

From the RAMUS team

Welcome to the December 2015 issue of the *RAMUS Newsletter*.

In this issue you will find information about the end-of-year requirements for scholars, both those continuing their scholarship and those graduating, plus mentor requirements.

You will also find an outline of the latest issue of the **Australian Journal of Rural Health (AJRH)**. Scholars have free online access to the AJRH through the RAMUS website.

The **2016 application round for RAMUS is open**. Given the changes currently underway to the overall rural health scholarship system, only a very small number of new RAMUS scholarships are available for 2016. There have been no changes to the criteria for ranking applications, so it is likely that only those which demonstrate that the student is from a quite remote area (ASGC-RA 3-5) and has significant financial need will be ranked high enough to be offered a conditional scholarship.

Best wishes

The RAMUS team

Lesley and Janine

2016 RAMUS application round

Applications for RAMUS 2016 are now open and will close at 5pm (AESDT) 19 January 2016. Given the changes currently underway to the overall rural health scholarship system, only a very small number of new RAMUS scholarships are available for 2016.

The 2016 RAMUS Application Form and Guidelines are available at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au>

End-of-year requirements

The end of the year is coming up rapidly. Whether you are graduating this year or continuing next year, it's time to begin thinking about the end-of-year requirements for your scholarship.

We will soon be emailing details of the end-of-year acquittal requirements to all scholars. Please contact the office if you think we may have an out-of-date email or postal address for you on our file.

The acquittal forms are also available at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/scholars>

Continuing scholars: please note that your scholarship payments for 2016 cannot start until you have submitted all the documents with a due date of 31 December 2015.

Completing Scholars

The following are due by 31 December 2015:

Completing Scholar Details Form

This ensures we have accurate contact information for you. Complete, sign and return the form via email, mail or fax.

Scholar Report

This report should be 500-1000 words and cover your involvement in rural activities, contact with your RAMUS mentor and things you have gained from your Scholar Mentor Plan. Complete pro forma (available on the website) and email as an attachment.

Academic Results

Official university documentation of your academic results for the year 2015. Results can be emailed as a screen shot from your student portal or photocopy/scan your 2015 results and attach to an email.

Continuing Scholars

The following are due by 31 December 2015:

Scholar Agreement

This confirms that you re-commit to meeting the obligations of RAMUS. Complete and return the scholar agreement form.

Scholar Details Form

This ensures that we have accurate contact and bank account details for you. Complete and return the scholar details form.

Scholar Report

This report should be 500-1000 words and cover your involvement in rural activities, contact with your RAMUS mentor and things you have gained from your Scholar Mentor Plan. Complete pro forma (available on the website) and email as an attachment.

Academic Results

Official university documentation of your academic results for 2015. Results can be emailed as a screen shot from your student portal or photocopied and/or scanned and attached to an email.

Confirmation of Enrolment

Official university documentation of your full time enrolment in medicine for 2016. Proof of enrolment can be emailed as a screen shot from your student portal or photocopied and/or scanned and attached to an email.

Income details for 2014/15

Photocopy/scan your ATO Notice of Assessment for 2014-2015. If you did not lodge a tax return, submit a Statutory Declaration that states your income for 2014-2015. Provide a copy of your ATO Notice via email or mail. Statutory Declarations must be submitted via mail.

Mentors

Reports from RAMUS mentors on each of their scholars are due by **31 December 2015**. Mentors are asked to use the pro-forma sent to them (please let us know if you have not received the document).

Tips for your scholar report

Your annual scholar report gives an opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences as a RAMUS scholarship holder over the past year.

Things you might include:

- an overview of your activities and experiences relating to rural practice and what these have meant to you. Please refer back to your scholar mentor plan for 2015 and comment on whether you were able to achieve everything you planned;
- coverage of your activities and relationship with your RAMUS mentor;
- notes about academic or personal achievements you would like to share with your RAMUS colleagues and the team (university awards or prizes, articles published, presentations at conferences);
- feedback on your experience of the RAMUS Scheme; and
- photos are especially welcome – either incorporated with your report, or sent separately.

There is no set format for the report; feel free to use any style or approach you wish. Aim for 600 to 1,000 words in length. There is a scholar report pro-forma on our website which scholars can download and use.

You can submit your report as an email attachment (preferred) or by mail. Scholar reports are a demonstration of RAMUS scholars' enthusiasm for and commitment to the health and wellbeing of people living in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia.

We may wish to publish your report, edited extracts from your report, and/or your photos in the RAMUS Newsletter, on the RAMUS website or Facebook page or in other National Rural Health Alliance publications, such as Partyline. If so, we will contact you beforehand as a courtesy to seek your clearance.

Want to change your payment schedule?

Scholars on the Undergraduate Payment Schedule have the option to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule from the beginning of 2016.

We recognise that the Graduate Payment Schedule may suit some scholars in undergraduate courses better, especially in their later years of study. Each year we consider requests on a case-by-case basis from scholars on the Undergraduate Payment Schedule to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule.

If you decide to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule you cannot then change back to the Undergraduate Payment Schedule at a later date.

To make a request to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule from January 2016, you must contact the RAMUS team before 31 December 2015. An email or phone call indicating your wish to change payment schedule will be sufficient.

Completing scholars invited to join the RAMUS Alumnus program

Scholars graduating in 2015 can stay in touch with RAMUS through the RAMUS Alumnus program.

More than 1000 former scholars and current and former mentors are members of the Alumnus program. Joining the Alumnus program connects you with fellow doctors with a commitment to rural practice.

Alumni receive the RAMUS Newsletter, invitations to RAMUS networking events and can be members of the RAMUS Facebook group. You will also still be eligible to apply to the RAMUS Conference Placement Program for support to attend selected conferences.

Joining the Alumnus program is a pathway to becoming a RAMUS mentor once you start your vocational training (usually PGY3) and are working and/or training in a rural, regional or remote location.

Membership is free.

Download the Alumnus program brochure and membership form at:

<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/alumnus>

RAMUS Mentor Awards: nominations now open

Nominations are now open for the 2015 RAMUS Mentor of the Year Awards.

If your mentor has inspired you or they are your role model and a valued source of encouragement and advice, you can acknowledge and show your appreciation by nominating them for a 2015 Mentor Award.

To nominate a mentor please send a statement of up to 400 words outlining your reasons for the nomination and the contribution that the nominated mentor has made.

Please include a photo of your mentor/yourself with your mentor along with your nomination and email to ramus@ruralhealth.org.au by **31 December 2015**.

The annual RAMUS Mentor Awards recognise and celebrate the important contribution that RAMUS mentors make to supporting and teaching scholars and to developing scholars' links to rural practice.

Former scholars: have you considered becoming a RAMUS mentor?

Many former scholars have expressed interest in becoming a RAMUS mentor at a suitable stage in their career and the number of RAMUS alumni who are now mentoring scholars is growing every year.

Current scholars who are graduating this year will be invited to join the RAMUS Alumnus program and at that time you will be asked if you are interested in becoming a mentor in the future.

Feedback from scholars sought through the annual survey

Every year we seek feedback from selected RAMUS scholars about their experiences throughout RAMUS and their future career aspirations.

The 2015 scholar evaluation survey is now open and is for scholars who started their scholarship in 2015 and those who are graduating and completing their scholarship this year.

If you are a new or completing scholar this year, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RAMUS2015> to take part in the survey.

The annual survey helps build a picture of the effectiveness of RAMUS in supporting rural students in their medical studies and the career goals of RAMUS scholars. Survey results are reported to the Department of Health (the funding body for RAMUS) and treated in confidence, with information from the survey being used in consolidated or anonymous form only.

Conference Placement Program

In recent months, RAMUS scholars and alumni have attended a range of conferences with support from the RAMUS Conference Placement Program.

Please remember to send in your registration confirmation, conference report and Statutory Declaration to receive your CPP payments.

Keep your contact details up-to-date

Have you recently moved house or changed your email address? You can now update your details online through the RAMUS website.

To update go to:
<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/update-ramus-scholar-details>



Australian Journal of Rural Health

RAMUS scholars have free online access to the *Australian Journal of Rural Health* (AJRH).

Access is through the RAMUS website:
<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/ajrh>

The October 2015 and December 2015 issues of the Australian Journal of Rural Health is available from the [Wiley Online Library](#).

Contents include an editorial by Editor-in-Chief, Professor David Perkins on telehealth versus face-to-face contact.

Original research articles include:

- Increasing access to sexual health care for rural and regional people: Similarities and differences in the views of young people and service providers;
- Retention challenge facing Australia's rural community mental health services: Service managers' perspectives;
- Comparison of research experience and support needs of rural versus regional allied health professionals; and
- 'You never leave work when you live on a cattle property': Special problems for rural property owners who have to relocate for specialist treatment.

The December issue reflects the Journal's multidisciplinary outlook with a special focus on rural nursing and midwifery. This issue publishes commissioned articles on Aboriginal preventative child health and nurse practitioner led approaches to managing chronic kidney disease. Other articles review changes in birthing practices; aged care nursing and mental health nurses' roles.

