Guide to Applying for University of Otago Undergraduate Entrance Scholarships
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Scholarship Timeline

**Early July:** applications open for scholarships

**15 August:** applications close

**Late September/early October:** scholarship selection committees meet

**By 10 October:** applicants advised of decisions by email

**3 November:** deadline for accepting scholarship offers
I. Which scholarships to apply for

The first step is deciding which scholarships you plan to apply for. You can apply for as many of the scholarships as you like, all at once online, but there is little point applying for scholarships that don’t fit your particular circumstances. Remember that if you are in Year 13, we will be focusing primarily on your grades from Year 12 in making academic assessments for scholarships.

Note that all the scholarships listed below are only open to New Zealand Citizens or Permanent Residents.

The University of Otago Academic Excellence Scholarships

These scholarships, worth over $30,000 each, are primarily selected on the basis of outstanding previous academic performance, however leadership qualities and community involvement are also considered. In order to be competitive, we would recommend you have at least 80 excellence credits at NCEA Level 2, or equivalent.

Applicants for the University of Otago Academic Excellence Scholarships will also automatically be considered for the R & E Seelye Trust Academic Excellence Scholarships. These have the same selection criteria and value, but are funded and part-selected by the Ralph & Eve Seelye Trust.

The University of Otago Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarships

These $5,000 scholarships are selected based on a balance of academic achievement and leadership, which might be demonstrated either through school, sporting or cultural activities, and/or community involvement. While it is not necessary to be in a formal leadership position in your school (for example a prefect or Head Boy or Girl) to be selected for these scholarships, it is expected that your leadership activities would be of a kind that your school community would be aware of them. From an academic perspective, you would usually need to have achieved NCEA Level 2 with an overall excellence commendation, or equivalent, to be competitive for one of these scholarships.

The University of Otago Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarships

The University of Otago Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarships, valued at $10,000, are open to students of Pacific Island or Māori descent, and are selected based on academic ability and community involvement. Some consideration may also be given to the life circumstances of applicants when making selections. NCEA Level 2 with an overall merit commendation, or equivalent, is required in order to be considered for these scholarships.

The University of Otago Alumni Appeal Scholarships

Each year Otago graduates gift funds to support these $5,000 scholarships. The scholarships are for academically strong students who face significant financial challenges in attending university. We acknowledge that university may present financial challenges for the majority of students, but these awards are particularly for students who need to overcome greater-than-usual financial barriers to study at tertiary level. NCEA Level 2 with an overall merit commendation, or equivalent, is required in order to be considered for these scholarships.

There is also a specific award – the University of Otago Law Alumni Scholarship – for students who plan to study first year Law. Criteria for selection are the same. If seriously considering Law, you can choose to be considered for this scholarship (as well as the general Alumni Appeal Scholarships) by ticking the appropriate box when applying online.
The University of Otago Callis Trust Performance Scholarships

Supported by a donation from the Callis Trust, these $5,000 scholarships are available to students who have demonstrated academic ability and who are at an elite level for their chosen sport or cultural discipline. This scholarship is aimed at those who might represent New Zealand in their sport (for example future All Blacks or Olympians) or who might become household names as actors, musicians or dancers. Academically, NCEA Level 2 with an overall merit commendation, or equivalent, is required for consideration.

The University of Otago Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarships

Also supported by the donations of Otago graduates, these $5,000 scholarships are available to students who have demonstrated academic ability and who can show financial need arising from a disability. Students with an existing significant disability of at least six months duration are eligible to apply. Academically, NCEA Level 2 with an overall merit commendation, or equivalent, is usually required for consideration.

Once you have decided on the scholarships you are interested in, we recommend reading the official regulations available at www.otago.ac.nz/entrancescholarships (you are required to have read and understood the regulations before you apply for any scholarship).

Originally established in 2012 to celebrate the 20 years of formalised support at the University of Otago for students with impairments, the scholarship was renamed in 2014 to honour the memory of Donna-Rose McKay, the former Head of Disability Information and Support and a leader in disability advocacy at the University from 1992 to 2013. The Scholarships, which are made possible by gifting funds by Alumni and friends of the University of Otago, are offered to Students.

Donna-Rose began her work at the University in 1992, when she was appointed to a newly-created part-time position of disabilities co-ordinator, a first for any New Zealand university.

In a eulogy, University Director of Student Services Mr David Richardson described Donna-Rose as a “determined and fearless woman [who] took on anybody or any institution that had, or created, barriers for students with a disability” and noted that she was the founder and driving force behind the establishment of ACHIEVE, the national post-secondary education disability network.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne paid tribute to Donna-Rose as being a fierce advocate for the students in her care and living her life committed to the notion that every student had the right to study at Otago.

“She reminded the rest of us each and every day that it was our collective responsibility to make sure that happened. I know that Donna-Rose changed the lives of many – her personal strength empowered a whole generation of students.”
2. Selecting referees

Having selected the scholarship or scholarships you wish to apply for, you may need to approach referees who can provide a confidential reference about you. The following table summarises referee requirements for the various scholarships:

Referee Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOLARSHIP</th>
<th>REFEREE REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For current high school students or those who completed high school within the last two years:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Excellence</td>
<td><strong>Not required</strong> as references will be sought directly from your school. However you may name a teacher who knows you well (this person does not need to have formally agreed to be your referee).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders of Tomorrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Appeal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For those who completed high school over two years ago:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Excellence</td>
<td>An educational referee who can comment on academic performance and leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders of Tomorrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Appeal</td>
<td>A referee who can comment on suitability for a scholarship based on financial need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For all applicants:</td>
<td>One school/educational referee <strong>and</strong> one community referee, both of whom can comment on community involvement and academic achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māori and Pacific Island Entrance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callis Trust Performance</td>
<td>A referee who can comment on your area of elite performance (for example a school teacher, coach or tutor).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, for some scholarships, if you are currently at high school or finished high school within the last two years, we will contact your school directly to seek a reference. Although the reference will be sought from a central contact point at your school, you may name a teacher you feel knows you particularly well (this person does not need to have agreed to be a referee). The name of your nominated person will be provided to your school when a reference is sought, so the central contact person there can liaise with that teacher if appropriate.

Also note that in some instances, the University may only contact referees if you are shortlisted for the award.

There is a referee information sheet available on our scholarship website (www.otago.ac.nz/entrancescholarships) which you can provide to people who you may wish to approach about acting as your referees. It is important to choose referees who know you well and can comment on the qualities and characteristics required for the scholarship in question (as per the table above).
Please keep the following in mind when approaching potential referees:

- Your referee(s) must agree to provide a reference for you. If you provide the name of a referee who has not agreed to provide a reference, this will disqualify your application from further consideration.

- When entering referee details online, you will need to provide email addresses for your selected referees, so make sure you ask for these when talking to your referees.

- For the Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarship and Callis Trust Performance Scholarship your referee(s) must be willing and able to provide their references by no later than Friday 22 August 2014.

- Statements you provide as part of your application (see page 8) will be provided to referees to assist them in writing their reference.

The University will automatically contact provided referees for references as required after you have submitted your application. References for the Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarship and Callis Trust Performance Scholarship will be sent directly from the online application system, and will be due on Friday 22 August 2014. Because of the number of applications we receive and the systems we use, the University does not have the resources to follow up with individual referees for these scholarships. If applying for either of these scholarships, we recommend you double check with your nominated referees that they have provided references as the due date approaches. Failure to receive references may see your application disqualified from further consideration.
Preparing to apply

Having decided on the scholarships you wish to apply for and gained agreement from your referees to provide references, you are now ready to prepare the documents and statements you will need to complete the online application. It is recommended you do this in advance, as this will make the online application process quite straightforward.

Transcripts

When completing the online application you will be asked “What educational system were you primarily studying under last year (or when you last studied if not studying last year)?” Your answer to this question will determine what you need to provide in the way of transcripts from your school or other educational institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational system</th>
<th>Transcript Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCEA</td>
<td>No transcript required. You will need to provide your NSN number though, so the University can access your results through NZQA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge International Examinations</td>
<td>You will need to attach your CIE transcript to date, showing A Levels and AS Levels achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>You will need to attach your IB transcript to date. The University recognises that students who have not yet completed Year 13 will not have final IB grades. In such cases, the University will seek a grade estimate from your high school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>You will need to attach your relevant transcripts, including those relating to your final two years at high school and (if different) your most recent study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that if you are studying or studied at least 80 credits of NCEA above Level 2 but then started studying a different system such as Cambridge International Examinations or the International Baccalaureate, we recommend selecting the option which pertains to your current study (e.g. “Cambridge International Examinations”) but also uploading your NCEA Record of Learning along with your other transcript(s).

Required transcripts should be scanned or saved in PDF or JPEG format (not exceeding 1MB), ready to be uploaded when you make your online application. If you are not able to scan your transcripts please contact the Scholarships Office to discuss alternative options (email scholarships@otago.ac.nz). See also the section on scanning documents in the frequently asked questions at the end of this guide.
Statements

All of the scholarships require provision of a statement or statements in the online survey. It is strongly recommended you prepare these in advance in a program such as Microsoft Word and then copy and paste these into the relevant parts of the online application.

There are two types of statements which may be required for these scholarships:

1. **Lists** – you will be asked to list accomplishments. Each accomplishment should be described very briefly; as a sentence or note. For example:
   
   1. Head Boy of High School.
   3. Selected as one of only two youth delegates to represent New Zealand at an Amnesty International global meeting in Jakarta, June 2013.

2. **Essay** – you will be asked to provide a statement (with a word limit) addressing key criteria for the award of the scholarship. Please realise that these essays can play a key role in scholarship selection: write to the word limit (not too much but not too little), be aware of what is being asked for in the essay; check your spelling and grammar, ask somebody else to read your statement and provide you with feedback on it, and most of all make an effort! You can’t expect to receive a multi-thousand dollar scholarship if you’re not giving it 100%!

Requirements for statements are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarship</th>
<th>Statement Type</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Excellence and/or Leaders of Tomorrow</td>
<td>List</td>
<td>List up to five significant activities (in order of importance) in which you have been involved and have clearly demonstrated leadership; these activities may be drawn from school, sport, cultural or community experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callis Trust Performance</td>
<td>List</td>
<td>List up to five significant activities (in order of importance) demonstrating excellence in performance in your main discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māori and Pacific Island Entrance</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Provide a statement of no more than 500 words detailing your involvement with the Māori or Pacific Island communities (primarily outside the school environment), and how the award of a Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarship would benefit you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Appeal</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Provide a statement of not more than 250 words outlining the circumstances which have led you to apply for Alumni-funded scholarships, and how the award of such a scholarship would assist you in your studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support</td>
<td>Essay (×2)</td>
<td>In addition to the Alumni Appeal essay (described above) provide brief details of no more than 250 words on your disability or disabilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any statements provided **must be your own work**. Providing a statement written for you by someone else will see you disqualified from consideration for all scholarships. If this is discovered after you have been offered or received a scholarship, the University will require that you pay the scholarship back, and may take further action.
Income declarations (Alumni-funded scholarships only)

If applying for the Alumni Appeal Scholarship or the Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarship you will need to complete an income and asset declaration; the form for this is available online at www.otago.ac.nz/entrancescholarships. Depending on your circumstances, your partner and parents may also need to contribute to and sign these (see below).

When you apply for these scholarships online you will be asked to upload the forms so these should be scanned or saved in PDF or JPEG format (not exceeding 1MB), ready to be uploaded when you make your online application. If you are not able to scan your income declaration forms please contact the Scholarships Office to discuss alternative options (email scholarships@otago.ac.nz). See also the section on scanning documents in the frequently asked questions at the end of this guide.

You will also be asked as part of the online application to provide summary information from the forms, and so again, these need to be completed before you start the online application process.

Instructions for completing the declaration are on the form itself. Information on who will need to contribute to the form is as follows:

- You (the applicant) must complete and sign a declaration of your income and assets.
- If you will be under 24 years of age as at 1 January 2015, all your living parents, guardians or step parents must complete and sign a declaration of their income and assets, except in exceptional circumstances (see below).
- If you are married or have been living with a partner for more than two years, they will need to complete and sign a declaration of their income and assets.
- If you, your parents (as defined above) or your partner (as defined above) are settlors or beneficiaries of any trusts, you will need to provide information on the income and assets held in trust, and have that signed by the relevant beneficiaries or settlors.

It is recognised that in certain circumstances a parent or equivalent may not be able to sign a declaration, for example if they are estranged from you. In that case you may request to be considered independent of that parent. Some explanation must be given for this however, along with the details of some independent person (e.g. a medical professional, lawyer, counsellor etc.) who can verify this explanation if necessary.

It is also acceptable to seek declarations from your parents and/or their partners on different copies of the form, for example if your parents are separated and do not wish to share financial information. It is your job however, to make sure all necessary information is collated together, included, and summarised on the final page of the form.

The University appreciates that financial information and information relating to your financial circumstances can be sensitive, and we can assure you it will be treated with the utmost care and confidence. Only selection panel members and those involved in the administration of the Alumni scholarships will have access to this information, and only for the purposes of selecting the scholarships. Collection of such information is necessary however, in order to ensure that these scholarships are awarded to students with genuine financial need.

Disability declaration (Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarship only)

If applying for the Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarship you will need to provide confirmation of your disability from a suitably qualified professional. This should be scanned or saved in PDF or JPEG format prior to starting the online application process and uploaded along with your Income and Asset Declaration forms.

Scholarship declaration

All applicants are required to read and complete the scholarships declaration page in order for applications to be considered further. Failure to complete the section will mean that we will be unable to obtain results, in particular from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), and your application may not be considered further. If you have any queries regarding this, please email scholarships@otago.ac.nz
Checklist of required documents

- **Scanned transcripts** (if not NCEA)
- **Essays** (Māori and Pacific Island Entrance or Alumni Scholarships)
- **Lists of Achievements** (Academic Excellence/Leaders of Tomorrow or Callis Trust Performance Scholarships)
- **Income Declarations** (Alumni Scholarships)
- **Confirmation of Disability** (Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarship)
4. Applying online

So long as you have completed the necessary preparation, the actual online application should only take 5 to 10 minutes. Just make sure before you start that you have:

- Decided on the scholarships you wish to apply for, checked your eligibility and read the scholarship regulations [See Section 1]
- Sought agreement from referees to act for you as necessary (you should also have their email contact details on hand) [See Section 2]
- Prepared any statements offline, ready to copy and paste into the online application [See Section 3]
- Collected/completed any required documents and scanned or saved these in PDF format, ready for uploading

When entering data online, it is very important data is entered accurately. In particular please ensure that email addresses, phone numbers and your NSN number (if required) are entered correctly. If these numbers are entered incorrectly we will not be able to contact you and you will miss out on a scholarship.

Online Application Structure

The online application has six short sections:

1. Selection of the scholarships you wish to apply for
2. Personal details (name, contact details, demographic information)
3. Details of your current or previous study
4. Information relating to each scholarship – in most cases this involves supplying the statements described in Section 3 of this guide. However, if applying for:
   i. The Alumni-funded scholarships – you will need to enter summary information from the Income and Asset Declaration forms and upload these declarations.
   ii. The Donna-Rose McKay Disability Support Scholarship – you will need to upload confirmation of your disability as described in Section 3 of this guide.
   iii. The Callis Trust Performance Scholarship – you will need to answer two or three questions on your most significant performance achievement in the last three years.
5. Provision of referee details as required
6. Declaration (information provided is true and correct, University may access NZQA results, referees have agreed to act as such, and so on)

You will receive a confirmation email once you have submitted your online application. Should you encounter any difficulties when applying online, please contact the University of Otago Scholarships Office (email scholarships@otago.ac.nz).
5. Notification of Results

- Scholarship applications close at midnight on **Friday 15 August, 2014** (NZ Standard time)
- Selection of scholarships takes place in late September and early October, when the selection committees for the various scholarships meet.
- Applicants will be notified of results by email no later than **Friday 10 October, 2014**
- Successful applicants will have until **Monday 3 November, 2014** to accept the scholarship offered; note that in most cases this will also involve choosing whether you would like the scholarship to be applied to your tuition fees or residential college accommodation costs.

To assist us in the processing of scholarships, we ask for your help as follows:

1. From the time the scholarship closes until results are due in early October, please don’t request updates from us. This is a very busy time for us, and we process scholarship applications as quickly as possible. Unless you have a truly critical issue, we would be grateful if you could refrain from contacting us during this period.

2. If you are unsuccessful in securing a scholarship, **this decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into** (you agree to this when you complete the scholarship declaration form). We appreciate missing out on a scholarship can be disappointing, but with well over 1,000 applications every year, it is inevitable that very good students do miss out.

3. If you are successful in securing a scholarship but decide that you do not want to accept it (or if you wish to defer accepting it) we would be grateful if you let us know as soon as possible. Other applicants may have been waitlisted for your scholarship, and so if you let us know you won’t be taking up the scholarship, we can then offer this to them.
6. Frequently asked questions

Eligibility

Q. I am not a New Zealand Citizen or Permanent Resident, can I apply?
A. No, these scholarships are only for New Zealand Citizens or Permanent Residents.

Q. I am a New Zealand Citizen or Permanent Resident, but I have been studying overseas recently, can I apply?
A. Yes, so long as you meet other eligibility criteria.

Q. I left school some years ago, can I apply?
A. Yes, so long as you meet other eligibility criteria.

Q. I am part of an accelerated programme at my school and have been studying some university papers this year, can I apply?
A. Yes, so long as you have not gained admission to a degree programme at the University of Otago.

Q. I am a Foundation Studies student affiliated with the University of Otago, can I apply?
A. Yes, so long as you meet other eligibility criteria (Foundation Studies is considered to be prior to the first year of University study).

Q. I have previously completed tertiary study at a Polytechnic, but now wish to embark on university study. Can I apply?
A. Yes, so long as you meet other eligibility criteria.

Q. I have previously completed tertiary study at another university, but now want to complete further undergraduate study at the University of Otago (I have not studied at Otago before). Can I apply?
A. The scholarship regulations do not prevent this, however the intention of these scholarships is primarily to support students who are coming to university for the first time. This intention is likely to inform the decisions of the scholarship selection committees in marginal cases.

Q. I have previously completed tertiary study at another university, and now want to enrol at the University of Otago for the first time in order to complete a postgraduate qualification. Can I apply?
A. No. These scholarships are for undergraduate study only. For further information on postgraduate scholarship options, please see www.otago.ac.nz/scholarships

Q. I am not ethnically Māori or a Pacific Islander, but I identify strongly with one (or both) of these communities. Can I apply for the Māori and Pacific Island Entrance Scholarship?
A. No.

Q. I am not from a particularly disadvantaged background, but I know university is going to put some financial strain on me. Should I apply for the Alumni Appeal Scholarship?
A. No. While we recognise tertiary education can be expensive, these scholarships are particularly for students whose financial circumstances present a much greater barrier to tertiary education than is usual for the majority of students.

Q. I wish to apply for a Performance Scholarship, but I won’t be studying in my performance area at university. Can I apply?
A. Yes. You don’t need to be studying your area of performance to apply, although this can be an advantage in some areas (for example performance music), where it can demonstrate an on-going commitment to your area of performance.

Q. If I apply for the Alumni Law Scholarship, can I still be considered for the general Alumni Appeal Scholarship too?
A. Yes. Alumni Law Scholarship applicants will be considered as a separate group for the Law scholarship, but those who do not receive a Law Scholarship may still be considered for the more general Alumni Appeal Scholarship.

Q. Are University of Otago Academic Excellence Scholarship applicants automatically considered for the R&E Seelye Trust Academic Excellence Scholarships?
A. Yes.
Q. If applying for the Academic Excellence Scholarship, should my listed achievements focus on leadership, academic achievement or both?
A. These should focus primarily on leadership achievements. Note however that some of these may be academic, for example captaining a New Zealand Mathletics team.

Q. Do I have to be first registered for my 2015 course before applying for scholarships?
A. No

Referees

Q. Can I use a family member as a referee?
A. This isn’t recommended, as it constitutes a conflict of interest. If circumstances dictate that only a family member can provide a reference, they should declare this conflict of interest when providing their reference and the reason why they are providing the reference in spite of this. If at all possible though, we recommend avoiding this situation.

Q. I am at school or completed school in the last two years, but I want to choose my own referees for the scholarships where you would usually contact my referees directly. Can I do this?
A. No.

Q. I changed school recently and I am worried that the person providing references at my new school won’t know enough about me to be able to comment accurately. What should I do?
A. We recommend making an appointment with your [new] school’s Careers Advisor to talk through this issue with them, and let them know about your accomplishments. The Careers Advisor can then be listed as the person who knows you well at your school when you make your application (you should ask them to make sure they have input if a reference is sought from the school). Note too that referees get to see the statements you have provided along with your application, so your achievements will be known to the person making the reference.

Q. I want to seek references directly myself, or I already have letters of reference – can I upload these as part of my application as well as (or in place of) naming referees to provide references?
A. No. The references we require need to be confidential. We will not use any other uploaded references in decision-making for scholarships.

Transcripts and grades

Q. I am not studying towards NCEA – how do you compare my grades to those people studying under NCEA?
A. The University has grade conversion tools and guidelines it uses for this. As a general rule, applicants who receive Academic Excellence Scholarships would generally be in the top 1% of all students academically, successful applicants for the Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship would usually be in the top 5% to 10% of all students, and successful applicants for other scholarships would usually be in the top 25% or so of students.

Q. I am studying towards NCEA (or my last completed qualification was NCEA) – do I need to upload my transcript?
A. No, so long as you provide your NSN number, we can seek your results directly from NZQA. Please ensure you enter your NSN number correctly. Entering wrong numbers may mean your application is not considered further.

Q. I am studying (or last studied) at tertiary level; what transcripts should I upload?
A. Primarily your tertiary-level (i.e. your most recent) transcripts. If you also have high school transcripts readily available, please upload these as well.

Q. I am on exchange; what transcripts should I upload and which system should I record as my primary educational system?
A. Please record your educational system as ‘other’ and note both your New Zealand and exchange systems of study. Similarly, please upload both your New Zealand transcripts and any transcripts from your exchange.

Q. I am studying overseas – how do you compare my grades to those people studying in New Zealand?
A. The University has grade conversion tools and guidelines it uses for this (see the question above). To assist us in assessing your transcript, please provide any information on the transcript relating to the grading (for example a ‘grading key’). Information on your rank or relative position in your class, if available, is strongly recommended.
Q. I am currently studying towards the International Baccalaureate and don't have final grades yet; what should I do?
A. Please upload any provisional transcripts you have. The University will seek further information on predicted IB grades from your school.

Q. I am studying (or have studied) a mix of NCEA and another system (such as IB or CIE); which of these systems should I record as my primary educational system?
A. If you are primarily studying towards IB or CIE, please identify that system and then upload your NCEA record of learning along with your IB/CIE results. If you are studying a mixed system, select "Other" as your educational system and upload transcripts from all systems under which you are studying. Note: if you know your NSN number, please provide this on your declaration form, as this will help us with processing.

Q. I am from Christchurch and my relevant grades (NCEA Level 2 or 3 or equivalent) were detrimentally affected during 2011 and/or 2012 by the Christchurch earthquakes? Can this be taken into consideration?
A. Yes. When you upload your scholarship declaration, please attach a statement explaining how the earthquakes affected your grades.

Declaration of income and assets (for Alumni-funded scholarships)

Q. Should I (or my parents/guardians) include any income from benefits on the Income and Asset Declaration Form?
A. Yes.

Q. I don't have anything to do with my parents (or a parent) – do they need to complete an income and asset declaration?
A. Not necessarily. There is space on the form to explain if you are estranged from one or both of your parents, however you will need to provide the name and contact details of someone who can confirm this if asked.

Q. My parents are separated and they do not want to share financial information with one another – how can they complete the Income and Asset Declaration Form?
A. It is acceptable to separate out the pages of the form and have different parties complete and sign just their particular section (this might mean one section is provided several times with the different details of different parties). Note that you will need to collate the different parts of the form together though (for uploading) and also summarise all the collected information on the final page of the form.

Q. I or my parents have accountancy statements detailing our financial position – can I upload these as well as (or instead of) the income and asset declaration form?
A. No. Please use the form provided and do not provide additional documentation.

Q. I don't feel comfortable providing financial information – can I apply for the Alumni-funded scholarships without doing this?
A. No. We appreciate the sensitivity of this information and assure you it will be treated with the utmost care and confidence. Only selection panel members and those involved in the administration of the Alumni-funded scholarships will have access to this information, and only for the purposes of selecting the scholarships. Collection of such information is necessary however, in order to ensure that these scholarships are awarded to students with genuine financial need.

Scanning documents for uploading

Q. I don't have access to a scanner, what can I do?
A. You could take a digital photo of your transcript and upload this as a JPEG file. Just make sure the file isn’t larger than 1MB and that your results in the photo are very clear – please don’t send a picture of your transcript in which we cannot easily make out all of the results! Note that for transcripts uploaded in this way, we may seek independent verification of the results from your school or equivalent institution.
Q. What formats can I upload my documents in?
A. PDF or JPEG only – and each file must not exceed 1MB in size.

Q. Can I upload multiple files – for example different files for each of my transcripts?
A. No – for each requested upload, all documents must be in one file only. That is – one file of all your transcripts (if required); one file of your income and asset declaration form (if applying for Alumni-funded scholarships); and one file for your scholarship declaration form. There are free online applications for merging PDF documents together: we recommend entering “combine pdfs” into a search engine such as Google.

Q. I just can’t figure out getting my documents into an electronic format – help!
A. Don't panic! Please email scholarships@otago.ac.nz and we will find a solution to your problem. Note that unless you have your documents in an electronic file however, you shouldn’t attempt to complete the online scholarship application. Please contact us first!

Applying online

Q. Can I save my online application halfway through and come back and finish it off later on?
A. No. To protect applicant privacy on shared computers the online application deletes any details when you close your browser. If you have prepared in advance, applying is a very quick and easy process though. We recommend putting aside five to ten minutes to complete this.

Q. I never received confirmation of my application by email, what should I do?
A. Please check your junk or spam email folders first. If no confirmation is found, please contact scholarships@otago.ac.nz and we can check whether your application has been lodged with us, and if so, whether the email address you have provided is correct. Please don’t reapply without checking with us first, as this may lead to multiple applications from you in the system.

Q. I’m stuck – help!
A. Don't worry – just contact scholarships@otago.ac.nz and we will help sort things out if we can within the time available.

Results and after results

Q. When should I know whether I’ve received a scholarship or not?
A. Results will be emailed to all applicants no later than Friday 10 October 2014.

Q. I haven’t received news about my scholarship – what should I do?
A. If it is after 10 October 2014, check your spam and junk email folders first for our notification email. If you are sure you haven’t received any message from us, email scholarships@otago.ac.nz if it is before 10 October 2014, just wait – results should be with you by that date.

Q. I missed out on a scholarship but I’m a top student – can I ask for reconsideration of the decision?
A. No. Scholarship decisions are final and we will not enter into discussion about these. Unfortunately demand for these scholarships is very high, so even some excellent students miss out.

Q. I received a scholarship but have decided to turn it down – do I need to let the University of Otago know this?
A. Yes, please do. As we operate waitlists for some of our scholarships, if you can let us know as soon as possible, we may be able to offer the scholarship to another deserving candidate.

Q. I have received a scholarship but I’m not sure whether to accept it or not, because I am waiting on other scholarship results, and I won’t know about these till after 3 November (when my acceptance decision is due with the University of Otago); what should I do?
A. Please contact the Otago Scholarships Office by emailing scholarships@otago.ac.nz and we can advise on the best course of action for you.

Q. I received a scholarship – do I have to take it up in 2015, or can I wait?
A. It maybe possible to apply to defer taking up a scholarship for a year by applying in writing to the Scholarship Manager. We recommend you check the “tenure” section of the regulations for the scholarship you have been offered.

Q. I received a scholarship and then was awarded Dux of my school and so became eligible for the University of Otago Dux Scholarship – can I have both awards?
A. You can be awarded both scholarships and so both awards will appear on your academic transcript. However in such cases the remuneration for the Dux Scholarship will not be paid; this is to allow the University to spread scholarship funding across a greater number of recipients.

Other Queries

If your question isn’t answered in the sections above, please email scholarships@otago.ac.nz. We are happy to help, and your question may even make next year’s edition of these guidelines!