



# Ministry Candidate Support Grant

POL-PEO-25

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## Purpose

In accordance with the 30th Synod's Resolution 13.70 and resolutions 14.195 to 14.197 of the Synod Standing Committee, the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod commits to attracting and encouraging candidates to experience the call of God to full-time ministry by providing financial support and other assistance during their ministry candidature. All support will be in accordance with the stated resolutions and this policy. The allocation of financial support to individual candidates is the responsibility of the Board of Christian Formation (BCF).

## Scope

This policy applies to ministry candidates within Trinity College Queensland (TCQ) and is effective from 1 July 2018 in accordance with the resolutions.

This policy does not apply to lay students or ordained persons undertaking further study.

## Policy

1. A ministry candidate who has an urgent, financial situation may apply for a ministry candidate support grant (the grant). The grant may be used as a contribution towards costs related to health, accommodation, food, transport and utilities to relieve short term pressures whilst longer term plans and resolutions are put in place.
2. To be considered for the grant, the candidate must inform their presbytery of their circumstances of financial hardship. They must also indicate the level of assistance required.
3. If the presbytery is unable to meet the request for financial assistance fully, they recommend that the candidate sends an application for the grant for the balance of the financial assistance to be considered by the Queensland Synod office (the Synod office).
4. The presbytery office is also responsible for communicating the decision of the presbytery to the Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning, who may consider recommendations in relation to the candidate's studies.
5. The Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning is responsible for communicating the progress of the candidate to the presbytery.
6. Candidates applying for the grant to assist in their everyday expenses must complete the Ministry Candidate Support Grant Application form TOO-PEO-25. The grant will be partly means tested and each applicant will be required to validate their financial circumstances by providing their most recent Centrelink Statement and Australian Taxation Office Assessment notice.
7. In assessing the application by way of an interview, consideration will also be given to whether the applicant has:
  - 7.1. Centrelink rent assistance
  - 7.2. Low income Health Card



- 7.3. Arranged Centrelink Advance Payments in the last 12 months
- 7.4. Centrelink debt
- 7.5. Other plans in place for longer term needs.
- 8. The Synod office Manager People and Culture is responsible for administering the grant in accordance with these principles and within the allocated annual budget which may vary each budget cycle.
- 9. The Manager People and Culture is responsible for receiving and processing applications for the grant.
- 10. The Manager People and Culture must ensure that each application for the grant has been assessed in a consistent and fair manner after conferring with the Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning, prior to recommending an application to the General Secretary, who is the delegated authority to approve applications.
- 11. The Manager People and Culture must ensure that all personal information provided by ministry candidates as part of their application is treated in accordance with the Synod Privacy Policy; POL-0001.
- 12. All ministry candidates must consult with their Centrelink Office to determine the impact the grant may have on their current level of Centrelink benefits and must include this information as part of their application.
- 13. All ministry candidates must be made aware that the grant provided is measured as income for the purposes of the Centrelink means test and 'in-kind' assistance will not be exempt from the means test.
- 14. All applications for the grant must be assessed on a case by case basis. This includes the amount of the grant and the method by which it is provided.
- 15. No grant shall be provided for university tuition fees as the Government's FEE-HELP or other schemes are considered appropriate for fee payments.
- 16. The Manager People and Culture must determine the actual claim, and only in extreme situations may recommend the grant to the maximum of \$20,000 per annum to an individual candidate, depending on their personal and financial circumstances.
- 17. A ministry candidate shall have the right to appeal the decision made regarding the application. Where there is a grievance, it shall be resolved through the grievance procedure laid down in the Ministry Candidate Support Grant Procedure PRO-PEO-25.

## Related documents

POL-0001 Privacy

PRO-PEO-25 Ministry Candidate Support Process

TOO-PEO-25 Ministry Candidate Support Application Form



## Definitions

Term	Meaning
<b>Queensland Synod Office</b>	Means the work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia performed by the Queensland Synod.
<b>Ministry Candidate</b>	Means a person who has been approved by the Synod Selection Panel, the relevant presbytery and by BCF to proceed as a candidate for ministry.
<b>Fee Help</b>	Means the loan scheme offered by the Australian Government for eligible higher education students to pay their fees through future taxation on income.

## Revisions

Document number		POL-PEO-25			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
1.0	11.06.2015	Board of Christian Formation	11.06.2015	Irene Waters	Irene Waters
1.1	27.08.2018	Executive Leadership Team	01.07.2018	Satya Swami	L&D Officer
Next scheduled review		01.06.2025			