



ADDENDUM 3

to the Grant Opportunity Notice GO8470 – New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program 2027 Round released on 9 June 2026.

DFAT provides the following information to assist prospective grant applicants. This includes answers to questions received by the New Colombo Plan (NCP) Secretariat between 12 pm AEST 1 July and 5 pm AEST 21 July 2026.

Questions and Answers:

Ref	Question	Answer
1	What questions will referees be asked to answer, and what commitment is involved?	Referees will respond to questions that closely align with the assessment criteria. The questions cover the applicant's personal attributes for completing a scholarship offshore, their potential to maintain Indo-Pacific engagement and, where relevant, their language learning potential. Referees provide written comments rather than ratings, and only on areas within their knowledge.
2	Can I apply, and participate in an interview, while I am overseas?	There is no requirement to be in Australia during applications. As outlined in section 8.1 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines, shortlisted applicants will participate in an online interview via Microsoft Teams.
3	Can I change my proposed program, including my host location, before applications close?	Yes. You can change any part of your proposed program before the closing time, and you are not bound by your university's expression of interest. If you have already submitted, contact ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au to edit your form before closing time. Your university must confirm support for your revised program via the feasibility letter.
4	I did not receive my preferred exchange placement, or my university's exchange applications have closed. Can I propose a different host institution or a different semester?	Yes. Before the closing time, you may change your proposed host institution or the timing of your study component. You require your university's support via the feasibility letter attachment.



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5	Can I undertake one component in mainland China and another in Hong Kong?	Yes. China (including Hong Kong and Macau) is one host location under section 5.6.1 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines. Components may be undertaken in different cities within a host location (see Addendum 2, ref 1). You are responsible for the visas required for each part of your program, and different arrangements may apply to mainland China and Hong Kong.
6	If a student holds permanent residency in Hong Kong, are they also ineligible to undertake a program in mainland China?	Yes, this student would be ineligible to apply for China (including Hong Kong and Macau) as a host location.
7	What does 'proximate' mean for secondary host locations in section 5.6.3? Does a non-proximate secondary host location make an application ineligible?	Section 5.6.3 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines provides that a secondary host location should be proximate to the primary host location. 'Proximate' takes its ordinary meaning: geographically close. The Guidelines do not set a distance or border test. Locations that neighbour each other, or sit within the same region (for example, both in Southeast Asia), are likely to be proximate. A non-proximate secondary host location does not of itself make an application ineligible. However, secondary host locations are permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Applicants must explain in their application why the secondary location is necessary, and how it is coherent with the objectives of their program in the primary host location. Assessors will consider the rationale as part of the application's assessment against the criteria at section 6.2.
8	Is a language training component that does not meet the language target still valid? How strictly is the intensive training path measured?	Yes. A component that meets section 5.2.4 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines is valid regardless of the target, which is a DFAT reporting measure and not a program requirement. The intensive path requires 10 consecutive full-time weeks commenced in the first 3 months. This cannot be met by averaging hours across fewer weeks, or combining full-time and part-time training. Priority will be given to programs that meet the language target criteria (see Guidelines criterion 2). However, each application will be fully assessed on its merits. A proposal that slightly



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		falls short of the target would score slightly less than if a comparable proposal met the target. Language learning is an important part of the scholarship. DFAT encourages applicants to maximise the language training in their program, even if it falls short of the target, and even if you already have proficiency.
9	Can language training be completed through a university's in-house language centre?	Yes. A university-delivered, non-degree language program can be your language training component if it is separate from your credit-bearing study component(s) and meets the requirements in section 5.2.4 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines. DFAT assesses provider suitability in its sole discretion after selection, so classification does not pre-approve any provider. Language units undertaken for credit within a semester or trimester course load form part of the study component and should be entered as such.
10	Can an applicant claim both the intensive training path and the academic integration path for the language target?	Yes. An applicant may propose a program that satisfies both paths, for example an intensive language training block followed by a study component in which 50 per cent or more of the credit is language-related (see of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines glossary). Where a full-time study semester occupies the first 3 months, the intensive path cannot be scheduled, but the academic integration path remains available).
11	Can I undertake language training with 2 providers during the same period, for example one course in the morning and another in the afternoon? The application form only accepts one provider.	We will allow you to propose a full-time language training component that comprises 2 courses from separate language training providers. The combined training must meet all requirements in section 5.2.4 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines. In your program summary, you must clearly set out the arrangement. You must put forward the argument that this is a suitable arrangement in your circumstances, as compared to a course at only one provider. Each provider must separately meet the suitability requirements and be approved by DFAT post-award and pre-commencement. Where the application form asks for information about the provider, complete the fields with the



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		requested information for both providers (for example, "Name: Language School 1 / Language School 2").
12	Can I return to Australia between components of my program?	Yes. While you may return to Australia during holiday breaks, please consider this carefully when designing your program. The objective of the NCP is to develop Indo-Pacific capability through immersive experiences in the host location. Scoring highly against criterion 1 (section 6.2 of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines) requires a cohesive scholarship program that provides an immersive experience. Minimise any breaks to your program. All scholarship benefits are suspended while in Australia.
13	Will DFAT approve a leave of absence to attend an event outside my host location?	Permitted gaps, including a leave of absence or voluntary suspension, are considered and approved after award (see of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines section 5.8). We cannot give pre-approval at the application stage. If successful, raise the matter early with the NCP Scholar Support Services team.
14	For programs exceeding 12 months, when does the additional 14 days of gap leave become available?	For scholars with a program over 12 months, the additional 14 days of gap leave only becomes available in the 13th month onwards.
15	Will costs I incur before my scholarship agreement is executed be reimbursed – for example, a deposit to secure a language training place?	No. The program will not reimburse costs incurred before the scholarship agreement is executed (see of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines section 5.4). Tuition invoices must be issued by, and are paid by DFAT directly to, the host institution or language training provider (see Guidelines section 5.5.2). The award of a scholarship does not itself approve a proposed provider (see Guidelines section 5.2.4). If successful, you must raise the proposed provider with the NCP Scholar Support Services team, who will review the proposal.
16	My program commences in early January 2027. Can I travel to my host location in December 2026 to settle in?	Before travelling to your host location, you must complete all pre-departure requirements and receive clearance to travel first. This includes



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		mandatory training and an approved risk assessment. For a December departure, start these requirements as soon as you sign your agreement, and advise the Scholar Support Services team of your intended date immediately. Without clearance you are not covered by NCP insurance, and no benefits are paid before your program commences. If you travel to your host location without clearance, you will not receive any travel allowance, meaning travel expenses will be at your own cost. We will not transfer any benefits, including travel allowance, establishment allowance or stipend, before 1 January 2027. Once cleared to travel, NCP insurance covers you for up to 28 days before your program commencement date. This cover is for mobilisation only, and does not extend to leisure travel before your program starts. These are the current policy terms. If successful, we will share the new Insurance Policy Handbook confirming coverage for your cohort. Settling-in time before your first component does not involve gap leave.
17	What will happen if my visa is not granted, or visa requirements mean my program cannot proceed as planned?	Visas are granted by the host location's immigration authorities, and DFAT cannot influence or guarantee visa outcomes. Scholars are responsible for researching and obtaining the visas required for each component of their program. Research the visa requirements for different program activities (internships, study, language training) from official sources before finalising your program, including your options to utilise different visas across the program lifespan. The host location's visa requirements may affect component sequencing and duration, including if components can run concurrently. Within one host location, different arrangements may apply in different areas, for example mainland China and Hong Kong.



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		If visa requirements prevent an awarded program proceeding as planned, the Scholar Support Services team will work with you on variation options.
18	I am enrolled in a Bachelor degree with a concurrent diploma. Can subjects in my study component receive credit towards my diploma?	Yes. Within a study component (semester or trimester), credit may be divided between your Bachelor degree and your concurrent diploma, provided your Bachelor degree receives credit. In this scenario, you will not be eligible to remain a scholar if you complete your Bachelor degree.
19	Does a research-based Honours study component require enrolment at the host institution?	A research-based Honours study component may be undertaken through your existing enrolment at your Australian home university. Enrolment in units at a host institution is optional for this pathway. The study component must still be based at the overseas host institution, with the research supervised by an academic from that institution. Your application should identify the proposed host institution and, where available, the proposed supervisor. The component must be structured as a full-time semester or trimester, with full-time academic credit granted by your home university (see of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines sections 5.2.1(a)-(c)).
20	My home university considers a reduced credit load (for example, 45 of 60 credit points) to be full time. Whose definition of full-time study applies, and can my proposed credits differ from the host institution's standard load?	Your home university's definition applies. Section 5.2.1(c) of the NCP Scholarship Guidelines requires a course for which your home university will grant full-time academic credit towards your degree. Your home university's feasibility letter must confirm your proposed load meets its full-time equivalent.

All other information as set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines dated 9 June 2026 remains unchanged.