

ST. HELENA SCHOLARSHIP TRUST OPERATIONAL POLICY

POLICY TITLE:	ST. HELENA SCHOLARSHIP TRUST OPERATIONAL POLICY
LEAD OFFICER:	Director of Education & Employment
DATED PRODUCED:	January 2021
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW:	January 2022
APPROVED BY:	
ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:	St. Helena Scholarship Trust
TEAMS AFFECTED:	Scholarship Trust Board , Education and Employment Committee, Education and Employment Directorate
THIS POLICY REPLACES WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT:	The Scholarship Awards Committee Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This policy supports the business of the St. Helena Scholarship Trust in that it gives guidance on the process and procedures for the awarding of scholarships.

2. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

2.1. Scholarships may be awarded to eligible St Helenians who are nominated by the Scholarship Trust Board, through funding administered by the St Helena Scholarship Trust.

2.2. Scholarships may be offered in any of the following categories:

2.3 Overseas Undergraduate Scholarships

These scholarships allow individuals to undertake academic study abroad in a course leading to a first degree which is or is equivalent to a UK Honours degree from a university approved by the Trust Board.

2.4 Overseas Vocational and Technical Scholarships

These scholarships allow individuals to undertake vocational or technical study in a course leading to an accredited qualification at Level 3 or higher in a subject area in which a relevant qualification cannot be reasonably achieved in St Helena.

2.5 Overseas Postgraduate Scholarships

These scholarships allow individuals to undertake postgraduate studies leading to a recognised qualification at Level 7 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework at a university approved by the Trust Board.

2.6 Local Scholarships

These scholarships are tenable at the St Helena Community College and allow individuals to undertake studies leading to a first-degree equivalent to a UK Honours degree.

2.7 The actual offer of scholarships in any year will be dependent on available resources, but priority will be given to undergraduate and vocational and technical scholarships.

2.8 Access and foundation courses will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and when forming part of a UK Honours degree.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Education and Employment Committee establishes and reviews the Constitution of the St. Helena Scholarship Trust and advocates within the St Helena Government to allocate government funding to achieve its objectives.

3.2 The St. Helena Scholarship Trust implements this policy, manages and allocates the funding, follows the specified guidelines in nominating appropriate applicants that qualify for scholarships, provides technical expertise in relation to scholarship issues, and manages the scholarship process.

In executing its oversight of scholarships the Trust Board may:

- Nominate candidates for international and local scholarships as may be so designated to their authority.
- Nominate scholarship recipients.
- Receive and review reports from scholarship holders.
- Terminate scholarships where the scholarship holder is found to be in serious breach
- Make recommendations to the Education and Employment Committee about the development of scholarship policy.

3.3 The Education and Employment Directorate manages the day to day implementation of this policy, acts as the liaison between the key stakeholders in the scholarship awards process, serves as the Secretariat and manages the budget for the administration of scholarships. The Director of Education and Employment serves as the Chair of the St Helena Scholarship Trust.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

4.1. The St Helena Scholarship Trust is committed to fairness, equality and values diversity in all its dealings. The role of equality and diversity is central to all processes and aims to provide equal opportunities for all.

5. MANAGEMENT OF POLICY

5.1 The primary responsibility for adherence to this policy rests with the St Helena Scholarship Trust Board.

5.2 The Director of Education and Employment has overall responsibility to ensure that this constitution is applied fairly and meets any legislative requirements in force.

5.3 Strategic policy direction is the responsibility of the Education and Employment Committee, as is the allocation of government funding to support the St Helena Scholarship Trust.

5.4 This policy will be reviewed by the St. Helena Scholarship Trust Board and Education and Employment Committee on an annual basis or as may be required by legislative or policy changes or other exigencies.

6. GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARDING OF SCHOLARSHIP

6.1. Stage 1 - Application

6.1.1 In order to be considered for a Scholarship, applicants must submit a completed **Scholarship Application Form, (Appendix 1)**. References should come from non-family related individuals who have the necessary knowledge to support the suitability of the applicant for the proposed course of study.

6.1.2. Applicants may request support in the application process from relevant staff at Prince Andrew School, the St Helena Community College, or from the Office of the St Helena Government United Kingdom Representative, but it is the responsibility of the applicant to secure acceptance to an appropriate course of study.

6.1.3 Applications received after the published deadline will not be eligible for consideration (see Appendix 2 – Scholarship process Timeline).

6.1.4 Eligibility

Eligible scholarship candidates are required to:

- Possess St Helenian Status at the time of application.
- Have been ordinarily resident in St Helena for two years prior to application.
- Has completed Year 13 studies in PAS
- Present a satisfactory vetting certificate.
- Have successfully attained relevant qualifications as follows:
- Post School Undergraduate - Level 3 qualifications equivalent to 3 A Levels at Grade C or above by completion of 6th Form education in PAS or other educational institution.
- Vocational Scholarship - relevant qualifications required for identified course of study
- Have attained a grade equivalent to C/5 or higher at GCSE in English and Mathematics.
- Demonstrate a good record of commitment to studies and personal competence
- Plan to undertake a course of study or training of direct benefit to St Helena and in line with the Island's strategic plans and objectives.
- Have attained the age of 18 before the start of the proposed course of study.

6.1.5 In considering whether or not any applicant may progress to the presentation stage of the scholarship application process, the Trust Board will consider these requirements along with:

- The quality of the application, including the personal statement
- Whether or not, in the view of the Trust Board, the applicant has set out reasonable and achievable personal and educational aspirations.

6.1.6 If, in the opinion of the Trust Board, the application meets the criteria set out above, the applicant will move to the next stage in the selection process where they will be invited to make a personal presentation to the Trust Board (see Appendix 3).

6.2 Stage 2 Initial Presentations

6.2.1 Candidates whose applications have been deemed to meet the general requirements for a scholarship award will be required to appear before the Trust Board to make a presentation outlining their proposed course of study and how this will bring to themselves in their chosen career and benefits to St. Helena.

6.2.2 The presentation by the candidate will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Academic merit
- Forethought and preparation including evidence of research and relevant course options
- Demonstration of the benefits to St Helena from course choice and study abroad
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Expression of achievable personal aspirations
- Evidence of a clear plan and purpose with regard to the proposed course of study and a viable role upon return to St Helena
- Conveyance of a "mature" personality and an ability to cope with living and the challenges of studying abroad.

6.2.3 A copy of the criteria will be made available to candidates in advance of the presentation (see Appendix 4).

6.2.4 Scoring - Candidates will be individually assessed by members of the Trust Board on the above criteria and given a score. Members will then collectively score each candidate. Candidates will then be ranked in order of total scores starting with the highest score. Scholarships will then be allocated to the candidates having the highest scores in accordance with the number of scholarship placements available.

In the event of two candidates having equal scoring members will then vote to select which candidate has the highest rank based on their personal scoring.

6.3 Stage 3 - Provisional Awards

6.3.1 Selected applicants will be sent a Conditional Offer Letter offering them a scholarship conditional to them, submitting a satisfactory medical clearance and completing any other requirements which may be imposed by the Trust Board.

6.3.2 Successful applicants must provide a written response to their conditional offer within the required timeframe. If a written acceptance is not received within the deadline set, the provisional scholarship offer may be withdrawn.

6.4 Stage 4 - Final Approval

6.4.1 Upon confirmation of a course of study at an approved university or other approved institution, the applicant will notify the Secretary in writing who will communicate this to the Trust Board.

6.4.2 Final approval for scholarship awards is dependent on evidence of acceptance to a course of study as approved in the provisional offer and of satisfactory completion of any additional requirements set out in the provisional offer.

6.4.3 Once the Trust Board is satisfied that all requirements have been met, a Scholarship Offer Letter will be sent to the applicant confirming the scholarship, the course, and terms and conditions of the scholarship.

6.4.4 Scholarship recipients must confirm acceptance of the Scholarship in writing to the Secretary.

7. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Selected students normally receive funding for up to three years of their studies with the second and third years of study dependent on completing and passing required courses.

7.2 Funding for additional years of study will only be considered in exceptional circumstances

7.3 The annual government contribution to the St Helena Scholarship Trust will be determined as part of the overall St Helena Government budget setting process.

7.4 The Trust Board will not approve scholarships or recommend a candidate for a scholarship through the St Helena Scholarship Trust if reasonable alternative sources of study or funding are deemed to be available.

7.5 Scholarship recipients shall be entitled to receive:

- Payment of university fees on an annual basis.
- Monthly stipends as agreed and regularly reviewed by the Trust Board, paid until the end of the approved course of study or other such date as agreed
- The reasonable cost of travel to the educational institution from St Helena at the beginning and return to St Helena at the end of the approved period of study.
- A lump sum settlement at the beginning of the scholarship equal to one month's stipend payment is paid for miscellaneous costs such as study materials, freight, local travel.
- Any other such costs as may be approved by the St. Helena Scholarship Trust.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

8.1 Practical administration of support for scholarship recipients based in the United Kingdom is managed by the St Helena Government United Kingdom Representative, who will serve as the United Kingdom base for the administrative aspect of the programme.

8.2 Where possible, additional support will be provided by approved personal via distance support (e.g. digital media), or in person.

9. STUDENT BONDS

9.1 All scholarship recipients will be required to complete and sign a bonding agreement as a requirement of the scholarship. The amount and conditions of the bonding agreement for the are set by the Trust Board, and recipients should be aware that they are undertaking a binding legal agreement (Appendix 5).

9.2 Should a scholarship recipient fail to successfully complete the course of study, fail to return to live and work in St Helena upon the completion of the course of study for the required bonding period, or have their scholarship revoked, they are liable for repayment of the bond under the terms of their bond agreement.

10. EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

10.1 The awarding of scholarships awards represent a significant investment of public resources in the individual recipient. Scholarship recipients are expected to make every reasonable effort to succeed in their studies, to complete their programme of education in the agreed time, and to return to St Helena prepared to contribute to the positive development of the island.

10.2 Scholarship recipients must at all times consider themselves to be ambassadors for St Helena and must ensure that their conduct does not bring the St Helena Scholarship Trust or the wider community into disrepute.

10.3 Scholarship recipients are expected to maintain regular communication with the Trust Board and to submit reports of their progress at the end of each semester in such form as the Trust Board shall specify

10.4 Scholarship recipients studying in the United Kingdom are also expected to maintain regular contact with the United Kingdom Representative for St Helena.

10.5 Scholarship recipients must notify the Chair of the Trust Board and UK Rep. before traveling outside the country in which they are studying. This notification shall, wherever possible, be provided at least two weeks before the expected date of travel.

10.6 Scholarship recipients are expected to maintain regular contact with the Directorate/organisation to which they are linked in regards to their career prospects on their return to St. Helena.

11. REVOCATION OF A SCHOLARSHIP

11.1 Scholarship recipients are expected to serve as role models for the community and ambassadors for St Helena. They are also expected to make satisfactory progress in their studies and to remain in good standing within their educational institution. Scholarship recipients are expected to refrain from criminal activity, from academic misconduct and from any action which may cause reputational damage to St Helena or to the St Helena Scholarship Trust.

11.2 Failure to meet these expectations or any of the specific expectations set out in this policy may result in termination of their scholarship where, in the view of the Trust Board there is reasonable cause.

11.3 Any scholarship recipient whose scholarship is being revoked will be notified of this in writing via email at least two weeks before the date of official termination of the scholarship. The recipient is expected to send receipt of acknowledgment of the termination.

11.4 On official termination of the scholarship the recipient will no longer be eligible for the funding entitlements as set out in Section 7. The recipient however will be paid their flight back to St. Helena at the next available opportunity after the date of termination of the scholarship. NB: Any recipient who declines the opportunity to travel at the next available flight will have the return flight funding arrangement withdrawn. It will then be their responsibility to manage their affairs.

12. COMPLETION OF STUDIES

12.1 Upon completion of the agreed course of study, the scholarship recipient shall notify the Secretary of the outcome of their studies.

12.2 Except by prior approval of the Trust Board, scholarship recipients will be expected to return to St Helena within six weeks of the completion of their course of study.

12.3 Upon application by the scholarship recipient, the Trust Board may approve an extension of the time allowed before return to St Helena of not more than three years for an individual recipient. This approval is given on the proviso that:

- In the opinion of the Trust Board, the extension will allow for the development of skills, knowledge, experience or qualification which cannot otherwise be gained on St Helena and
- Where, in the view of the Trust Board, the likelihood of the individual's return to St Helena to satisfy the terms of the Scholarship Bond is not diminished by the extension.

NB: Where this approval is given, enforcement of the Scholarship Bond will be delayed for the term of the extension.

13. EVALUATION OF SCHOLARSHIP

Upon return to St. Helena all scholarship students are required to give formal feedback on their study and career aspirations to members of the St Helena Scholarship Trust Board and Education and Employment Committee. This will enable constructive feedback on the scholarship process and how it can be improved and determine benefits to St. Helena.

14. APPEALS

Appeals against any decision of the St Helena Scholarship Trust Committee can be made in writing to the Education and Employment Committee who will address the issue as required.

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