

Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission

MACC Debt Management Policy

Purpose: This policy sets out the approach of the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission (the “MACC”) to recovering debts owed by Scholars and managing cases where debts cannot be reclaimed.

Scope: This policy applies to all Scholars, Fellows and other Debtors who have received funding under the Marshall Scholarship programme and who have incurred debts to the MACC, including but not limited to stipends, tuition fees, rent deposits and travel expenses.

Policy Statement: The MACC is committed to fiscal responsibility, ensuring that public funds are managed properly and that all reasonable efforts are made to recover debts owed. However, the MACC also recognises that circumstances may arise where recovery is not feasible. The MACC will exercise discretion in cases of exceptional personal or financial hardship. Decisions in such cases will be made transparently and with due regard to the MACC’s fiduciary responsibilities.

Debt Recovery Process

Scholars who receive a housing deposit from MACC will be required to sign a Loan Agreement stipulating that the deposit must be returned directly to the MACC by the landlord. The Scholar will be responsible for returning any portion of the deposit that is not refunded directly by the landlord.

1. Notification of Debt

- The Marshall Secretariat (the “Secretariat”) will notify the Scholar formally in writing of the debt owed, including a detailed breakdown of the amounts and the reasons for the debt, and ensure it is aligned with the Scholarship Handbook section on the topic of “Deposits”.
- The notification will outline repayment terms, including deadlines and available payment methods, and allow the Scholar to dispute the debt, and reference any financial difficulties.

2. Repayment Plans

- Scholars may request a repayment plan if they are unable to repay the debt in full by the specified deadline.
- Repayment plans will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the Scholar’s financial circumstances.

3. Follow-Up Actions

- If the debt remains unpaid within the agreed deadlines, the Secretariat will issue reminders quarterly for one year and engage with the Scholar to explore resolution options.
- In cases of refusal to pay or non-response after one year, the Secretariat will escalate the matter to the MACC CEO and Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee (“ARM”) (and Chair of the Academic Committee in case of financial difficulties) for consideration of appropriate action.
- As stated in the Scholarship Handbook, MACC reserves the right to withhold the homeward fare contribution from Scholars with outstanding debts (see relevant sections on “Homeward Fare” and “Completion of Tenure”).

Irrecoverable Debt

In circumstances where a debt has not been repaid within two years, and the recovery of the debt is deemed unfeasible, the following steps will apply:

1. Assessment of Recoverability

- The Secretariat will present ARM with all available information, including the Scholar's financial situation and efforts made to recover the debt.

2. Approval for Write-Off

- A recommendation to write off the debt will be prepared and submitted for consideration by ARM.
- Even if a debt is written off, the MACC reserves the right to reinstate it in the future or deduct from any future payments to the Scholar.

3. Record-Keeping

- Details of irrecoverable debts will be retained for audit and transparency purposes, and recorded on the MACC's Financial Loss Register
- The updated Financial Loss Register will be periodically reviewed by ARM and MACC

Review and Amendments: This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

Contact: For enquiries or assistance related to this policy, Scholars should contact the Secretariat at prog.admin@marshallscholarship.org