Commitment to Teach Policy

1. Purpose

The Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships (CTS) Program Commitment to Teach (CTT) Policy articulates the eligible employment options, eligible educational settings, and process for the CTT obligation of individuals who are in receipt of a Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the CTS Grant Opportunity Guidelines (Scholarship Guidelines) for the relevant round and the terms of the Scholarship Agreement available on the Scholarships website.

2. Background

The Scholarship Guidelines relevant to each scholarship round and the Scholarship Agreement outline the CTT obligation. CTS recipients will be required to undertake teaching employment in eligible educational settings (refer to section 3) upon completion of their initial teacher education (ITE) program. This obligation must be fulfilled within 10 years of the scholarship funding completion date.

3. Eligible work and eligible educational settings

The Scholarship Guidelines for the relevant round define eligible employment for the fulfilment of the CTT obligation as a teaching role that requires an ITE qualification, within an eligible educational setting.

An eligible educational setting is a government school or a government-run early learning setting. CTS recipients should refer to the relevant state or territory education department website to locate government schools and/or government-run early learning settings.

For the purposes of the CTS Program, employment in non-teaching roles (such as paraprofessional, education support, school counsellors) or employment under a permission to teach arrangement, does not meet this requirement.

The Australian Government Department of Education (the Department) is not a teacher employer and cannot employ CTS recipients, confirm a recipient's employment, identify employment opportunities or provide employment related advice.

4. Calculation of the CTT

The CTT requirement is up to 4 years of full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching for an undergraduate-qualified teacher and up to 2 years of FTE teaching for a postgraduate-qualified teacher. The CTT amount directly relates to the amount of scholarship funding received:

- scholarship funding of $40,000 results in a CTT obligation of 4 years FTE
- scholarship funding of $35,000 results in a CTT obligation of 3.5 years FTE
- scholarship funding of $20,000 results in a CTT obligation of 2 years FTE.

Recipients have 10 years to fulfil the CTT obligation, commencing from the scholarship funding completion date. Where a recipient undertakes an ITE program which extends beyond the scholarship funding period, the additional study time will reduce the 10-year period to fulfil the CTT.

Any teaching employment undertaken during the ITE program or prior to completion/conferral of the ITE program will not count towards the CTT obligation, including any teaching undertaken by recipients completing an employment-based pathway program.

A CTT obligation may be fulfilled through a combination of full-time, part-time, fixed-term contract and relief/casual teaching employment.

If a CTS recipient gains part-time, fixed-term or relief/casual teaching employment, the full-time equivalent requirement must still be fulfilled. For example, approximately 6.5 years teaching at a part-time rate (approx. 3 days a week for each year) may be equivalent to the 4 years full-time teaching required to fulfil the CTT obligation for recipient undertaking an undergraduate ITE program.

As a general guide, the CTT obligation may be calculated as follows:

- Undergraduate ITE recipients: approximately 800 days (200 days per year) to complete their 4-year FTE CTT obligation; and
- Postgraduate ITE recipients: approximately 400 days (200 days per year) to complete their 2-year FTE CTT obligation.

Periods of long-term leave (such as maternity/parental or long service leave) are not counted as service towards the completion of the CTT obligation.

5. Evidence collected

For a recipient to demonstrate their progress towards fulfilling the CTT, the Department will collect employment information and confirm teacher registration status on an annual basis, using a form provided by the Department.

A recipient will be required to provide official evidence to support their progress in fulfilling the CTT, such as a Statement of Service.

Following the submission of evidence each year, the Department will provide recipients with an update confirming their progress towards fulfilling the CTT obligation.

6. Extensions to the 10-year completion requirement

6.1 Extension criteria

A CTS recipient may seek the Department's approval for an extension to the 10-year CTT completion requirement

If applying to the Department for approval of an extension to the CTT timeframe, recipients must demonstrate adequate attempts to fulfil the CTT obligation, including evidence of any completed portions of the CTT. A recipient should apply for an extension as soon as practicable.

The Department will only consider approving a request in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

6.2 Seeking an extension

Individuals must submit any request for extension via the form provided by the Department, which is available upon request. Submitted forms must include all required official supporting evidence to substantiate the claim.

Requests for an extension to the CTT timeframe must include:

- Reason for request
- Relevant evidence to fully support the extenuating circumstances for the extension request.

6.3 Consideration of extension application and decision

The Department will consider the request and all relevant evidence provided to determine if the extension can be granted. If additional evidence is requested, the CTS recipient will have 14 days to respond with supplementary evidence. Should additional time be required to obtain evidence, the recipient must request additional time in writing before the 14 days has been reached.

Recipients will be advised of the outcome in writing within 30 days of the initial request or where additional evidence is required, within 30 days of the receipt of supplementary evidence.

Where an extension is not approved, a recipient will be provided with information on the next steps and may have to repay some, or all the scholarship funding.

The Department’s decisions to approve or reject extensions are final and there is no mechanism to appeal these decisions.

7. Complaints

Any complaint about a decision made by the Department will be handled in accordance with the CTS Complaints Handling Policy.