

Social Service Scholarship FAQ

Eligibility Criteria

1. What are the courses that are supported?

The Social Service Scholarship supports full-time undergraduate or postgraduate studies from local universities or overseas universities recognised by professional accreditation bodies such as Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW), Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC) and Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) in the following areas:

Undergraduate	Postgraduate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Work• Physiotherapy• Occupational Therapy• Speech and Language Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speech and Language Therapy• Psychology (only applicable for postgraduate studies)

2. What are the selection criteria for scholarship?

To be eligible for the Social Service Scholarship, you must:

- Be a Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident
- Possess excellent GCE 'A' Level, International Baccalaureate (IB), Diploma and/ or University results
- Have applied to a university or gained admission into a recognised Social Work, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy or Psychology programme at the point of application
- Demonstrate leadership qualities, community involvement and a strong interest in pursuing a career in the social service sector

3. Is there a specific list of recognised schools more commonly considered by NCSS for the Scholarship if I were to apply for a course of studies?

For the list of recognised qualifications, please refer to the professional accreditation bodies.

For social work, please refer to Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW).

For therapy studies, please refer to Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC).

For psychology, please refer to Singapore Psychological Society (SPS).

4. I am currently working in the Social Service Sector, am I eligible to apply for the scholarship?

The Social Service Scholarship is targeted at new entrants. For in-service professionals, you may tap on the Professional Capability Grant (PCG). For more information, visit: <https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/funding-schemes-and-common-services/funding/professional-capability-grant>

5. Does the scholarship support part-time studies?

The Social Service Scholarship supports only full-time studies.

- 6. I recently graduated with a Diploma in Business Management and have always been passionate about addressing social issues. Is there any scholarship that I might be suitable for?**

You may apply for the Singapore-Industry Scholarship (SgIS) Scholarship to pursue a career in Social Service. NCSS partners MOE to offer the SGIS scholarship that supports undergraduate studies in the following areas:

- Business (Business/Business Administration/Business Management/Marketing)
- Communication Studies (Communication Studies/Communications and New Media)

- 7. I am currently working at a Social Service Agency as an executive, as I wanted to contribute and gain experience in the social service sector before pursuing my postgraduate degree. However, I plan to terminate my employment once I gain admission into a Master's programme to concentrate on my full-time studies. Would I be eligible for the Social Service Scholarship?**

It is not encouraged for in-service professionals to terminate employment to be eligible for the Social Service Scholarship. The Social Service Scholarship is a sectoral scholarship i.e., if you are shortlisted and awarded the scholarship, you will be serving a bond in one of the member agencies under NCSS.

For in-service professionals who wish to further your studies, you can check out the support available under the **Professional Capability Grant (PCG)**. The grant supports short-term local training courses/conferences and higher education programmes. You should first discuss with your current Social Service Agency on your career plans and interest to further study. For more details on PCG, please visit: <https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/funding-schemes-and-common-services/funding/professional-capability-grant>

- 8. I am currently a psychologist with a SPED School and looking to pursue a PhD to further my interest in children with special needs. Does the scholarship apply to PhD studies?**

The Social Service Scholarship currently does not support PhD level.

- 9. I am commencing my course in March, do I apply for the Full-Term Scholarship or Mid-Term Scholarship?**

Please apply for the Full-Term Scholarship if you have yet to commence studies. If you have completed at least one academic semester, please apply for the Mid-Term Scholarship.

- 10. Does the scholarship support overseas universities?**

Yes, provided that the qualification is recognised by the professional accreditation bodies. However, it will be assessed by the Scholarship panel accordingly. Candidates applying to overseas universities will need to be able to justify the choice of pursuing their studies in an overseas university instead of a local university.

11. I am currently in my final semester of study. Am I still eligible to apply the Scholarship (Mid-Term)?

You will need have at least one remaining year of academic studies at the point of your application (i.e. cannot be in your final year of studies at point of application).

12. I have not applied to a university yet, can I apply for the scholarship?

You will need to apply to the university prior to applying for the Social Service Scholarship. The course of study and commencement date must be indicated in the Brightsparks application.

13. Are successful applicants allowed to hold concurrent scholarships? For example, if I was offered a partial scholarship (with no bond requirements) and was successful in the Social Service Scholarship application, am I allowed to be awarded both or would I need to give up the other one?

Scholars should not concurrently hold two scholarships.

14. What are the minimum criteria to maintain the scholarship?

Scholars are expected to graduate with honours, within the stipulated period of the course.

15. Can I change my course of study after receiving the scholarship?

You are awarded the scholarship based on your indicated choice of study during the selection and interview stage. The scholar is obligated to serve a bond in the profession that you are supported for your course of studies under the scholarship bond obligations.

Scholarship Coverage and Bond

16. What does the scholarship coverage entail?

The Social Service Scholarship covers full tuition fees, monthly allowance, one-time pre-studies allowance, overseas exchange program, enrichment activity allowance and any other compulsory fees required to complete the course of study.

**The overseas exchange and enrichment activity allowance is by application basis and subjected to approval.*

17. What does the mid-term scholarship entail?

The Social Service Scholarship (Mid-Term) covers full tuition fees from Year 1 Semester 1 (back payment via reimbursement), pro-rated monthly allowance (from the year of award), pre-studies allowance, overseas exchange programs, enrichment activity allowance and any other compulsory fees required to complete the course of study.

**The overseas exchange and enrichment activity allowance is by application basis and subjected to approval.*

18. What is the bond period?

Type of Qualification	Local Universities	Overseas Universities
Undergraduate (Bachelor)	4 years	6 years
Postgraduate (Master)	3 years	4 years

19. When does my scholarship bond start and end?

The period of your scholarship bond will begin from the first day of your emplacement at the social service agency upon completion of your study. You will have to fulfil the bond duration as stipulated in the signed agreement. The bond emplacement will end upon your fulfilment of the scholarship obligations, subjected to NCSS's discretion.

20. Am I allowed to choose the agency I want to work in upon graduation?

All scholars will be contacted 3-6 months prior to the completion of their studies. Scholar's preference for the sub-sectors (namely, Children and Youth, Families, Seniors, Disabilities and Mental Health) will be considered, subjected to the demand at the point of time. The scholarship secretariat will work closely with the scholars on the job search process.

21. What happens if I am not able to fulfil the agreement, for example, not able to complete course / did not complete my bond?

All scholars will be liable to pay the liquidated damages (LD) at **10% compound interest per academic year** to NCSS for any failure to fulfil the terms of the agreement, including not being able to complete the studies or fulfil the agreed bond period.

22. What is the difference between the Social Service Scholarship and Social Service Tribe Study Award?

	Social Service Scholarship	Social Service Tribe Study Award
Who is it for	Outstanding individuals who have demonstrated an excellent track record in academic results, community involvement, leadership potential and passion to pursue a career in social service	Individuals who have a strong interest and passion to pursue a career in social service. The Study Award provides an opportunity to join a SSA that best aligns with your career development after graduation
Supported Courses of Studies	Same courses of studies (refer to S/N 1)	
Institution supported	Local and Overseas Institution	Local institution only
Bond	Serve a bond with the Social Service Sector	Serve a bond with a sponsoring Social Service Agency
Bond Period	Undergraduate: 4 to 6 years Postgraduate: 3 to 4 years	Undergraduate: 2 to 3 years Postgraduate: 1 to 2 years

Application Period	First Window: 1 Jan to 31 Mar Second Window: 1 to 30 Sept	1 Jul to 31 Aug
Application Platform	Via Brightsparks Portal	Via Social Service Tribe website https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-tribe/our-news/detailpage/studyaward Candidates are to apply directly with the partnering SSA of your choice

Selection Process

23. When will I be informed of the outcome?

All applications are to be submitted via the Brightsparks portal and only shortlisted candidates will be notified during the following periods:

Application Window	Application Period	Notification Period
First Window	1 Jan to 31 Mar	May-Jun
Second Window	1 to 31 Sept	Nov-Dec

24. How many scholarships are given out in each window?

The number of scholarships given out in each window depends on the suitability and quality of the candidates. All candidates are required to go through a Scholarship panel interview.

25. What are some key qualities that interviewers are looking out for during the Scholarship panel interview?

These are some of the key qualities that our interviewers look out for:

- Passion and motivation to join the Social Service Sector
- Excellent communication skills
- Leadership qualities
- In depth awareness and knowledge about the discipline
- Clarity towards career aspiration in Social Service and choice of discipline

Application Process

26. I submitted my application via Brightsparks Portal. Under the “Additional Questions” section, it mentioned reference letters, but there was no indication of a template or where to upload them.

There is no template for reference letters. Please attach referral letters with all supporting documents.