



Rationale

Sponsorship is designed to promote higher education studies in religious education, theology and educational leadership. It recognises that higher learning in these areas is an important element of contemporary Catholic leadership and teaching that will enhance the Catholic identity and the learning across our diocesan education community, ensure effective learning outcomes for students and support leadership succession.

Background

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL), through its Office of Management, recognises the importance of supporting teachers, current and aspiring school leaders to pursue advanced academic studies in Catholic educational leadership, religious education, theology and Catholic identity. DOBCEL believes that support for these studies, rather than be an entitlement, is a responsibility shared by DOBCEL Management, schools and individuals.

Sponsorship is funded for primary teachers through CECV Grants Allocation Committee- Primary (GACP), and for secondary teachers through a professional development levy paid by each secondary college in the diocese.

Policy Statement

DOBCEL Office of Management will allocate specified funds annually to sponsor teachers and leaders in Catholic schools of the diocese and DOBCEL Management staff to pursue further academic qualifications in educational leadership, religious education, or theology. DOBCEL Management will oversee applications from RI/MPJP schools operating within the diocese through a Service Level Agreement in place with these schools.

Principles

Formation appropriate to responsibilities

Professional development is mandatory in most professions and training in fiduciary concepts and the principles of governance is similarly a requirement for all who undertake the ministry of leadership in church organisations. Those involved in the mission of DOBCEL, therefore, are required to build their capacity for and understanding of their role. This requires acquiring a blend of ecclesial, theological, corporate and professional capabilities required for the effective operation of DOBCEL entities.¹

¹ *The Light from the Southern Cross: Promoting Co-responsible governance in the Catholic Church in Australia, A Report and Recommendations on the Governance and Management of Dioceses and Parishes in the Catholic Church in Australia*, 6.8.1, p.89, 2020, <https://www.catholicreligious.org.au/light-from-the-southern-cross>.

Responsible stewardship

Stewardship is a fundamental tenet of the Church's spirituality and integral to its mission. It entails a responsibility for service that aims to nurture a gift from another. Frequently understood in relation to care for our common home, the ideas fundamental to stewardship apply more broadly, involving the just and proper use of human and material resources through prudent management, wise investment and usage.²

Co-responsibility

Participation in community brings with it both a range of rights and protections and a range of duties and obligations. The particular responsibility each person has within the Church stems from the responsibility that all Christians have by virtue of their Baptism. All share in responsibility for the being and activity of the Church and all the People of God make a specific contribution to the Mission.

Key related documents

Diocesan Education Vision and Mission Statements

Partnering: A Step Further - Strategic Directions 2020-2024

Characteristics of a Highly Effective Catholic School (CHECS)

DOBCEL Performance Development and Review Policy and Procedures

Diocesan Leadership Framework

Awakenings – Religious Education Curriculum

Accreditation to Teach and to Teach Religious Education or Lead in Catholic Schools in Victoria Policy (CECV)

² See *The Light from the Southern Cross*, *op.cit.*, 3.2.4 p.28.



These procedures are to be read in conjunction with the *DOBCEL Sponsorship: Higher Education Policy*.

Funding

- Each year specific sponsorship funds will be allocated for staff pursuing academic qualifications in educational leadership, religious education, or theology
- Sponsorship is funded for primary teachers through CECV Grants Allocation Committee-Primary (GACP). Once sponsorship applications have been approved through the DOBCEL Office of Management, CECV will distribute funds to eligible schools
- Successful applications for sponsorship for members of DOBCEL Management are also funded from GACP but distributed directly through the Management office
- Sponsorship is funded for secondary teachers through a Professional Development levy paid by each secondary college in the diocese. Funds are distributed directly to each college
- The DOBCEL Management Finance Team sends a letter to each school indicating that they will receive the sponsorship grant and listing the sponsored staff.

Costing

- Sponsorship funding is based on the cost of university fees per unit and will usually be provided on the basis of one-third from DOBCEL Management, one-third from the school and one-third from the applicant. The Executive Director CEB has discretion to vary this arrangement in specific situations
- Primary teachers undertaking studies to meet the requirements of the *CECV Accreditation to Teach and to Teach Religious Education or Lead in Catholic Schools in Victoria Policy* will be funded two thirds from the DOBCEL Office of Management and one third from the school
- Secondary applicants pursuing academic study in religious education or theology, will be funded fully through the Secondary Religious Education Professional Development fund, to which each secondary college contributes
- The proposed course of study should be demonstrably relevant to the applicant's professional role in the school community as validated by the principal's endorsement.

Applications

- Applications for sponsorship will be advertised in Term Four via the DOBCEL website.
- Courses that are recommended by DOBCEL Management as meeting the requirements for diocesan sponsorship will be listed in Term Four via the DOBCEL website
- All applicants must have their principal's endorsement to be considered for sponsorship, as the school is acknowledging part payment of the applicant's study costs. In the case of DOBCEL Management applicants, the Team Leader's endorsement is required
- Applicants are responsible for enrolling in the respective course of study

- The cost of each unit of study undertaken must be cited in the application, otherwise the minimum sponsorship allocation will be provided
- As part of their application, applicants need to articulate clearly in approximately five hundred words, their vision of what this study will mean for:
 - themselves
 - students in their school
 - Catholic education
- Applicants must be employed in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Ballarat or in the DOBCEL Office of Management for the duration of the year in which funding is awarded for a period of employment of at least 0.5FTE
- Applicants will not have access to any other funding source for the study being undertaken
- If staff members transfer from one school, or office, to another within the year that funding is awarded, the sponsorship will need to be re-negotiated
- In negotiation with their principal, governing authority (in the case of a principal) or Team Leader (in the case of DOBCEL Management staff), successful applicants may pursue the following options as to how they would like their funding to be allocated:
 - To pay university fees
 - Evidence of payment, or the request for payment, must be presented to the principal/school bursar or DOBCEL Management (whichever applies) before funding can be released
 - As replacement funding for time release to a maximum of eight days.
 - As reimbursement for travel and/or accommodation expenses
 - Exact details and receipts must be kept and presented to the principal/school bursar or DOBCEL Management (whichever applies) in order for funding to be released
 - To pay administration fees
 - Evidence of payment, or the request for payment, must be presented to the principal/school bursar or DOBCEL Management (whichever applies) before funding can be released
 - A combination of any of the above
 - limited by the original amount of funding awarded to the individual, and subject to the same conditions as stated above
- If a teacher is finding it difficult to pay the totality of fees when enrolling, they are to request support from the school, which can then negotiate a repayment plan if required
- At the end of the academic semester, sponsorship recipients are required to provide to their principal, proof of successful completion of study for that semester. The principal will in turn notify DOBCEL Management. Failure to do this may result a cessation of sponsorship payments
- Further sponsorship will not be considered without satisfactory completion of previous units.
- Sponsorship funding is granted for one year only and may not be deferred.
- New applications for funding must be made for each year of the course.
- If a scholarship recipient withdraws from a unit or units of study, DOBCEL Management, the principal and bursar of the school must be notified.
- The allocation of sponsorship will vary in any given year in accordance with demand. The Executive Director of Catholic Education Ballarat has discretion to vary this arrangement in specific situations.

Process for approval and prioritising of applications

- A panel will be formed to oversee sponsorship applications. Membership of the panel will consist of a representative of the DOBCEL CEO, a representative of the Deputy Director, a primary principal, a secondary principal, a primary teacher, a secondary teacher and the sponsorship executive officer from DOBCEL Management
- The panel will process and recommend to the DOBCEL CEO suitable applicants to be considered for sponsorship.

Courses that meet the following requirements will be considered for diocesan sponsorship

Religious Education and Theology

- Studies pursued to meet the requirements of the CECV Policy Accreditation to Teach and to Teach Religious Education or Lead in Catholic Schools in Victoria. A current list of recommended courses can be found on the DOBCEL website. Accreditation study will be fully funded two thirds from DOBCEL Office of Management and one third from the school.
- Other studies in religious education, theology, spirituality and Catholic identity, particularly at Masters' level.

Educational Leadership

- Applicants will normally be required to be accredited in line with the CECV policy. The Executive Director CEB may grant exemptions in specific circumstances
- DOBCEL Management will publish annually those courses which have been approved for sponsorship for educational leadership. These will normally be offered by Catholic institutions and reflect the priorities for education in the Diocese.

Unused/Additional Funding

- In a given year, if part of the funding available for sponsorship is not distributed or additional funding is available, the Executive Director CEB has discretion to use these funds for sponsorship for other higher education courses. The amount for allocation and requirements to be met will be determined by the Executive Director CEB.

Supporting documents

Diocesan Education Vision and Mission Statements

Partnering: A Step Further - Strategic Directions 2020-2024

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Appendix

Application Template



DIOCESE OF BALLARAT CATHOLIC EDUCATION LIMITED

Sponsorship: Higher Education Studies Application Form

APPENDIX 1

You must complete **ALL** sections of the application form.

First Name:	Click here to enter text.	Surname:	Click here to enter text.
Details of Study to be Undertaken			
Institute of Study and contact	Click here to enter text.		
Course Name:	Click here to enter text.		
Names of Units to be completed in 2018	1. Click here to enter text.	2. Click here to enter text.	
	3. Click here to enter text.	4. Click here to enter text.	
Estimated Costs:	Course Fees:	\$Click here to enter text.	
	Text Books:	\$Click here to enter text.	
	Other:	\$Click here to enter text.	
Are you able to access funding for course costs from another source? If yes, please identify:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Click here to enter text.
Mode of Delivery for <u>each unit</u> to be undertaken in 2021 (online, weekends, face to face, distance, etc):		Click here to enter text.	
Comments in support of your application, include how this study is relevant to your role at CEB: Click here to enter text.			

- Applicants may wish to attach documentation to support their application, particularly regarding Accreditation.
- I understand that this Sponsorship is for 2021 ONLY
- I will provide details of each unit cost (university fee) to CEB. Sponsorship cannot be otherwise finalised.
- Applicants doing a course which requires block release can take half of the days as professional development (paid leave) and the other half at their own expense (LSL or Annual leave).
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Applicant's Name: _____ Signature _____

Team Leader's Approval: _____

Executive Director's Signature _____

- Note:**
1. CEOB support will usually be for 2/3 of course costs as per DOBCEL Policy.
 2. Reimbursement will be on presentation of invoice/receipt to the CEB Finance Officer.
 3. Sponsorship may need to be repaid on units where a pass is not gained.