted to meet specific AusAID requirements with a sufficiently large cohort of Afghan students	▪ Engineering (Civil and Construction; Mechanical; Electrical; Computer Systems; Computer Science; Electronics & Communication; Mechatronics) (4 years) ▪ Commerce (Accounting; Finance; Banking; Entrepreneurship & Marketing; Public relations & Management; Tourism) ▪ Business Administration ▪ Computer Science ▪ Science (Applied Geology; Geophysics) ▪ Technology in Computer Systems & Networking) ▪ Arts (Mass Communication) ▪ 4-year Engineering courses may be at Honours level ▪ Geology course has a focus in year 3 on the oil industry. However, the parent institution provides both a mining and a hydrology stream that could be taken in Perth in the third year. ▪ Other courses have specific options for completion in Perth to broaden the scope of the	▪ Commerce (Accounting; Finance; Marketing; Human Resource Management; Marketing; International Business; Management) ▪ Design (Graphic Design; Multimedia Design) ▪ Engineering (Civil; Electrical and Electronic; Electronics and Computer Systems; Robotics and Mechatronics; Telecommunications and Network Engineering) (4 years) ▪ Science (Biotechnology) ▪ Business Information Systems ▪ Information and Communication technology ▪ Various double degree options – 4 years

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
	ultimate degree		
Other courses – diplomas, Masters etc	▪ Post graduate only – Masters and PhD in various fields and covering all Schools	▪ Diploma and Masters and PhD in various fields	▪ Diplomas (articulating into UG degrees); Masters (Research only); PhD
Costings - University (i) UG course fees (ii) Other fees (iii) PCE/ELT and all other potential support courses	(i) $11,000 pa (Arts & Social Sciences) to $13,000 pa (Engineering & Science) (ii) $500 pa approx (includes some once-only fees (eg application, visa) and per semester fees eg 'Amenities' & Insurance (iii) ELBP $3,500 MUFY $7,000 - $8,500	(i) $7,000 pa (Business; Commerce) to $9,000 pa (Engineering; Geology) (ii) $100 pa (Insurance) (iii) <u>IEP:</u> $1,000 per term <u>EL Bridging:</u> $2,000 per semester <u>Foundation:</u> $5,000 pa <u>Essentially Curtin:</u> $1,000	(i) $6,700 (Commerce/Business to $8,200 (Engineering) (ii) $350 pa (iii) <u>Intensive English:</u> $900 per level <u>Supplementary English:</u> $150-400 per module <u>Foundation:</u> $5,300 pa
Costings – students (i) University provided accommodation – on campus residential college (ii) Apartment rental off campus (iii) Average living costs pa single student (Food, books,	(i) $2,000 pa (single) (ii) $1,200 - $3,600 pa (Sunway Hostel) $7,500 pa 2-3 bedroom apartment (iii) $6,500 pa	(i) $1,500 - $2,200 pa (ii) $1,600 single (Curtin Village & Curtin Villas) $2,700 family – private rental (iii) $3,500 pa	(i) $1,300 - $3,100 pa (ii) $1,100 - $1,800 pa (iii) $3,200 - $5,000 pa

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
transport, entertainment – excl. accommodation)			
Muslim foreign students especially female	▪ Significant numbers especially from countries such as Indonesia; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Indonesia; Bangladesh ▪ Currently negotiating with Aceh authorities to take a substantial cohort of students	▪ Significant numbers especially from Nigeria, Iran, Mauritius	▪ Significant numbers especially students from Bangladesh; Brunei; Indonesia; Iran; Pakistan; Nigeria
Afghan student numbers	None (Note: GoM statistics indicate that there are currently 113 Afghan students of whom 63 are in public universities and 50 in private universities, mainly the Islamic University)		
Key dates – 1st & 2nd semesters	▪ First semester starts 21 February & 2nd semester starts 11 July ▪ There is a 'special' third intake starting 17 August	▪ First semester late February & 2nd semester late July	3 semester entry points: 21 February; 4 July; 5 September
GoM attitudes towards overseas students especially from Afghanistan	Cautious regarding some Middle East (and some African) countries – but visas are granted subject to security checks after university place is confirmed. Very keen to develop as a regional training hub.		
Student placement and preparatory courses			
Recognition of Afghan qualifications	▪ Monash Melbourne advises would need completion of year 12 with 95% average for entry to MUFY and completion of first year from a recognised university (eg	▪ Successful completion of the first 2 years of a degree at Kabul University and separate evidence of English competence ▪ Alternatively, a Curtin-designed <u>Foundation</u>	▪ 12 years of secondary education viewed as equivalent to Year 11 allowing entry to Foundation studies if other requirements (eg IELTS) are met (Based on information

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
	Kabul university) with an average of 90% for entry to an UG degree[26] ▪ Could be reviewed based on additional information about the Afghan education system ▪ Alternative is the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) which can be provided off-campus at Sunway University College and could be packaged as part of the award ▪ Subject to achievement of prescribed scores it meets the entry requirements of Monash UG courses ▪ It is an Australian year 12 equivalent program developed and licensed by Monash ▪ Requires IELTS score of 5.5 and certain levels of mathematics ▪ Duration is 9-10 months (2 semesters) with intakes June and November	Course equivalent to year 12 ▪ The course is discipline-based ie it will reflect the UG field of study chosen ▪ IELTS entry requirement of 5.0 ▪ 1 year course of 2 semesters ▪ With satisfactory performance will allow direct entry to the UG course without further IELTS testing	in NARIC) ▪ Completion of 2 years of study at a recognised Afghan University would allow entry to an UG course if other conditions are met ▪ Alternatively, Swinburne provides a range of Foundation Courses based on the UG fields of Study ▪ 12 months duration ▪ IELTS 5.5 entry with no band below 5.0 ▪ No further IELTS testing required ▪ 3 intakes annually ▪ 4 Foundation programs (Business; Design; Engineering/Science; IT/Multi Media)
IELTS entry requirements for UG courses	▪ 6.5 IELTS with no band lower than 6.0. Equivalent TOEFL scores are acceptable	▪ 6.5 IELTS. Equivalent TOEFL scores are acceptable	▪ 6.0 and no band below 6.0. Equivalent TOEFL scores are acceptable

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▪ [26] For entry to a Monash PG degree course would require completion of a 5 year degree from Kabul University with a minimum overall GPA of Grade C or 70% which may vary according to the PG course selected. Could be reviewed for availability of pathway options based on additional information about the Afghan education system for students that have completed 4 year degrees from Kabul university with a good overall GPA

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
PCE / ELT options	English Language Bridging Program (ELBP) ▪ For students with a conditional Monash award offer ▪ 15 weeks ▪ 2 intakes annually – 15 March to 25 June & 11 October to 4 February ▪ To enter need 5.5 IELTS & no band below 5.0 ▪ Significant academic and bridging program components rather than an orientation towards IELTS scores – there is no further IELTS test for those completing the program successfully	Intensive English Language Program (IEP) ▪ For those lacking EL requirements for entry to Foundation, Diploma or degree courses ▪ 4 levels each of 10 weeks ▪ At highest (advanced) level a Curtin EL test on exit (CUTE) at various bands will translate to the EL requirements for entry to Curtin courses eg Band A equals entry to all courses (similar to 6.5 IELTS). Band D equals entry to EL bridging. English Language Bridging program ▪ 2 intakes February & July each year and each of 1 semester ▪ Requires 5.0 IELTS or band "D" in CUTE test ▪ Direct entry to Curtin courses	Intensive English ▪ Entry level based on Swinburne test – IELTS equivalent entry 4-4.5 ▪ 3 levels of 10 weeks each – Basic; Intermediate and Upper Intermediate ▪ For students not eligible for Foundation or UG programs because of their EL skills ▪ Covers EL and English for Academic Purposes Supplementary English ▪ 3 modules of 12-13 weeks with 4-5 hours per week per module ▪ Separate modules cover Academic Writing; Academic Reading; Listening and Speaking ▪ This program runs while students are undertaking their Foundation or UG programs
Other preparatory course options	▪ MUFY (see above)	▪ Curtin Foundation (see above)	▪ Foundation courses based on fields of study in the chosen UG program (see above)
Support material for placed awardees pre-departure – brochures etc	▪ A package of relevant material is provided on CD pre-arrival	▪ A collection of documents is provided	▪ Some documents are provided but relying mainly on handbooks etc on website
Support with Malaysian visas – students & families and other forms	▪ Monash facilitates visa issue for students by arrangement with GoM	▪ The International Office provides support in areas such as visas, insurance and	▪ Students are met on arrival in Kuching. ▪ Support is provided for family entry – visa

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
of support	Immigration authorities ▪ Student Services provide various types of support ▪ Monash through Sunway University College meets and escorts all overseas students though Immigration	accommodation ▪ Student Services provide various types of support ▪ Students are met on arrival in Miri ▪ Help is provided in finding suitable family accommodation	arrangements and accommodation
	▪ Afghan students need a "Visa with Reference" ▪ All foreign students must obtain a "Student Pass" before entering Malaysia ▪ In Kuala Lumpur students must be escorted through Immigration by a university representative – in Sarawak this is not required: they are in transit in Kuala Lumpur but have an appropriate entry stamp in their passports ▪ Foreign students may work during breaks up to 20 hours per week in designated sectors		
IAP equivalent arrangements – standard & to AusAID specifications	▪ Orientation Week (academic & social activities) which is compulsory would not meet IAP requirements ▪ Can be arranged based on Australian model ▪ Prepared to manage this jointly with Curtin and Swinburne	▪ Orientation Week (academic & social activities) which is compulsory would not meet IAP requirements ▪ Curtin currently has a 7 week "Essentially Curtin" course 10 January to 18 February, including EL, Critical Thinking & computing Skills course that could be adapted to cover the fundamental IAP components – or it may already cover all of the essential requirements ▪ Prepared to manage this jointly with Monash and Swinburne	▪ Orientation Week – which includes a cultural induction component (plus academic & social activities) and which is compulsory would not meet IAP requirements ▪ Can be arranged based on Australian model ▪ Prepared to manage this jointly with Curtin and Monash
Award administration			
Payment & management of student stipends etc for donors & receipt of course and other fees from the scholarship	▪ Can be arranged and currently managed for some other donors eg Government of Botswana ▪ Monash Melbourne would prefer to	▪ Can be arranged and currently managed for some other donors eg Timor Leste	▪ Can be arranged as necessary to meet AusAID requirements

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
donor	oversee and manage for Monash Kuala Lumpur – including tying this to the existing contract with AusAID through a contract amendment		
Access to and potential use of OASIS – via parent institution	▪ Monash Melbourne would prefer to manage on behalf of Monash Kuala Lumpur	▪ May be feasible since OASIS is web-based	▪ Could probably be managed by relying on OASIS system in Melbourne for all financial transactions with Melbourne responsible for passing funds paid by AusAID to Kuching campus
Student support arrangements both in general and by creating an AusAID Contact Officer equivalent (part-time) staff position for AusAID students	▪ Student Services provide some support available to all overseas students ▪ A new position has been created to support overseas scholarship students – covers elements of the AusAID Contact Officer position for ADS students in Australia	▪ Student Services provide some support available to all overseas students ▪ AusAID Contact Officer type arrangements could be developed as necessary	▪ International Student Centre has 3 dedicated staff to provide various types of support including visas, pastoral care for emergencies, insurance and banking, mentoring for international students ▪ Administrative staff each mentor 3-5 international students
On-award support services and completion			
Library access including to parent institution through 'virtual' facilities	▪ Extensive library (50,000 items) plus extensive IT facilities with access to 270,000 E books and serials and 800 electronic databases held/managed by Monash Melbourne	▪ Extensive library (27,000 items) plus IT facilities with access to Curtin Perth E books and serials and electronic databases	▪ Extensive library (17,000 books) plus IT facilities with access to Swinburne E books and serials and electronic databases
Student accommodation- residential colleges	▪ Several hostel facilities (Sunway Residences) used by students within walking distance but a large on-campus accommodation block is nearing completion	▪ On campus both single and shared accommodation plus Curtin Village and Curtin Villas off-campus	▪ On campus (Swinburne Hostel) and off campus connected by bus (Tabuan Plaza)
Tutorial & other assistance	▪ Various types of support are provided (eg counselling, study skills support,	▪ The Learning Centre provides various types of support – both language and academic but no	▪ Through the Learning Centre Academic Support and Academic Success Programs

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
	peer counselling, workshops) but no fixed allocation of tutorial hours	fixed hours of tutorial assistance	provide support in examination techniques, stress and time management, study skills, social skills ▪ Registered counsellors provide academic and personal counselling ▪ No fixed tutorial hours
Special support arrangements for international Muslim students – especially women	▪ No particular services provided by Monash but given other foreign Muslim students including women eg from Indonesia, a 'buddy' system could be arranged. ▪ The Monash University Student Association Malaysia (MUSA) coordinates various sporting, religious and faculty clubs and societies with support and facilities provided by Monash ▪ Includes a 'Monash Islamic Society' which arranges events for members and support in other areas	▪ No particular services provided by Curtin but given other foreign Muslim students including women eg from ME and African countries, informal support systems available ▪ A Student Association coordinates various sporting, religious and faculty clubs and societies with support and facilities provided by Curtin ▪ Includes an Islamic Society	▪ No particular services provided by Swinburne but given other foreign Muslim students including women eg from ME and African countries, informal support systems available ▪ There is a student to student 'Buddy Program' where local students buddy 3-5 international students
Support/supervision for return to home country	▪ GoM Immigration requires departure from Malaysia as visa expires with strict penalties for overstayers (Fine, imprisonment and deportation). ▪ Universities are required to report class absences beyond a certain number of hours to the authorities ▪ Universities do not currently play a particular role in ensuring or monitoring return to home country but may have arrangements with airlines to report 'no shows'		
Degree structure			
Nature of the degree	▪ A fully recognised Australian degree ▪ Testamur shows "Monash University" ▪ Transcript shows only "Monash	▪ A fully recognised Australian degree ▪ Testamur only shows "Curtin University" ▪ Transcript shows only "Curtin University"	▪ A fully recognised Australian degree ▪ Testamur only shows "Swinburne University"

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
	University" – except MUFY shows Sunway campus.		▪ Transcript shows Sarawak campus unless some semesters are taken in Melbourne when it would show both
Ability to do semesters at parent institution and cost implications	▪ Can be done on an "Intercampus Exchange" basis whereby up to 2 semesters may be taken at Monash Melbourne (or South Africa) (NOTE: Monash Melbourne clarified that it had recently been decided to limit this to 1 semester) ▪ Can't be the final semester and must first successfully complete a fixed number of units which in effect means no exchange is possible in Year 1 ▪ The course fees remain at Malaysian rates but other costs are higher plus fares. ▪ Second option is a "Fee-Paying Study Abroad Program" involving study at Monash partner universities around the world or at Monash Melbourne – fees are at host institution rates. (NOTE: Monash Melbourne clarified that under the second option a student would have to repay the difference between Malaysian and Australian course fees for all semesters completed in Malaysia – but that it may be possible to negotiate special arrangements for AusAID-funded students)	▪ Can be done with no restrictions as to numbers of semesters – except first semester is necessarily taken at Miri campus ▪ Can be the final semester or final year ▪ The course fees for all semesters taken in Australia are at Australian rates ▪ While course subjects are identical in various faculties, degrees are designed in a way that encourages completion of say 3rd year in Perth to expand the range of available degree combinations (eg geology/mining – see above) (NOTE: The Perth pathways are highlighted in publications including upgrades of degrees etc such that upgrade expectations are raised)	▪ An exchange program covers 1 or 2 semesters with study at Malaysian course rates after the first year however subject to performance criteria and interview to determine motivation etc ▪ Any number of semesters can be taken at Swinburne Melbourne at Australian course rates ▪ Can complete courses at parent institution picking up additional majors

Issue	MONASH Kuala Lumpur	CURTIN Miri	SWINBURNE Kuching
Visa arrangements for semester(s) in Australia	To be discussed with DIAC Canberra		
Registration at parent institution – and study at Malaysia campus	Students are registered in Monash Melbourne so this should be feasible	Would probably be feasible	May not be feasible. Swinburne Malaysia has its own student management system and student details are only registered with Swinburne Melbourne when they have qualified for their degree and graduate

B: Summary of findings

Summarised below are the key findings drawn from the comparison table.

1   *Award costings*

Generally, for study at Monash Kuala Lumpur, course fees and living expenses are about 50% below those applying in Australia. Course fees and living costs are cheaper still at the Sarawak campuses - about one third less than the equivalent fees/costs in Kuala Lumpur. Semesters taken in Australia will be at Australian course rates but for two of the campuses (Monash and Swinburne) may be at local course rates for one or up to two semesters. Additional semesters in Australia are at Australian course rates and for Monash this could involve adjustments to Australian course rates for all semesters previously completed in Malaysia. At least 2 scholarships could be funded at the cost of an equivalent scholarship taken in Australia – even if some semesters are taken in Australia.

2   *IELTS entry requirements and ELT and other preparatory course options*

All of the institutions have PCE and Foundation courses that would allow Afghan students to undertake preparatory studies leading to direct entry into UG programs. The extensive EL and Foundation course options that are available are at least on par with those found in Australia. For some of these an IELTS score of 5.5 and no band below 5.0 will be required whereas for the ADS PG awards Australian institutions will accept a score of 5.0 subject to PCE of up to 12 months.

3   *Duty of care*

Fundamentally, significant support arrangements are already in place in each of the institutions. All have significant cohorts of overseas students, some on donor-sponsored scholarships. The institutions are prepared to cooperate and manage an IAP-type course jointly and one campus already has a program that could probably be adapted to meet IAP-type requirements. On-campus accommodation is readily available especially for female students and it should be easier to encourage female candidates to study in Malaysia.

4   *Courses matching fields of study based on AusAID's likely sectoral priorities*

The institutions in Malaysia do not cover agriculture, education, health (except medicine and pharmacy), or rural development. Some elements of 'governance' broadly defined are covered. Current PG awards in Australia, while targeted to Ministries responsible for these sectors, often do not have a distinct sectoral focus and may include very broad study fields such as engineering; development economics; and public administration that do not specifically address AusAID priority sectors in Afghanistan. Similar areas are either fully or partly covered by courses available in Malaysia.

Mining is a new sectoral focus for the program and at the Curtin campus a science degree in geology could be of particular value to that sector especially when taken as two years in Malaysia concluding with a final year in Australia.

5   Capacity of each institution to manage awards to AusAID standards

All of the institutions have the capacity to manage awards but before such a program may commence it will be necessary to negotiate appropriate management arrangements and probably to execute simplified versions of contracts modelled on those currently managed by ASG with the Australian parent institutions. Such negotiations would need to commence early in the life of the new program to facilitate a possible first intake in 2013 (first or second semester).

All of the institutions are prepared to develop appropriate management arrangements where these do not currently exist to meet AusAID requirements – all already manage some scholarships for donors.

6   SPDA definitional requirements

Degrees meet all Australian quality standards. They are listed under the AQF and are ultimately indistinguishable from those awarded in Australia. While covered by Australian government quality controls they are not delivered by an Australian tertiary institution. The degree documentation makes no reference to the Malaysian campus – except the degree transcripts for one of the institutions.

Subject to consultation with ASG, these scholarships could potentially be classified as '*Australian Study and Professional Development Awards*' (should this be considered important[27]) which distinguishes these types of scholarships from the 'Third Country' Pacific Regional Scholarships offered at the University of the South Pacific.

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[27] SPDA awards are 'tied' and can be restricted to Australian institutions – including presumably their overseas campuses.

Annex 14   Consultations held

Team members

Kai Detto (Consultant – Team leader)
Simone Corrigan (AusAID Canberra – meetings in Australia)
Mohibullah Safi (AusAID Kabul – some meetings in Kabul)

Consultations

The following table summarises consultations with current and potential stakeholders, in Canberra, Melbourne, Kabul, Kuala Lumpur, Miri and Kuching.

Timing	Location	People/Agencies consulted
26 October	Canberra	AusAID Canberra
27 October	Melbourne	University of Melbourne – Staff and Afghan students
"	"	La Trobe University – Staff
28 October	Canberra	Australian National University – Staff and Afghan students
"	"	AusAID Canberra
29 October	Canberra	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
31 October	Kabul	AusAID Kabul – Minister Counsellor & First Secretary
1 November	"	US Embassy
"	"	DAFA staff
"	"	Ministry of Finance – Director Aid Co-ordination
2 November	"	DAFA staff
"	"	British Embassy
4 November	"	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development – Deputy Minister and staff
6 November	"	Ministry of Public Health – Director General and staff
"	"	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock – Deputy Minister
7 November	"	Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff
"	"	Ministry of Education – Minister and staff
"	"	South Korean Embassy – Counsellor (Phone discussion)
"	"	Ministry of Mines – Minister and staff
8 November	"	Silk Road Solutions – ELT Provider
"	"	NZ AID (Phone discussion)
"	"	British Council of Afghanistan
9 November	"	Australian Ambassador
"	"	AusAID Kabul – Minister Counsellor & First Secretary
10 November	"	American University of Afghanistan (Phone discussion)

"	"	Debriefing Ministry of Finance & AusAID Kabul
6 December	Kuala Lumpur	Australian Education International, Australian High Commission
"	"	Monash University, Kuala Lumpur Campus
8 December	Miri	Curtin University, Miri Campus
9 December	Kuching	Swinburne University, Kuching Campus
16 December	Melbourne	Monash University
"	"	Swinburne University