

Guidelines for Establishing New Scholarships, Prizes and Awards at The University of Auckland

(Updated by Scholarships Sub-Committee; 26 March 2009)

The University is often approached by potential donors who wish to establish scholarships and prizes. These proposals are often made in the first instance to Faculties or to External Relations. Regulations are subsequently drawn up within the Scholarships Office. Ultimately these regulations are considered by the Board of Graduate Studies and Senate, and are approved by Council.

To assist with the establishment of new scholarships, prizes and awards, the following guidelines, mainly codifying University practice, have been drawn up. These should be read alongside the templates outlining the standard regulations and wording for new scholarships and prizes (<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/scholarships> > Guidelines for Setting Up New Scholarships and Prizes).

1. **Definitions**

- (i) Scholarships are normally awarded to students who are academically meritorious, or who have the potential to become so.
- (ii) Prizes are normally awarded to students achieving the highest mark in a particular course.
- (iii) Awards are normally established to recognise personal qualities or to assist targeted groups, including students with financial need. They are not based on academic merit in the way that scholarships and prizes are.

2. **Suggested minimum values**

- (i) \$1,000 for prizes
- (ii) \$2,000 for awards
- (iii) \$5,000 for scholarships
- (iv) \$10,000 + for scholarships where selection includes an interview.

3. **Kind of study**

Donors should be given the opportunity to specify the kind of study they wish to support (e.g. a prize for a particular course; a scholarship for undergraduate, postgraduate (masters and/or doctoral); year of degree; field(s) of study; full-time/part-time study).

4. **Criteria**

- (i) The dominant criterion for most scholarships and prizes is academic merit. For prizes this tends to mean gaining the highest mark in a particular course. For scholarships it is recommended that the phrase 'demonstrated or potential academic merit' is used. There should always be a statement as to how academic merit is to be assessed e.g. by results in a certain set of examinations or by a grade point average.
- (ii) For all scholarships it is recommended that the following phrase is included: "Students must have gained admission to the university and be enrolled in the requisite programme of study in order to receive payment".

(iii) Where a scholarship is to assist in the completion of advanced research work, academic merit should be coupled with 'and the quality of the research proposal or project'. This will require provision in the regulations for a description of the research proposal or project but should allow the selection committee to make an assessment without usurping the role of those determining eligibility for postgraduate degree registration.

(iv) All scholarships supporting postgraduate research should include a statement that the scholarship will be awarded conditional upon the ability of the University to provide adequate supervision and resources.

(v) Scholarships based on academic merit will usually be approved for listing on the winner's academic record. However awards based on personal qualities (see 8 below) and where no academic criteria are required will normally not be listed, and in some circumstances will be administered and paid out within the relevant faculties.

5. Positive discrimination

The University supports scholarships, prizes and awards for students of merit from under-represented groups. Such merit may include demonstrated academic merit, or in the case of scholarships, potential academic merit; and leadership capability. In the case of potential merit, references should be required.

6. Donors often wish to provide scholarships, prizes or awards for students from designated groups.

(i) In such cases they should be made aware that the University is governed by the Education Act, its own statements of mission and goals, and the general law, particularly (in this context) the Human Rights Act 1993. The University will support prizes, scholarships and awards that are consistent with University values and the law. If the intended purpose of the scholarship, prize or award is inconsistent with University values and/or the law, then the donation cannot be accepted. If a scholarship, prize or award has to be declined by the University, donors may choose to create an external prize or scholarship, but they may not be promoted or in any way endorsed by the University.

(ii) Donors should be encouraged to define eligibility criteria as widely as possible so as to maximize the number of potential candidates.

7. Support of study at Auckland and overseas

University of Auckland scholarships will normally be for students to come to study, or to continue studying, at The University of Auckland. Awards that enable University of Auckland students to study abroad may also be supported.

8. Personal Qualities

It is legitimate for donors of scholarships, prizes or awards to stipulate certain personal qualities to be looked for in applicants. Words like 'contribution' and 'participation' commonly capture the degree of well-roundedness donors sometimes want to nurture and support. It is important in these instances to devise assessment tools that measure those qualities e.g. 'participation in community organisations',

'contribution to school life'. Phrases such as 'good moral character', which cannot be easily and consistently interpreted, should be avoided. The naming of referees will likely be essential and, if necessary (bearing in mind the value of the scholarship), interviewing may also be considered (for scholarships with a value of \$10,000 or more).

9. Employment with donors

- (i) It is generally not desirable for the terms of a scholarship to tie the successful student to work, then or in the future, for the donor company, although such employment may be made available as an option for the scholarship holder. Nor should a criterion relate specifically to the attributes of, or the interests of, a specific employer or donor. Such objectives can usually be achieved by phrasing such as 'potential contribution to the X profession' or 'a responsible member of the Y profession'. Once again the application form should elicit information from which assessment can be made.
- (ii) Donor companies should be encouraged to keep the criteria for an award broad enough to attract suitable numbers of applicants.

10. Interviews with Selection Committee

Interviews are not normally expected for scholarships of less than \$10,000 value. Interview panels should contain an odd number of people, and be weighted towards University staff members.

11. Financial Hardship

Donors frequently wish to alleviate financial hardship. The University accepts and encourages this aim. In such cases a regulation that states that financial need or hardship is a criterion for selection should be included, with applicants asked to produce evidence of their financial need.

12. The issue of whether or not the Scholarship can be held concurrently with other scholarships

This should be considered on a case-by-case basis. As a guide, PhD students are permitted up to \$35,000 in concurrent grants before one or more grant is prorated. A guideline for Masters students might be \$20,000, and for undergraduate students, \$15,000. This is not an issue for prizes or awards.

13. Selection Committee

It is expected that the relevant Head of Department (or equivalent) will recommend prizes. Scholarships and most awards require a selection committee. Normally there will be only one member external to the University, representing the donor, on a selection committee. If there is an equity element in the scholarship, there should be a member of the selection panel representing the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities).

14. Intellectual Property

Any provision in the scholarship relating to intellectual property or restriction on publication rights must conform to University policies. The receipt of a scholarship should not compromise the ability of the scholar or their supervisor to publish their work. A short delay in publication may be acceptable in cases where IP has to be protected

first, but there should be an obligation on the organisation requiring that delay to complete procedures to protect the IP (in connection with UniServices) as soon as is reasonably practical.

15. Process and consultation

It is important at the formative stages of prize and scholarship establishment, that Faculties and External Relations discuss the proposals and possible wording with the Chair of the Scholarships Sub-Committee of the Board of Graduate Studies and the Manager of the Scholarships Office. This will help to ease the passage of the terms of the prize or scholarship through the University Committees, Senate and Council.

16. Unacceptable donor wishes

In the case of unsolicited donations, every effort should be made to structure the regulations of the scholarship, prize or award according to these guidelines. There may arise occasions on which a donor's wishes cannot be accommodated within these guidelines. In such cases there will need to be an early discussion with the Chair of the Scholarships Sub-Committee to ascertain whether the University is able to accept the donation or must decline it.

These guidelines must be reviewed on or before 1 November 2010.