

AEU FEDERAL REFUGEE TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIP

Supporting refugee background students to complete tertiary studies

Overview

The AEU Federal Refugee Tertiary Scholarship, funded by the Australian Education Union – Federal, supports refugee background students from public schools to undertake tertiary study. One scholarship is offered per year, for students completing Year 12 in 2026 and commencing full-time study at university or TAFE in 2027.

Eligibility Check / Location or Cohort Basis

This scholarship is open to refugee background students who have attended public school anywhere in Australia. Applicants must have arrived in Australia as a refugee during their lifetime and hold Australian citizenship or permanent resident status.

Scholarship Value

Funding is awarded over three years at \$3,000 per year (a total of \$9,000). A relocation fee may also be available to assist students moving from their home town to university or TAFE, subject to eligibility.

Eligible Expenses

The scholarship provides financial assistance to support tertiary study-related expenses, including but not limited to:

- Tuition and course fees
- Textbooks and learning materials
- Laptop or device for study
- Internet access
- Travel and accommodation linked to study requirements

Both face-to-face and online courses (or blended programs) are eligible.

Basic Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have arrived in Australia as a refugee during their lifetime
- Be an Australian citizen or hold Australian permanent resident status
- Have attended a public school in Australia
- Be currently in Year 12 in a public school, enrolling in full-time tertiary study in the following academic year
- Be enrolling or planning to enrol full-time in a tertiary course of one or more academic year's duration at an approved Australian university or TAFE
- Have sufficient English proficiency to meet the IELTS requirements for university or TAFE entry (both applicant and principal must reference this in the application)
- Priority is given to applicants who have not previously undertaken tertiary education

Selection Criteria

The selection panel will assess:

- Academic transcript and potential/ability to complete the nominated course
- Evidence that current study, academic record or work experience is appropriate to the nominated tertiary study
- Evidence of hardship that may prevent a successful transition to post-school study or training
- Positive attitude towards schooling and participation in school life
- Contribution to community and/or extracurricular activities

Selection Process

Applications are reviewed by an independent PEF selection panel; a representative of the AEU may also participate. The panel assesses applications between September and November, with the PEF Board approving the final list of scholars by the end of November. Applicants are notified in December.

How to Apply

Applications must be submitted online via PEF-Apply. Sign up [here](#) to access the form.

Note: All sections of the application must be completed before submission.

Information required

Student and family information

- Contact information
- Proof of enrolment (or planned enrolment) — institution name, address, contact email
- Background information, including refugee/citizenship or residency status
- Languages spoken at home
- Family composition and household structure
- Employment status
- Education levels of immediate family
- Disability, learning difficulty or additional needs (if applicable)
- Socio-economic context
- How the applicant heard about the scholarship

Written components

- Why you are a suitable candidate (max. 400 words)
- How current study/work experience supports your goal (max. 250 words)
- Perceived barriers to tertiary study
- Year 12 results or latest academic transcript (digital copy)
- Personal reference (PDF/Word, max. 400 words)
- Supporting statement from Principal, referencing the applicant's English language proficiency



Submitting Your Application

Applications open in June and close in September each year. Once offered the scholarship, the student must provide confirmed evidence of enrolment before payments can be made. Payments are made by electronic transfer into the scholar's bank account, in full-year instalments, subject to full-time enrolment for the year.

Further Information / Contact

For support or clarification, contact the Public Education Foundation on 02 7814 2806 or email scholarships@publiceducationfoundation.org.au.