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**CANBERRA LAW STUDENTS' SOCIETY**  
STUDENT TEXTBOOK EQUITY PROGRAM POLICY

Effective as at 16 January 2023

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**1. Objectives**

- 1.1. This policy sets out the Canberra Law Students' Society (CLSS) Student Textbook Equity Program (STEP).
- 1.2. STEP is run by the CLSS for University of Canberra students studying a Bachelor of Laws or Bachelor of Justice Studies.
- 1.3. STEP aims to assist students who are studying a Bachelor of Laws and/or a Bachelor of Justice Studies unit facing financial disadvantage or would be burdened by the cost of textbooks, by providing an opportunity for students to apply to borrow a textbook from STEP.

**2. General Application**

- 2.1. The provision of textbooks under STEP will be decided by the CLSS Equity Director or an application assessment panel made up of CLSS Executive ("the Panel").
- 2.2. A maximum of four textbooks may be loaned to an applicant at any one time.
- 2.3. By applying to STEP, all successful applicants agree to fulfilling any obligation imparted upon them under STEP, including but not limited to returning textbooks at the nominated time and in a good condition.
- 2.4. Most required units for Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Justice Studies require students to purchase a textbook. The CLSS will aim to procure textbooks for all required units. Provision of textbooks is dependent on the number of textbooks procured for a semester.
- 2.5. Applicants to STEP are to agree that they are the beneficiary of the textbook. Using STEP for the benefit of persons who are not otherwise eligible for STEP may result in disqualification from further assistance for both parties and forfeiture of the bond amount.

- 2.6. A successful applicant may only apply for assistance for a certain textbook/unit of study once.
- 2.7. An applicant's unsuccessful or successful application for one semester of study does not preclude them from applying for assistance in future study periods.
- 2.8. The CLSS may review and update this policy as necessary.
- 2.9. Any decision made by the Equity Director under this policy may be reviewed pursuant to the CLSS grievance policy.

### **3. Application period**

- 3.1. The application period will commence no later than one week before the beginning of the applicable semester and close no earlier than the Friday of the second week of that semester.
- 3.2. The Equity Director, in consultation with the CLSS President, may extend the application period. Notice of extension of the application period will be made via the CLSS website and/or CLSS social media accounts.
- 3.3. Applications must be received within the application period unless an extension has been sought from the Equity Director within the application period, or shortly after.

### **4. Eligibility criteria**

- 4.1. To be eligible for a textbook loan under STEP, the applicant must:
  - 4.1.1. Be studying a Bachelor of Law or Bachelor of Justice Studies at the University of Canberra; and
  - 4.1.2. Be a member of the CLSS; and
  - 4.1.3. Are facing financial hardship and unable to purchase textbooks for their units of study; or
  - 4.1.4. Would be burdened by the cost of textbooks if they were to purchase textbooks for their units of study.
- 4.2. Financial hardship could be affected by, but is not limited to, any of the following circumstances:
  - 4.2.1. The applicant is not supported by family;

- 4.2.2. The applicant is unemployed;
  - 4.2.3. Educational commitments;
  - 4.2.4. The applicant has recently moved from another city, interstate or overseas;
  - 4.2.5. The applicant has experienced a recent family tragedy or other major setback of a personal nature which affects their immediate access to funds; and
  - 4.2.6. The applicant has been acknowledged as disadvantaged by the government and is receiving welfare payments from the Australian Government.
- 4.3. In approving the provision of textbooks under STEP, the CLSS Equity Director or the application assessment panel may take into account the circumstances at paragraph 17 but is not limited to consideration of solely these circumstances.

## **5. Apportionment of the number of textbooks to be loaned**

- 5.1. The CLSS will procure a certain number of textbooks for each applicable unit for each Semester.
- 5.2. Textbooks will be apportioned appropriately to ensure that all successful applicants have an opportunity to receive a minimum of one textbook for the applicable semester.
- 5.3. Successful applications may receive a maximum of four textbooks.

## **6. Application assessment panel**

- 6.1. If for a certain unit/s more applications are received than there are textbooks available, an application assessment panel will be established to assess the applications.
- 6.2. This panel will be composed of two CLSS Directors and the CLSS President, or the CLSS Vice-President as a proxy for the President. The two CLSS Directors will be chosen by the Equity Director.
- 6.3. The Equity Director will inform and assist the Panel but will not have any decision-making powers as part of the panel.

- 6.4. The Equity Director is not required to consult the Assessment panel in relation applications received where there is sufficient supply of textbooks to completed applications received.
- 6.5. All applications that require review by the panel will be anonymised by the Equity Director prior to their submission to the panel. The Equity Director may include additional information on whether textbooks have been apportioned to the applicant prior to the anonymisation to support the panel's consideration.

## **7. Ineligible applicants**

- 7.1. At the discretion of the Equity Director, an applicant will not be eligible to receive a textbook loan if:
- 7.1.1. The applicant possesses any overdue textbooks;
  - 7.1.2. The applicant has repeatedly failed to return textbooks before or at the end of the loan period;
  - 7.1.3. The applicant has repeatedly returned textbooks in poor condition;
  - 7.1.4. The applicant has misused STEP.
- 7.2. Applicants will be advised of their failed application and the reason for their denial of textbooks should they be ineligible under paragraph 22.

## **8. Bond**

- 8.1. Successful applicants will be required to pay a \$40 bond to the CLSS for the initial textbook loaned. Any further charges for textbooks will be at the discretion of the Equity Director.
- 8.2. The bond will be refunded following the return of all textbook/s.
- 8.3. At the discretion of the Equity Director, the bond will be wholly or partly forfeited to the CLSS if the applicant does not return the textbook before the end of the loan period and/or the applicant returns the textbook in poor condition.

8.4. The Equity Director and CLSS President may seek additional costs at their discretion should textbooks not be returned or returned in a poor condition.

## **9. Condition of textbooks**

9.1. Successful applicants agree to returning any textbook in satisfactory condition.

9.2. Whilst not exhaustive, examples of a textbook not in satisfactory condition may include:

9.2.1. Highlighting;

9.2.2. Liquid Damage;

9.2.3. Markings not in pencil; and/or

9.2.4. Torn or missing pages.

9.3. The Equity Director has discretion to decide whether a textbook is in satisfactory condition.

## **10. Return of textbooks**

10.1. Unless otherwise agreed to by the Equity Director, textbook/s must be returned to the by the end of the loan period.

10.2. The loan period commences on the date of the loan and ends on the last day of exams for that semester.

10.3. It is the responsibility of the student loaning the textbook to contact the Equity Director to return the textbook.

10.4. If the student loaning the textbook is not able to return the textbook within the loan period, the Equity Director may allow the student to return the textbook on a nominated collection date after the loan period.

## **11. Confidentiality**

11.1 The privacy of students accessing STEP will be respected at all times, and personal information will not be shared without the student's consent. All information provided by the applicant will be kept strictly confidential.