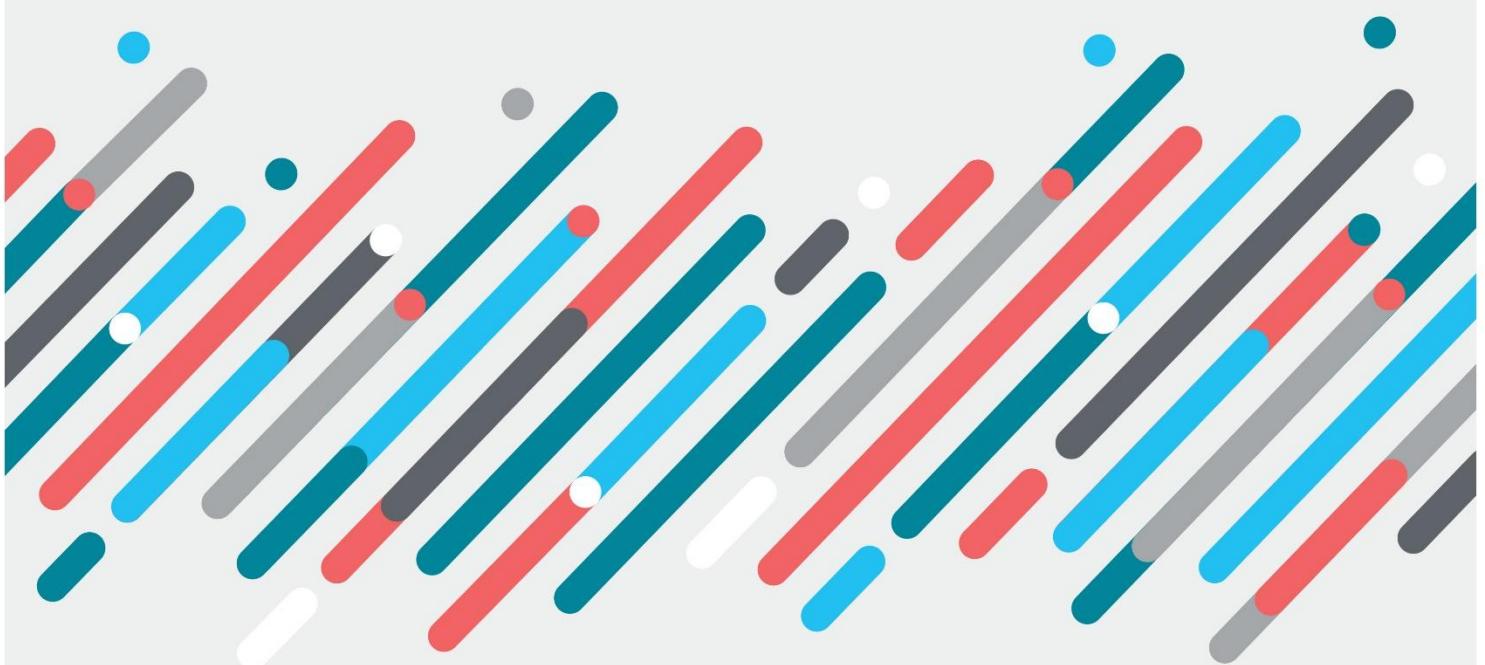




Australian Government
Department of Education

Commonwealth Prac Payment

Student Guide



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Purpose

This guide is to help you apply for the Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP).

It is intended to help you better understand the CPP program and navigate the application with your higher education provider.

This document does not replace information or guidance provided by your higher education provider or other information for students regarding the CPP.

This document includes links and is intended to be provided electronically.

What is the Commonwealth Prac Payment?

The CPP is a government payment for students studying teaching, nursing, midwifery, and social work. If your course requires mandatory placement/s (also known as practicums), you may be eligible for the payment while completing those placements.

For example, in a three-year social work Bachelor's degree, you might get the CPP for a 2-week placement in year 1, for two separate 6-week placements in year 2 and a 12-week placement in year 3.

You can find out more at: [Commonwealth Prac Payment](#).

If you are a **Diploma of Nursing student** at a TAFE or a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), visit [Commonwealth Prac Payment \(CPP\) | Your Career](#) for information on how to apply for [CPP \(VET\)](#).

Definitions

The below outlines key words or statements contained in the document and their meaning.

Domestic student	You meet Commonwealth supported places (CSP) citizenship and residency requirements for CPP
Higher education provider	The institution where you are studying (for example your university)
Unique Student Identifier (USI)	Your personal education number required for all nationally recognised study in Australia. You must have one to be in a CSP.

	It is made up of 10 letters and numbers and stays with you for life.
Course of study	A course you are enrolled in leading to a higher education award e.g. Bachelor of Nursing
Commonwealth supported place (CSP)	A subsidised place at an Australian university or approved higher education provider

Questions & answers about applying

Before applying for the CPP

Before applying for the CPP, check whether you meet the eligibility criteria. You can check your eligibility by visiting the [Commonwealth Prac Payment eligibility checker](#).

Am I eligible?

From 1 July 2025, to be eligible for the CPP, you need to meet all 5 of the following eligibility criteria:

1. You are a domestic student
2. You are enrolled in a [Commonwealth supported place](#)
3. You are completing a Bachelor's or Master's degree in a course of study that leads to your qualification (known as entry-to-practice) in teaching, nursing, midwifery, or social work and
4. Within your course, you are undertaking a mandatory placement/s that either:
 - a. averages 30 hours or more per week for the duration of the placement; **OR**
 - b. for midwifery students only – you are undertaking a continuity of care placement, which prevents you from maintaining paid work due to your placement.
5. That you:
 - a. are currently receiving a Commonwealth income support payment (for example ABSTUDY, Austudy, Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension or DVA Education Allowance); **OR**
 - b. meet a 'Need to Work Test' and 'Income test.'

The 'Need to Work Test' requires that you provide evidence (a pay slip or a letter from your employer) to your higher education provider confirming you work an average of **more than** 15 hours per week during your normal study period. This needs to be either in the four weeks before you apply for CPP or the four weeks before your placement starts — whichever comes first.

The 'Income Test' requires you to provide evidence to your higher education provider to show that your individual income is less than \$1,536.37 per week (pre-tax), including income from state, territory or Commonwealth scholarships during the same period.

The individual income threshold is indexed annually. To check the current indexed income threshold, please visit [Commonwealth Prac Payment for students](#).

Eligibility under exceptional circumstances

If there are circumstances affecting your ability to meet the eligibility criteria for placement hours or the income-related requirements, you may be able to apply for CPP under exceptional circumstances.

For example, if you are a student with a disability and can demonstrate reasonable adjustments to exempt you from meeting the 30-hour placement requirements, you may be eligible for exceptional circumstances. More information on exceptional circumstances is provided in this document.

You should also discuss your individual circumstances with your higher education provider.

How to apply for Commonwealth Prac Payment?

Prior to applying for CPP, it is recommended that you check your eligibility by visiting [Commonwealth Prac Payment eligibility checker](#).

When to apply:

You can submit your CPP application before your planned placement. Each university or higher education provider sets its own application dates, so check with your provider to find out:

- How far in advance you can apply
- What steps you need to follow

How often to apply:

You only need to submit one CPP application each year while you're enrolled in your course and required to complete mandatory placements.

- If you have multiple placements in the same year, you don't need to apply again for each one.
- Before each additional placement, your provider will ask you to confirm your circumstances haven't changed and that you still meet the eligibility requirements. This keeps you eligible without a new full application.

What you'll need:

Prepare your application form and supporting documents and submit them according to your provider's instructions.

- If you're unsure about the documents required, contact your provider before submitting.

Important:

Incomplete applications or missing evidence can delay assessment, so double-check everything before you submit.

Where to find the application form:

Each provider has its own CPP application form. To apply, you should:

- visit your higher education provider's website for the application form and instructions
- ask your course coordinator or placement coordinator about the process
- contact the student administration/enrolment area at your higher education provider.

Regardless of where you study, you'll need to complete a CPP application form and provide evidence that you meet the eligibility requirements.

What evidence is required to support my application?

You must provide evidence to your higher education provider with your application to show how you meet the CPP eligibility criteria. Some examples of evidence may include:

- a payment summary from another government agency confirming income
- payroll prints
- time and wages sheets or pay slips
- a letter from your employer.

For self-employed students, evidence might include:

- client invoicing and billing information and/or sole trader timesheets. For CPP eligibility purposes, a sole trader's gross income means the income remaining after deducting business expenses.

Exceptional circumstances

If you believe you meet most of the eligibility criteria, but you don't meet one or more of the other CPP eligibility criteria such as the 30-hour placement requirement, or the Need to work/Income test, you might still be able to receive the CPP under exceptional circumstances. These circumstances must meet program requirements.

You need to submit an application for exceptional circumstances to your higher education provider before your placement. Make sure you talk to your higher education provider about how far in advance you need to submit your application and the type of supporting documentation you need to provide to demonstrate eligibility.

If the circumstances are ongoing, successful exceptional circumstances applications may be valid for the duration of the relevant evidence (e.g. an Individual Education Plan), up to 12 months. You will need to re-apply to your higher education provider after 12 months.

For temporary circumstances, exceptional circumstances will apply only to the affected placement period (i.e. 4 weeks) or where you are approved for a specific period.

You will need to apply for CPP through the standard application process for any future placements unless new exceptional circumstances arise.

If you are applying for exceptional circumstances, please refer to the journey map/s.

How long will it take to process my application?

Talk to your higher education provider to find out about application processing times.

How will I know if my application has been successful?

Your higher education provider will let you know the outcome of your application.

For more information on the application process, please refer to the student journey map/s in this guide.

Disputes

Can I disagree with the outcomes of my application?

Yes. If your application is not successful, you have options:

For standard applications:

- Start by talking to your higher education provider to understand why your application was declined.
- Request a formal review
 - You can seek a review through your provider's complaints or grievance process. This may be called an 'appeal' and will follow your providers' existing policies.
- Refer to the National Student Ombudsman (NSO)
 - The NSO can investigate complaints about a range of student issues.

For Exceptional Circumstances applications:

- Start by talking to your higher education provider to understand why your application was declined.
- Contact the Department of Education:
 - You can lodge a written complaint with the department in line with the Department of Education's complaints policy. Check the department's Complaints Factsheet for guidance.
 - Before doing so, you may email the Commonwealth Prac Payment team at: CommonwealthPracPayment@education.gov.au
- If you're unhappy with how the department handled your complaint you can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman. Note: The Ombudsman usually won't investigate unless you've first raised the issue with the department.

Payments

How much CPP will I receive per week, and for how long?

In 2026, the CPP is \$338.60 per week for eligible students in teaching, nursing, midwifery, and social work. The amount is benchmarked to the single Austudy rate.

The payment amount will change each year as the amount is indexed annually on 1 January.

How is the payment delivered?

If you are completing a Bachelor's or Master's degree, CPP will be paid into your nominated bank account by your higher education provider, who will let you know when you can expect to receive your CPP.

The total CPP you receive over the course of your study will depend on the duration of your placement and your course of study.

Course of study - Bachelor's and Master's	Number of weeks supported - maximum
Teaching (Master's)	12 weeks
Teaching (Bachelor's)	16 weeks
Nursing	20 weeks
Midwifery	26 weeks
Social Work	26 weeks

**If you are a midwifery student undertaking a Continuity of Care placement, please talk to your higher education provider.*

Reporting CPP as income to other agencies

Who should I tell if I receive CPP?

You should tell:

- Services Australia (SA) or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA):
 - If you already receive payments from SA or DVA, you must include CPP in your regular income reporting.
- Australian Taxation Office (ATO):
 - CPP is considered ordinary income, so you must report the amount you receive in your annual tax return at the end of the financial year.
- Impact on other payments:
 - The CPP may affect your eligibility for other income support payments.

Learn more about when and how to report CPP to [SA](#), [DVA](#) and the [ATO](#) by checking their official guidelines.

What documentation will I receive?

You'll need documentation to report your CPP income correctly each financial year. Here's what to expect:

- Payment Summary:
 - Your higher education provider will give you a payment summary showing the total CPP income you received for the relevant financial year.
- Tax Information:
 - CPP is taxable income, but your provider will not withhold tax on your behalf.
 - You must declare CPP as income in your tax return.
- Follow any instructions provided by your higher education provider.

Important: If you don't report your CPP income to the ATO correctly, you could end up with a tax debt

Student responsibilities

What are my responsibilities as a student applying for CPP?

You are responsible for:

- completing your placement in line with course requirements and entry-to-practice standards
- notifying your higher education provider of any changes to your circumstances
- declaring any CPP income to the appropriate agencies, including:
 - Services Australia
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs
 - Australian Taxation Office.

What are my responsibilities as a student who is seeking a review of a CPP decision?

You are responsible for:

- providing supporting documentation as requested by the reviewer
- maintaining respectful communication (written or verbal)
- understanding that all dispute scenarios will be handled through a fair, timely and impartial process.

Other resources

Where can I find more information about CPP?

After speaking with your higher education provider, if you have further questions about the CPP process, you should refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Who can I contact if I have questions about the CPP?

Talk to your higher education provider if you have questions about your eligibility or their application process.

Student Journey Map – Higher education students

Student Journey Map – Eligible for CPP

Step 1	You enroll in teaching, nursing, midwifery, or social work qualification that requires you to undertake a practicum placement
Step 2	You talk to your higher education provider about your practicum placement dates and determine your eligibility for CPP
Step 3	You apply for CPP and provide evidence to demonstrate eligibility to your higher education provider
Step 4	You find out if you are eligible for CPP and the timing of the payment
Step 5	You tell Services Australia you will be receiving CPP and placement dates* *Only relevant to students in receipt of an Income Support Payment (ISP)
For subsequent placements (within 12 months of initial application)	
Step 6	You confirm there are no changes in circumstances for subsequent placements
Step 7	You tell Services Australia you will be receiving CPP and placement dates (including any indexation on the payment if it is received after 1 January of the following calendar year) * *Only relevant to students in receipt of an ISP
Step 8	You report CPP to the Australian Taxation Office as part of your annual tax return
For subsequent placement years	
Step 9	Refer to step 3

Student Journey Map – Not eligible for CPP or seeking exceptional circumstances

Step 1	You enroll in a teaching, nursing, midwifery, or social work qualification that requires you to undertake a practicum placement		
Step 2	You check CPP eligibility criteria and determine if you are eligible (refer to the eligibility checker)		
Step 3	You contact your higher education provider (student services or placement coordinator) to discuss your eligibility for exceptional circumstances.		
Step 4	You are advised you may be eligible for exceptional circumstances	OR	You are advised by your higher education provider that you are not eligible for CPP, including exceptional circumstances
Step 5	You apply for exceptional circumstances through your higher education provider	OR	You may raise a dispute about the outcome with your higher education provider or contact the National Student Ombudsman

Student Journey Map – Assessment for exceptional circumstances

Step 1	You enroll in a teaching, nursing, midwifery, or social work qualification that requires you to undertake a practicum placement		
Step 2	You determine, or have been advised by your higher education provider, that you are ineligible for CPP, but may qualify for exceptional circumstances because: <ul style="list-style-type: none">you do not meet all the eligibility criteria for reasons outside of your control and the reasons are temporary, uncommon, irregular or unusualyou meet the eligibility criteria, but cannot provide documents to support your application due to reasons outside of your control		
Step 3	You apply for exceptional circumstances through your higher education provider and submit relevant evidence to them		
Step 4	Your higher education provider makes a recommendation to the Department of Education, who considers all applications under exceptional circumstances		
Step 5	You are advised you are eligible for exceptional circumstances	OR	You are advised you are not eligible for exceptional circumstances
Step 6	You may follow up with the Department of Education or the Commonwealth Ombudsman if you disagree with the decision		
Step 7	You tell Services Australia you will be receiving CPP and placement dates		
Step 8	You report CPP to the Australian Taxation Office as part of your annual tax return		