



Government of Sierra Leone

Ministry of Technical and Higher Education

New England

**POLICY FOR THE AWARD OF GRANT-IN-AID AND OTHER AWARDS TO SIERRA LEONEANS BY
THE MINISTRY OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

1. PURPOSE

This policy informs students and members of the general public about the student grant-in-Aid scheme designed to assist students' access Higher Education by meeting their financial obligations to the institutions of their choice. This scheme is meant to provide pecuniary assistance to qualified and deserving students who may want to pursue various programmes but whose financial situation mitigates against the realization of their dream; to access and pursue higher education. This scheme barely provides monies to meet the fees charged by the universities in respect of the programmes provided.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Sierra Leonean students who are faced with financial difficulties but pursuing courses in Public Technical and other tertiary institutions in the country.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the intention of government to embark on the development of human capital in order to drive growth in general. Government has observed that there are some students who intend accessing and pursuing various programmes in Technical and Tertiary Institutions but are inhibited from doing so due to their weak financial situations. In this light, article 9 of the Sierra Leone Constitution 1991 (Act. No.6) states government's intent thus:

9. (1) The Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal rights and adequate educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels by—

a. ensuring that every citizen is given the opportunity to be educated to the best of his ability, aptitude and inclination by providing educational facilities at all levels and aspects of education such as primary, secondary, vocational, technical, college and university;

b. safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups, such as children, women and the disabled in security educational facilities; and

c. providing the necessary structures, finance and supportive facilities for education as and when practicable.

4.0. ROLE OF MINISTRY OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Identify priority training needs of the country based on the courses offered in the various tertiary institutions.
2. Award scholarships to deserving students.
3. Supervise agencies under the ministry.
4. Collaborate with agencies in the advancement of quality education in Sierra Leone.

5.0. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

5. Awards are advertised in both electronic and print media.
6. Students fill applications and submit online. (What about in the case where in the applicants were unable to complete the online application forms
7. Shortlisted candidates are invited to an interview by a committee set up by MTHE, and successful candidates are awarded and informed accordingly.

6.0. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF AWARDEES

- The MTHE is aware of the fact that quality education is expensive and demands a lot more support from government. The government of Sierra Leone as a priority will support needy but deserving students in Technical and Higher Education Institutions by way of awarding scholarships.
- A committee shall be constituted by the Ministry and the responsible Minister shall appoint the head(s) both national and by districts to handle the award of Grant-in-Aid and other awards.

7.0. SELECTION COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

There shall also be constituted a selection committee for the nomination of international awards. The committee shall comprise of the following:

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|--|-----------|
| ➤ Chief Technical and Higher Education Officer | Chairman |
| ➤ Director of Tertiary Education | Member |
| ➤ Director of TVET | Member |
| ➤ Director of Science | Member |
| ➤ Director Research, Planning and Development | Member |
| ➤ A Representative from HEIs | Member |
| ➤ Anti-Corruption Commission | Observer |
| ➤ Ministry of Foreign affairs | Member |
| ➤ HRMO | Member |
| ➤ Civil Society Organization | Observer |
| ➤ Student Secretary | Secretary |

Note: MTHE with any other two external staff from other ministry/ commission shall be granted permission to conduct interviews at both Headquarter and Districts offices of the Ministry.

8.0. SELECTION COMMITTEE: DUTIES

8.1. Members of the selection committee shall be responsible for evaluating in a fair and transparent way applications forwarded to MTHE for International awards, and thereafter short list candidates based on the set criteria.

However if any member has an interest(s) that could affect his/her decision or the functioning of the committee, that member must disclose such interest(s) whether actual or perceived.

Moreover, the responsible Minister has the right to exclude any member of the committee where there is actual or perceived conflict of interest.

The Chairman shall ensure that each member's view is acknowledged while s/he leads the selection process based on the criteria outlined below:

8.1(a). The class of degree as requested by the awarding body and country (Commonwealth, Moroccan, Algerian scholarships etc)

8.1(b). For postgraduate programmes, a well-structured, written and relevant proposal.

8.1(c). Must be a Sierra Leonean ordinarily resident in-country and within the stipulated age bracket.

8.1(d). Committee Members shall append their signatures and date to the short listing document at the end of the exercise.

9.0. NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS COMMITTEE: COMPOSITION

Except for reasons of security and other extreme circumstances that may negate the peaceful operations of the ministry, but all international scholarship interviews shall be conducted at the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education or a place to be determined by the minister of Technical and Higher Education for that purpose.

9.1. The National Scholarship Advisory Committee shall comprise the following:

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|--|----------|
| ➤ Chief Technical and Higher Education Officer/Rep | Chairman |
| ➤ Director of TVET | Member |
| ➤ Director of Science Education | Member |
| ➤ Director of Research, Planning and Development | Member |
| ➤ Director of NCTVA/Rep | Member |
| ➤ Registrar, University of Sierra Leone | Member |

➤ Registrar, Njala University	Member
➤ Registrar, EBKUST	Member
➤ Inter-religious Council	Member
➤ Ministry of Foreign affairs	Member
➤ HRMO	Member
➤ ACC Representative	Observer
➤ Student Secretary, MTHE	Secretary

9.2. COMPOSITION OF DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS COMMITTEE

➤ Regional Deputy Director: MTHE	Secretary / Chairman
➤ Chief Administrator	Member
➤ Civil Society Representative in the District	Member
➤ Registrar of a Tertiary Institution in the District/Region	Member
➤ A Representative for the Conference of Principals	Member
➤ Head, Government Technical Institute in the District	Member
➤ ACC Representative	Observer
➤ Chairman of council of Chiefs	Observer

Note The chairman for the nomination at district level shall be chosen within committee members above.

10.0. CONDITIONS OF THE AWARDS

i). Successful applicants are bonded for a period equivalent to the number of years for government scholarship was awarded. Defaulters will have their guarantors responsible for reimbursement of grant.

ii). The Ministry reserves the right to take the necessary action(s) should applicants present false documents/information during the award process.

iii). Students who fail during the academic year and requested to repeat the academic year will have their grants withdrawn.

iv). Change of course/program without permission from the ministry will lead to the withdrawal of the grant.

v). Late application forms will neither be accepted nor processed.

vi). No student should have two scholarships with a giving period of time.

5.1. ADDENDUM

MTHE shall provide a sitting fee (to be determined by the relevant authority) and an appropriate amount to cover cost of transportation based on the distance(s) covered.

The Ministry shall form a selection committee that must comprise of a broad representation of both internal and external stakeholders with adequate professional expertise and appropriate gender balance

All scholarships under the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education should be assigned to the scholarship selection committee. The scholarship selection committee is responsible for the transparent and fair assessment of awardees

The Chairman shall lead in the selection process and ensure that each selection committee member's view is acknowledged.

The Chairman shall document, approve and notify the Minister of the selection outcome.