

FAQs for Sponsored Students

Am I a sponsored student?

You are a sponsored student if:

- Your tuition fees are paid by an external government or organisation; **and**
- La Trobe bills your sponsor directly for your tuition fees

If an organisation/company gives you money to pay for your tuition fees, you are *not* a sponsored student by La Trobe University's definition.

How do I register to be a sponsored student?

When accepting your offer, you or your agent need to provide a Financial Guarantee letter from your sponsor to your La Trobe International admissions officer. The Sponsored Programs Team will then review the letter, and if it is approved you will be granted an eCOE and be registered as a sponsored student.

What is a Financial Guarantee letter?

A financial guarantee letter is an official declaration from your sponsor on their letterhead that they will sponsor you for study at La Trobe University. A financial guarantee letter needs to be on Sponsoring organisations letterhead and include:

- Sponsoring Organisations name and contact details
- Students name
- University name (i.e. La Trobe University)
- Course name (e.g. ELICOS, Foundation, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Bachelors, Masters, Professional doctorate, PhD)
- Details of sponsorship (i.e. tuition fees, OSHC single/family)
- Invoicing contact (name, position, address)
- Signed and dated by appropriately authorised representative

If you are a Saudi Arabian sponsored student, you must also apply to the [Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission](#) for your final confirmed financial guarantee as soon as you arrive in Australia and submit it to the [Sponsored Programs Team](#). If you do not do this, you will not be able to receive your OSHC card and your sponsored student enrolment may also be terminated.

How do I accept my offer as a sponsored student?

Submit all documents as per the offer acceptance booklet complete the sponsorship details in the offer acceptance booklet and submit a financial guarantee letter.

What is the permission to release information form?

The permission to release information form is a document that allows La Trobe University to release specific information about your enrolment such as your enrolment status, your fees or your results to a nominated third party, such as your sponsor. You can request the form from the La Trobe International Reception. This form can be used for both La Trobe University and La Trobe International College students.

Do I have to sign a permission to release information form?

You don't have to sign a permission to release information form but due to the Australian Privacy Laws, if you don't fully complete and sign a permission to release information form we are not able to invoice your sponsor or send your results to them.

How do I pay my fees as a sponsored student?

Approved sponsors are sent a La Trobe University invoice for their sponsored student fees twice a year at the end of April for Semester 1 and the end of September for Semester 2. Sponsors will pay La Trobe University directly.

Approved sponsors are sent a La Trobe International College (ELICOS, Foundation, and Diploma) invoice for their sponsored student fees in the middle of each term. Sponsors will pay La Trobe International College directly.

I'm a sponsored student but why haven't I received my OSHC card?

If you accepted your offer just before you arrived, we may not have sent notification to OSHC Worldcare yet. Please visit La Trobe International reception or La Trobe International College reception, tell them you are a sponsored student and ask if your OSHC has been disbursed. Then you can apply for your OSHC card at www.oshcworldcare.com.au

Please note: If you are a Saudi Arabian sponsored student and you have not applied to the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission for your final confirmed financial guarantee, we are not able to not send notification to OSHC World Care and you will not be eligible for your OSHC card. Please ensure you visit the [Cultural Missions website](#) and complete the forms as soon as you arrive in Australia.

I have received a statement of account (SOA) asking me for payment, do I have to pay?

If you receive a SOA with a balance in the student payments column, please bring your SOA to La Trobe International reception and we will check that you are registered correctly on our list as a sponsored student, and liaise with the Fees and HECS office to correct the SOA.

How can I send my sponsor my academic results?

The sponsored programs team and the International College automatically send your sponsor your academic results at the end of each term or semester as long as you have signed a permission to release information form.

Can I change my current La Trobe University degree course?

Currently enrolled Sponsored students* may apply for a new course after they have enrolled by following these steps:

1. Complete a course transfer form (available at LTI or Faculty offices).
2. Have your Faculty also complete and sign the form to indicate your advanced standing, new course structure and course end date.
3. Submit this form to LTI reception marked attention Sponsored Programs Coordinator.
4. An offer letter will be produced within 10 working days and sent to your email.
5. You can then send this offer letter to your sponsor to secure a new financial guarantee.
6. Please present your revised financial guarantee to LTI reception marked attention Sponsored Programs coordinator or send to sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au with New financial guarantee for course transfer approval in the subject line.
7. LTI will then sign and approve your course transfer and return the form to you to submit to Student centre.

*If you are an AusAID student, please go to LTI reception to make an appointment with the Sponsored Programs Coordinator before you follow the above steps.

If you are a student at La Trobe International College, please talk to La Trobe International College reception or your La Trobe International admissions officer on the process for apply for a new course before you have enrolled in your main degree.

Can I change my La Trobe University degree course even though I haven't started my course or I'm currently studying at the International College?

Sponsored students may apply for a new course using the La Trobe International application form, and you may then be eligible to receive a new conditional offer letter, but you can only accept your offer and get a new eCOE when:

- a) you provide a new financial guarantee letter from your sponsor with your acceptance documents, that states your new course,
 - or
 - b) if approval is given to the AusAID contact officers by AusAID (for AusAID students only)
- Please refer to the [La Trobe International website](#) if you are not sure how to apply for a new course.

Can La Trobe International help me contact my sponsor?

Yes, if you have already signed the Permission to Release Information Form and submitted this to the Sponsored Programs Team.

If you are studying at the International College, please consult with reception staff for advice on how to receive assistance to contact your sponsor.

I have OSHC single cover mentioned in my Financial Guarantee letter but I want to register for OSHC family, can I ask my sponsor to pay for my family's OSHC?

You will need to submit a new financial guarantee showing that OSHC is covered for you and your dependents or ask your sponsor to email us at sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au giving permission for you to upgrade.

Then, if we have a billing arrangement for your OSHC with your sponsor you can submit an OSHC renewal form at La Trobe International and then log on to www.oshsworldcare.com.au 2 weeks after this to order your new card.

If your sponsor does not cover OSHC for your dependents, you will have to pay for the upgrade by yourself directly to Worldcare or your preferred OSHC provider.

Can I take a leave of absence (intermission)?

Please refer to the La Trobe University [Current Students \(Intermission\)](#) page for information on how to apply. A leave of absence (intermission) can only be taken for 1 2 semesters if your circumstances are eligible under student visa regulations.

Your sponsor will need to be informed.

AusAID students can only take an intermission with AusAID approval.

If you are studying at the International College, please consult with reception staff for advice on how to receive assistance regarding a leave of absence.

My enrolment has been encumbered, what does this mean and how do I fix it?

Encumbered status applies to sponsored students if the sponsors haven't paid tuition fees by the due date. Encumbered status will not affect your La Trobe IT or library access but will prohibit your receipt of:

- Academic Transcripts
- Graduation
- Completion letters.

To fix this status, it may help to contact your sponsors and remind them to arrange payment for your tuition fees.

I need a letter for my sponsor. Where can I get this letter?

Please visit La Trobe International Reception and ask for the TWIMIC application form. Please ensure you state clearly the contents of the letter that you want us to write.

If it is a letter requested by your sponsor, the Sponsored Programs team may be able to assist provide this letter to you in 3 working days, free of charge.

If it is *not* a letter requested by your sponsor then you will need to submit your TWIMIC application form at the Student Centre and pay the relevant charge.

If you are studying at the International College, please refer to reception staff for advice on how to receive assistance with letters to your sponsor.

I am having difficulties with my course, what should I do?

Please consult the La Trobe University [Current Students](#) page for Study resources and University Services available to help you.

In addition, some sponsors (including AusAID) will help pay for tuition assistance if you are at risk of failing the subject and can provide a letter from your tutor/lecturer/course advisor to support that extra tuition is recommended.

Send an email to sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au if you would like the Sponsored Programs Team to help you with this option.

If you are studying at the International College, please talk to your teachers or reception staff for advice on how to receive assistance.

I am a sponsored student but I have been offered a La Trobe University scholarship for one semester, can I accept it?

You may be able to accept the offer, but you should check the terms and conditions of your sponsorship carefully before you decide. If the scholarship is for tuition fees La Trobe University or La Trobe International College are not able to refund any fees your sponsor may have already paid.

My sponsorship is about to end but I haven't finished my course (e.g. I failed a subject and need an extra semester), can I apply for an extension?

You will need to submit a new financial guarantee letter from your sponsor for the additional time. Most sponsors will require you to write a letter to them before they give you a new financial guarantee, requesting an extension and stating clear reasons and how long you want to extend. We can help you send this letter if you email us at sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au

Please also collect a student visa extension kit from La Trobe International and refer to www.immi.gov.au/students for visa extension information.

My sponsorship is about to end and I'm a research student but I haven't submitted my final thesis, can I apply for an extension?

You will need to submit a new financial guarantee letter from your sponsor for the additional time. Most sponsors will require you to write a letter to them before they give you a new financial guarantee, requesting an extension and stating clear reasons and how long you want to extend. You should also include a letter from your supervisor stating the reasons for the extension and the expected dates of submission and final marking. We can help you send this letter if you email us at sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au
Please also collect a student visa extension kit from La Trobe International and refer to www.immi.gov.au/students for visa extension information.

I submitted my final thesis last week and I am waiting for the correction, but my sponsorship is ended, do I have to pay for the thesis marking period?

No, you don't have to pay any extra tuition fee during the thesis marking process but you do need to have a valid student visa. Please contact La Trobe International or [DIAC](#) if you are not sure if your visa is still valid.

I am a sponsored student and I want to cancel my sponsorship (e.g. if you have been offered another scholarship or you wish to pay your own fees)

You may be able to cancel your sponsorship and continue studying but you should check the terms and conditions of your sponsorship carefully before you decide as many sponsors request funds to be repaid if you cancel the sponsorship, particularly if you plan to stay in Australia.

Id like to become an Australian permanent resident (e.g. I'm getting married, I'm applying for General Skilled Migration etc), is this permitted by my sponsor?

Generally no. Most sponsors do not allow you to change your residence status while you are on a sponsorship. You are usually required to finish your sponsored course and return to your home country as soon as your sponsorship ends. Please check the terms and conditions of your sponsorship carefully.

I've finished my course earlier than expected but my sponsorship end date has one more semester/term to go. Can I stay in Australia?

No, you can't stay any longer in Australia if you have finished your course as your visa will expire shortly after you complete your course and both DIAC and your sponsor will be notified of your early completion. Please refer to www.immi.gov.au/students for details on your visa expiry conditions.

If you want to apply for another course immediately after you finish your original course, you should apply for a course at La Trobe University, then apply to your sponsor and submit another Financial Guarantee letter if they allow you to continue your studies.

QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO AUSAID STUDENTS

Who are the AusAID student contact officers at La Trobe University?

The Sponsored Program team (Pia Larsson and Tina Huynh) are the AusAID student contact officers at La Trobe University. You can contact us by sending an email to sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au or visiting La Trobe International reception.

What requests do I need AusAID approval for?

You will need to contact the Sponsored Programs Team for approval for any of the following requests:

- Travel arrangements (fieldwork, reunion, returning home)
- Supplementary Academic Assistance
- Study Enrichment Allowance
- Intermission (Suspension of scholarship)
- Change of course
- Extension of scholarship
- Extension of visa

Please also refer to the [AusAID ADS manual](#) and the [AusAID ALA website](#) for further information regarding your AusAID scholarship.

I'm an AusAID student, how do I arrange my fieldwork/reunion/returning home travel?

At least 8 weeks before intending to travel, email sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au with your request and we will issue you with a travel voucher to take to STA campus travel.

I'm an AusAID student, how do I bring my family to Australia?

The Australian Consulate General/Immigration offices in your home country may request you to provide a letter of no objection to bring your family to Australia. In order to get this letter you will need to:

a) sign an acknowledgment of responsibility form (email sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au to request this form) **and**

b) apply for an AusAID no objection TWIMIC letter through La Trobe International reception

For other information regarding visa issues and schooling, please refer to the information at the [Students with Families](#) page

I am an AusAID student and have brought my children with me to Australia, can I get childcare benefit? And if yes, where can I apply for it?

Yes, AusAID sponsored students are eligible for Child Care benefits through the Government department Centrelink. Please see the [Centrelink](#) webpage for further details regarding the childcare benefit.

Who can I ask for further help with my sponsorship requirements?

La Trobe University (Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Bachelors, Masters, Professional doctorate, PhD)

La Trobe International reception

Peribolos East, Level 2

Phone: 9479 1199

or

Sponsored Programs Team

sponsoredprograms@latrobe.edu.au

La Trobe University International College (ELICOS, Foundation, Diploma students):

International College reception

Phone: 9479 2417