



Tertiary **Scholarships**  
& **Loans** Service  

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Empowering Fiji's Future



**2022**  
**GARLAND OF**  
**ACHIEVEMENTS**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLS) had undergone tremendous transformation from August 2021 till date. It was during this period that TSLS attained milestone achievements under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Hasmukh Lal with guidance and support from the TSLS Board.

## 2. CEO's MESSAGE



Dr. Hasmukh Lal, CEO TSLs

It has been a remarkable journey in providing leadership to Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Board (TSLB) renamed to Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) with an aim to *“Empower Fiji's Future.”*

The driving force for TSLs has been the revised Strategic Plan with key strategic focus areas:

- Customer Service Excellence
- Communication & Awareness
- ICT Transformation
- Governance, Compliance and Risk Assurance

It has been a professional satisfaction to build on and transform something that will have a lasting institutional impact. TSLs is poised to expand its unprecedented growth in 2020 - 2024 Strategic Plan and beyond. The organizational transformation that has been attained has garnered phenomenal success in terms of student uptake to scholarships, customer, and employee satisfaction, and in addressing the much-needed labour market needs.

Continuous performance, improvements and partnerships have been a game busting performance which is paying dividends to TSLs, and industry partners and we will continue to expand the TSLs brand. There is increasing confidence from our clients, the Government, industries, industry professional bodies and stakeholders. Growth strategies continue to be guided and honed by rationalistic 'market call' underpinned with diversification, expansion, and capital projects.

The staff and Team TSLs has been greatest pillar of all these achievements with their 'winner's' attitude. From work culture and readiness to go 'the extra mile' the team believed in best service delivery and making transition in pursuit of excellence.

### **3. OPERATIONAL & POLICY REVIEW**

The report from the Review Task Committee was submitted to TSLs Board to be used as a guideline in enhancing the service culture, business processes and overall operational aspects of TSLs. The Review Task Committee was established by the Board to review TSLs processes and internal policies. As a result, the findings from the report transpired the transformational journey of TSLs.

### **4. REBRANDING**

#### **A. LOGO**

The revamping of TSLs logo was facilitated as part of rebranding exercise. Logos are the primary and first visual which is displayed to the audience. Ideally, every company wants to instantly connect to the audience by attracting them with the memory of what the company offers. With the logo revamp TSLs would like to add modern features to the existing logo – it is not a brand-new concept; it is a refreshing and revamping exercise that will connect TSLs to its key stakeholders in a professional way.



Tertiary **Scholarships**  
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#### **B. WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT**

Oceanic Communications was engaged to redo the TSLs website to have modern day features and easier accessibility features. The new website will also be disability friendly and have extended features for easier access.

#### **C. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

TSLs created other social media platforms apart from the existing Facebook page to increase its reach to clients and stakeholders. TSLs is now available via Facebook, Tiktok, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and a dedicated YouTube channel.

## 5. STAFF BENEFITS

The TSLS Board approved the recommendation to **increase the annual leave entitlement** for staff. The recommendation was made after a benchmarking exercise with similar organizations. The annual leave for TSLS staff was increased from 10 days to 21 days leave entitlement.

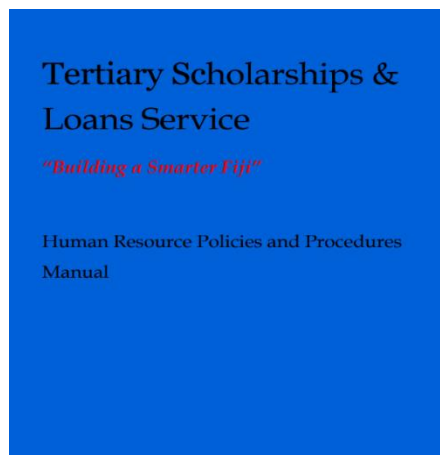
All TSLS staff now benefit from the initiative by TSLS management and Board to **cost share the medical insurance cover**.

In the history of TSLS, this was the first time all staff would enjoy a **re-treat** and get away from the business of work buzz to rejuvenate and prep for the new term in serving our students for the new academic term. In addition, closure of Office during Christmas and New Year's break for staff was also newly implemented.

## 6. POLICIES, FRAMEWORK & PLAN

### A. HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY REVIEW

The review of the HR Policy was conducted by PwC and after a period of six (6) weeks, PwC provided the final revised HR Policy which is now in effect.



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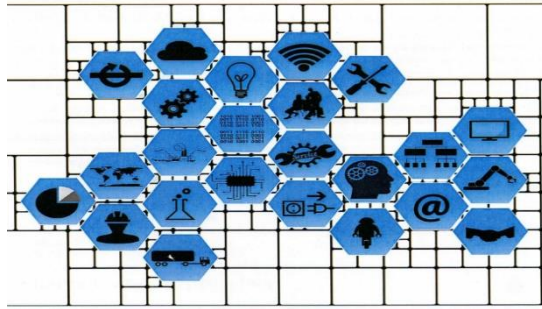
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### B. COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLS) formulated and endorsed its first ever Communications Policy. The 'Communications Policy' was designed to ensure that the communications process and procedures across TSLS is coherent, well-coordinated, managed, and reactive to the diverse information needs of the different stakeholders. Having a good internal communication will reflect positively on external communication and improve TSLS's credibility and image to all stakeholders locally, regionally, and internationally.



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



1. Name: Mr. Rakesh Ram

Position: Board Chairperson

Signature: 

Approved date: 29<sup>th</sup> / April / 2022

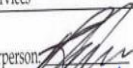
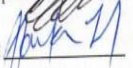
Furthermore, at the end of applications processing period, for the first time, TSLs had an off-site workshop to check and measure the processes and results of its service delivery against the plan that was put together for the processing period of 2022. This was carried out to reflect the **Plan Do Check Act** (PDCA) cycle which TSLs adopted from ISO901: 2015.

C. TSLs THIRD PARTY DISCLOSURE POLICY

The Third-Party Disclosure Policy was created to safeguard interests of TSLs personnel and applicants including existing TSLs student/recipient, TSLs sponsored or funded graduate by ensuring that personal information data, privacy and communication are always kept confidential and handled with utmost respect. The Policy aims to assist TSLs personnel and students in understanding the circumstances and conditions in which information about applicant or recipient held by TSLs maybe disclosed to the applicant or recipient or to any other party.

Third Party Disclosure Policy

13.0 POLICY REVIEW DETAILS:

Policy Drafter	Head of Student Services
Approved by and date of approval	Approved by Chairperson:  Approved by CEO:  Date: 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2022
Next revision date	

#### D. INTERNAL AUDIT POLICY

The Internal Audit Policy establishes guidelines and procedures to ensure the delivery of internal audit work is consistent with high standards and assurance quality. Therefore, the Policy reflects the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Standards) administered by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).



#### INTERNAL AUDIT POLICY



#### E. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

The Whistleblower Policy was established to encourage all individuals to report on significant wrongdoing without fear of being victimized or facing any form of discrimination by others. Therefore, this Policy aims to ensure that members of the public as well as TSLs employees can freely report or disclose any fraudulent acts, unethical behavior, breaches of relevant TSLs laws and policies with sufficient evidential proof of such acts or actions.





## F. TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

The Talent Development and Retention Policy provides guidance for effectively managing talent within the Tertiary Scholarship and Loan Services. The Policy aims to provide attract, develop and retain a diverse pool of talented individuals who will support and contribute to the organization's vision, mission and Strategic Plan objectives. It further provides management with a structured approach to develop staff potential and retain talent within TSLS.



## TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	<b>TSLS Board</b>
<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>2026</b>

## G. LEGAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Legal Management Framework provides guidance on how the legal and regulatory advisory processes at TSLS ought to be managed. It aims to provide step by step procedures for Management in taking timely informed decisions in line with TSLS relevant laws and regulations. Therefore, promoting legality, regularity and good governance principles with TSLS.



### LEGAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

#### Policy Review Details:

Policy Drafter	Manager Legal/Board Secretary
Approved by and date of approval	Approved by Chairperson:  Mr. Rakesh Ram Chairperson
	Approved by CEO:  ..... Dr. Hasmukh Lal
	Date: 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022

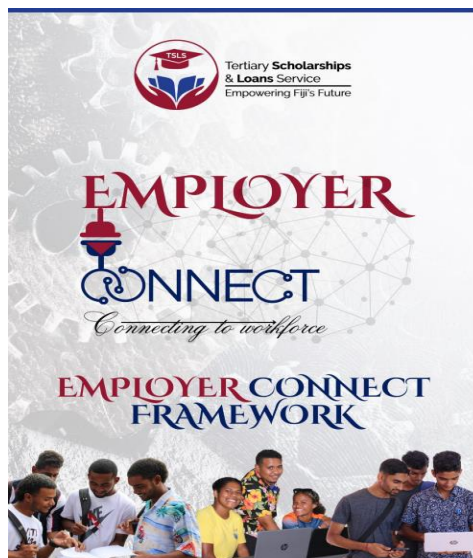
## H. RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK & RISK REGISTER

The Risk Management Framework & Risk Register aims to provide guidance regarding the management of risk to support the achievement of strategic objectives, protect employees and TSLS assets and ensures financial sustainability. The framework is designed to assist TSLS in integrating risk management into significant activities and functions.

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Critical
Rare	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	HIGH Quarterly senior management review
Unlikely	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	HIGH Quarterly senior management review
Possible	LOW Accept the risk Routine management	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	HIGH Quarterly senior management review	HIGH Quarterly senior management review
Likely	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	HIGH Quarterly senior management review	HIGH Quarterly senior management review	EXTREME Monthly senior management review
Almost certain	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	MEDIUM Specific responsibility and treatment	HIGH Quarterly senior management review	EXTREME Monthly senior management review	EXTREME Monthly senior management review

## I. EMPLOYER CONNECT FRAMEWORK

The Employer Connect Framework aims to provide guidance and support system to sponsored and funded students who have graduated with potential employers. This collaborative approach system provides a connecting support link between new graduates and the potential employers to ease the search for employment opportunities and recruitment respectively.

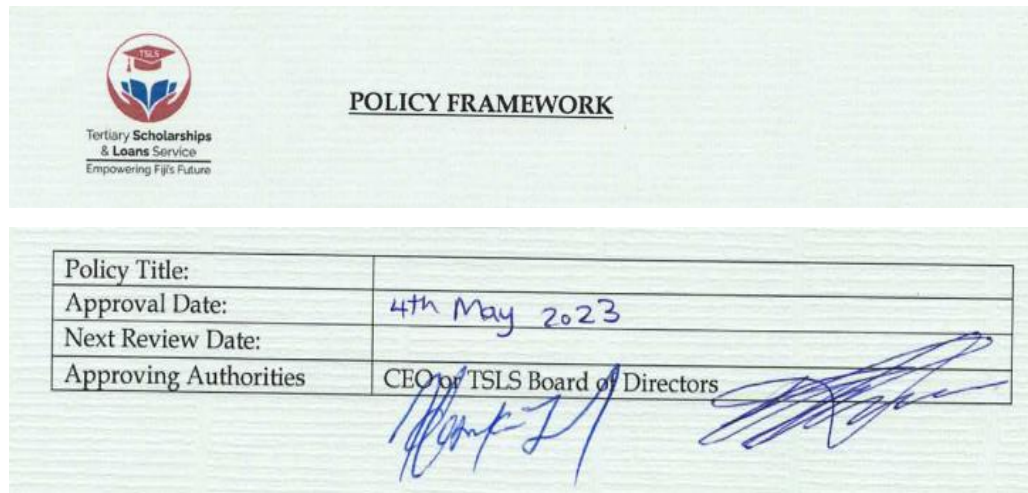


Implementing Authority:	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Contact:	Manager Learning Support Services
Approving Authority:	Board
Date Approved:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
Review Date:	

*(Handwritten signatures are present over the signature lines.)*

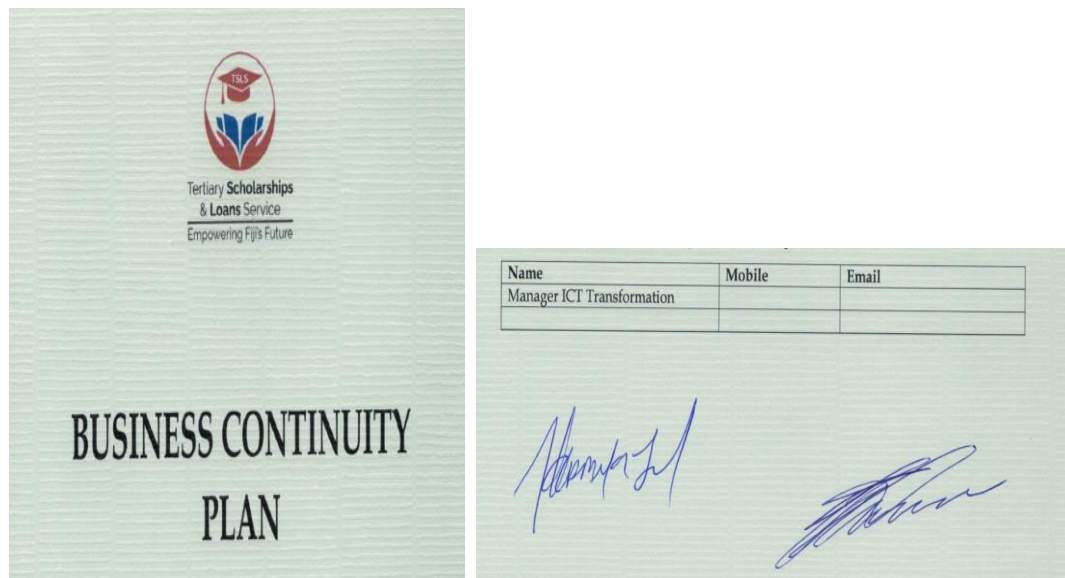
## J. POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Policy Framework provides TSLS with guidance in developing new policies, amending existing ones and making periodic reviews on the same. It further provides clear steps on policy and procedure pertaining to the development, consultation, review, amendments, approval and implementation stages to ensure TSLS is in line with its core functions, compliance and governance. Therefore, the Policy ensures that TSLS standardize policy development, amendments, and reviews accordingly.



## K. BUSINESS CONTINUITY & DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

The Business continuity Plan outlines the process that ensures TSLS to continue operating during disruptions or an emergency event. The Policy also ensures the protection of the processes, assets, and human resources. To establish a BCP for TSLS will prevent, respond, adapt, recover, and learn from any type of disruptive event. The major focus of business continuity plans are assets, staff, and safety.



## L. ICT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PLAN

The ICT Digital Transformation Plan aims to provide TSLS with a comprehensive roadmap to leverage technology effectively in support of its mission to invest in tertiary education opportunities and build human capital in Fiji. Therefore, the Plan aligns with TSLS’s vision to offer opportunities to Fijians through scholarships and study loans with aim to empower Fiji’s future through knowledge, skills and talent.



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<small>TSLS will continue using distinct awareness strategies to communicate and disseminate information to stakeholders. To enhance public presence TSLS will engage in student-oriented forums, community-based awareness sessions and use different techniques, voice to reach the different age groups. TSLS has this far invested in digital transformation, investing in areas where our clients are and will continue to find ways to maximise TSLS's reach.</small>	
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## 7. MOU's, LOA's & PARTNERSHIP

### A. FRCS

TSLS and FRCS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the aim to facilitate the loan recovery process for graduates who are in employment. The parties believed that this would strengthen and improve the current student loan recovery processes. The signing of the MOU resulted in the quick turnaround of collection recovery by FRCS from graduates. The signing of the MOU was yet another milestone achievement for TSLS.



*Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service CEO, Dr. Hasmukh Lal & Fiji Revenue and Customs Service CEO, Mr. Mark Dixon*



## B. APAEA

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) and Asia-Pacific Applied Economics Association (APAEA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a working relationship to jointly support and develop research at TSLs. The MOU would therefore allow joint research between TSLs and APAEA in building research profile visibility of TSLs.



*Professor Paresh Narayan of Asia Pacific Applied Economics Association (APAEA) & Dr. Hasmukh Lal, CEO of Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service*

## C. FCEF

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation (FCEF) to foster formal working relationship. The signing of the MOU was significant given the fact that FCEF is one of Fiji's largest private sector bodies and is a premier employers' representative. The collaboration was noteworthy whereby the parties would equally benefit in having industry-matched skills set development through scholarships, study loans and grants. The signing of the MOU would add value to the need basis human capital development.



*TSLs CEO, Dr. Hasmukh Lal and FCEF CEO, Mr. Kameli Batiweti after signing of MOU.*

#### **D. NCPD**

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to address scholarship needs for persons with disabilities. The signing of the MOU is significant given NCPD will serve as the advisory agency and facilitator of information to persons with disabilities with regards to securing relevant scholarships offered by TSLs.



*NCPD Executive Director Lemeki Cagialau and TSLs CEO Dr. Hasmukh Lal during the MOU signing.*

#### **E. FIJI AIRWAYS**

A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Tertiary Scholarships and Loan Service (TSLs) and Fiji Airways on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023, will pave the way for more Fijian to eventually join Fiji's National Airline as pilots and aircraft engineers.



*Fiji Airways Managing Director Andre Viljoen and TSLs CEO Dr. Hasmukh Lal with the signed MOU.*



## F. FIJI INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (FICA)

The Fiji Institute of Chartered Accountants (FICA) and the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) is pleased to announce a landmark collaboration, solidifying commitment to the development and advancement of the accounting profession in Fiji. The collaboration, sealed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), aims to foster a robust partnership that benefits aspiring accountants and the industry.



*TSLs CEO Dr. Hasmukh Lal and President FICA Rajeshwar Singh after signing the MoU at TSLs HQ, Garden City, Raiwai.*

## G. TSLs ENTERS PARTNERSHIP WITH ENGINEERS FIJI

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) and the Engineers Fiji (EF) have entered new partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The collaboration aims to foster a partnership that benefits aspiring engineers and the engineering industry. The MoU will allow constructive information and data sharing that will allow quality of scholarship intakes and allocation of awards for the engineering programmes.



*TSLs CEO Dr. Hasmukh Lal and Vice President of Engineers Fiji, Mr. Terence Erasito after signing the MoU at TSLs HQ, Garden City, Raiwai.*

## H. TSLs INKS LOA WITH TWO NZ UNIVERSITIES & ONE AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY

To add more eligible institutions for overseas scholarships, the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs) has signed two Letter of Agreement (LOA) with University of Canterbury and University of Waikato in New Zealand and one LOA with University of Canberra.



*TSLs CEO Dr. Hasmukh Lal and University of Canterbury distinguished Professor and Pro Vice - Chancellor Pacific, Steven Ratuva signing the LOA in New Zealand.*



*TSLs CEO, Dr. Hasmukh Lal and University of Waikato Vice - Chancellor Professor Neil Quigley after the signing of the LOA in Waikato, New Zealand.*



*TSLS CEO, Dr. Hasmukh Lal and University of Canberra Pro Vice - Chancellor Mr. Chris Gartner and team after the signing of the LOA in Canberra, Australia.*

#### **I. PARTNERSHIP WITH VODAFONE ON M-PAISA**

TSLS renewed the agreement with Vodafone on M-Paisa for student allowance payment. The last agreement was signed in 2018 which saw TSLS sponsored and funded students receiving allowances through M-Paisa. TSLS sanctioned a review on policies and operations to bring about transformations as part of continuous improvement plans. Through the consultations, student associations strongly recommended that TSLS expand its service delivery through digital means. Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service is committed to expanding service delivery through digital means and M-PAiSA platform is one of the many avenues TSLS is using for reliable and convenient service to the students.



*Chief Executive Officer for Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service - Dr. Hasmukh Lal, TSLS sponsored USP Student - Ms. Maria Arusanotu (m-paisa user), TSLS Sponsored FNU Student - Ms. Ashna Prasad (m-paisa user), Acting Chief Marketing Officer for Vodafone Fiji - Mr. Shailendra Prasad*

## J. DIGICEL ON MYCASH

Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service signed an Agreement with Digicel Fiji Ltd to expand its service delivery through digital means. Through the Agreement, students would be encouraged to engage in cashless transactions and MyCash was the relevant platform to ensure students make direct purchase through My QR with provision of remote payment options to students for bills. Another important reason was that not all Higher Education Institutions eligible for TSLs funding were near banks.



*Chief Executive Officer of Digicel Fiji Ltd – Mr. Farid Mohammed, TSLs Sponsored Student & President of UniFiji Student Association – Ms. Maca Ratabua, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Hasmukh Lal.*

## 8. MEGA LAUNCH OF TSLs HEADQUARTERS & FOUR ICT INITIATIVES

TSLs opened its new TSLs Headquarters together with mega launch of four (4) ICT Initiatives namely the i) *New TSLs Website*; ii) *New Online application processing system*; iii) *TSLs Mobile Application* and iv) *Online Escalation Complaints Management System*. The Chief Guest to officiate the opening of the new Headquarters was the Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry, Foreign Affairs and Forestry, Honorable Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama. Also, present at the event was the Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts, Honorable Premila Kumar who officiated the launch of two of the ICT initiatives. The event was attended by up to 120 VIP guests and was a successful one for TSLs.



*Staff, Board and CEO of TSLs with the Hon. Premila Kumar and Hon. Prime Minister, Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama*



## 9. LAUNCH OF TSLS COMMUNITY AWARENESS HANDBOOK 2022

TSLS Community Awareness Handbook 2023 was launched by the Honorable Attorney General, Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications during the Key Stakeholders Awareness Workshop at the Suva Civic Centre.



## 10. LAUNCH OF TSLS COMMUNITY AWARENESS HANDBOOK 2023

TSLS Community Awareness Handbook 2024 was launched by the Minister for Education, Honorable Aseri Radrodro during the Key Stakeholders Awareness Workshop at the Holiday Inn.



## 11. FIJI BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

TSLS participated in the Fiji Business Excellence Awards (FBEA) for the first time this year and the Level of Recognition applied for was **Achievement**. The submission to the Department of Quality Awards at the Fiji National University was made on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022. TSLS received confirmation from the FBEA Secretariat that TSLS will be recognized this year but the level of recognition, however, would only be disclosed at the Awards ceremony. The Fiji Business Excellence Awards ceremony was held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva in which the Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Hasmukh Lal, Management team and Board Director Dr. Penuel Immanuel attended. TSLS was awarded with 'Commitment' Award on the night of the event. This was another milestone for TSLS as a service-provider organization.



*Management team and CEO of TSLS with his Excellency the President and First Lady of the Republic of Fiji at the Fiji Business Excellence Awards Event*

## 12. WORKSHOPS, AWARENESS & EMPOWERMENT DRIVE

### A. PRINCIPAL & CAREERS TEACHERS WORKSHOP

TSLS organized the first Principals and Careers Teachers workshop in three divisions Central: **10/11/22** at Saint Joseph Secondary School, two parallel sessions in Western Division: **11/11/22** at Tavua College and Swami Vivekananda College and in the Northern Division: Friday **18/11/22** at the Civic Centre Hall to disseminate information on TSLS scholarships and eligibility criteria.



*Principals and Careers Teachers during the TSLS organized workshop*



## B. EMPOWERMENT DRIVE 2021

TSLS Empowerment Drive commenced on 29th November 2021 and ended on 16th December 2021. During this drive Central, Western and Northern schools were covered. 66 schools in Central Division were visited with total attendance of 6922; 41 schools in the Western divisions were covered with total attendance of 3417 students. 32 schools in Northern division were visited with a turnout of 2537 students at the Empowerment Drive. Zoom sessions were also conducted in which the total schools covered were 32 with a total attendance of 1108 students. This Empowerment Drive aimed to assist Year 12 and Year 13 students in terms of TSLS schemes and eligibility criteria for 2022 online applications.



*TSLS staff facilitating an awareness session.*

## C. EMPOWERMENT DRIVE 2023

TSLS has created a robust communication and awareness plan by which it wishes to maximize its outreach programs and create extensive awareness among teachers, students, communities, provincial councils, community leaders etc. 3. As such, TSLS visited schools in the Central, Western and Northern Division from 20 September to 6 October [67 Schools in Central Division, 32 Schools in Northern Division, 45 Schools in Western Division and 25 Maritime school sessions via zoom], to educate and equip students with first-hand information on TSLS scholarships and eligibility criteria. TSLS provided information to around 17,115 students during the school visits.



## 13. LEARNING SUPPORT

### A. LEARNING SUPPORT SERIES

The Learning support for the student services department took a more proactive approach this year by going out to the students and the universities and providing them with learning support services. This initiated change for TSLS from previous practice and several new initiatives were taken such as: face to face Learning Support Sessions at the Higher Education Institution's (HEIs) which were conducted between 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 and 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. Special session for Students on third TSLS probation was carried out on 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2022, via face to face and zoom mode. Meeting with Stakeholders was held on 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, Zoom Learning support series which was conducted on a weekly basis where topics such as coping with your studies etc. were covered, Learning Resources were provided on the TSLS Website through the Learning Support portal. Apart from these initiatives, phone, face-to-face and zoom counseling sessions continued to be provided.



*Learning support series*

### B. EMPLOYER CONNECT FRAMEWORK LAUNCH

The Minister for Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations, Honorable **Agni Deo Singh** launched the TSLS Employer Connect Framework on 29 June 2023. The TSLS Employer Connect Framework aims to connect sponsored and funded students who have graduated, with potential employers.



*Minister for Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations, Honorable Agni Deo Singh during the launch of the Employer Connect Framework.*

### C. TSLS STUDENTS ALLOWED TO WORK ON PART-TIME BASIS

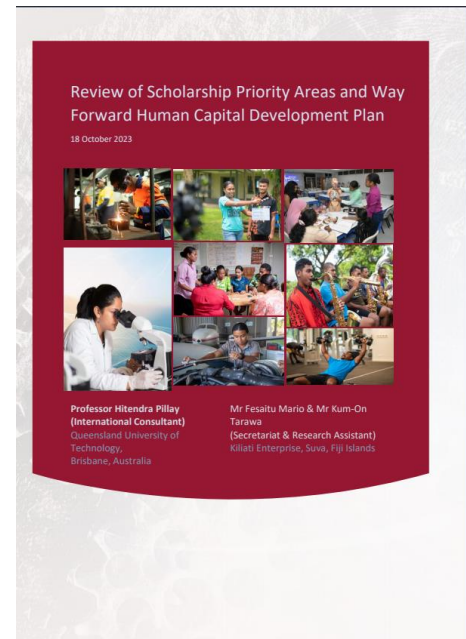
The Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Service (TSLs) sponsored students may work on a part-time basis for a maximum of 20 hours per week. This provision is in line with TSLs Employer Connect Framework launched by Honourable Minister of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations, Honourable Agni Deo Singh in June. This is an option but not mandatory. The students must seek approval from TSLs

### 14. REVIEW OF PRIORITY AREAS

The Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Service (TSLs) had engaged the services of the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to develop a 10-year Human Capital Development Plan (HCDP). The QUT approved Professor Hitendra Pillay as the international expert to develop the plan in line with the terms of reference. The plan has been developed and will be submitted to Ministry of Finance on 18<sup>th</sup> of October.



*Handing over of the HCDP to the Assistant Minister for Finance, Hon. Esrom Immanuel*



### 15. FORGIVING OF TELS DEBT

A Cabinet meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023. A working Committee (with TSLs being Secretariat) was established to discuss the way forward plan for forgiving TELS debt. The Bill was tabled in Parliament to amend the TSLs Act.



### Amendments to the TSLS ACT

Section 16B of the Act is newly introduced to address the cancellation of debt under loan agreement:

- Loan repayments of those students or former students that have been fully paid off are deemed to have been cancelled.
- Students or former students that have yet to fulfill their loan repayment and are working in either private or public sector will automatically have their loan agreement converted into bonding conditions and will need to serve their term in Fiji.
- Students or former students that have migrated overseas defaults in repayment, the responsibility is then shifted to their guarantors to continue repayment until all outstanding loan is paid off. Once the repayment is fully paid, they will need to obtain a clearance letter from FRCS.
- All repayments made by students or former students prior to 1 August 2023 whether partial or in full will not be reimbursed.

### A BILL

FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIPS AND LOANS SERVICE ACT 2014

ENACTED by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji—

*Short title and commencement*

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (Budget Amendment) Act 2023.

(2) This Act comes into force on 1 August 2023.

(3) In this Act, the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service Act 2014 is referred to as the “Principal Act”.

*Section 16B inserted*

2. The Principal Act is amended after section 16A by inserting the following new section—

*“Cancellation of debt under loan agreement*

16B.—(1) Notwithstanding section 16, loan repayments under a loan agreement by a student or a former student prior to 1 August 2023, except for loan repayments under a loan agreement by a student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 while working in the private or public sector and is yet to fulfil his or her loan repayment, are deemed to have been cancelled.

#### 2 Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (Budget Amendment)— of 2023

(2) Subject to subsection (1), all loan agreements entered into by a student or former student prior to 1 August 2023 are deemed to have been converted into bond agreements.

(3) The terms and conditions of the bond agreements under subsection (2) will be determined by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service.

(4) A student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 must fulfil the bond conditions as set out in the bond agreement under subsection (3).

(5) A student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 and has made partial repayments, must have the option of continuing the loan repayment or fulfilling the bond conditions set out in the bond agreement under subsection (3).

(6) A student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 and is residing abroad, must continue to make loan repayments under his or her obligations under the loan agreement.

(7) A guarantor for a student or former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 is obliged to make loan repayments if the student or former student, as the case may be, has left the country prior to 1 August 2023 and defaults on loan repayment or fails to fulfil the bond agreement.

(8) A student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 and intends to travel abroad for medical, vacation or temporary work purposes is required to provide nominated guarantors for travel clearance.

(9) For the purposes of this section, the Service and the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service must act in good faith in accordance with the Act to resolve issues arising out of the enforcement of the schemes, loan repayments or bond conditions.

(10) A student or former student who has paid his or her loan repayment or fulfilled his or her bond conditions must be issued a clearance letter from the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service.

(11) A student or a former student who was under a loan scheme prior to 1 August 2023 and has fully or partially paid his or her loan repayment prior to 1 August 2023 will not be reimbursed.”.

#### Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (Budget Amendment)— of 2023 3

*Schedule 1 amended*

3. The Principal Act is amended by deleting Schedule 1 and substituting the following—

“SCHEDULE 1  
(Section 2)

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION

1. Advance Aviation Training (PTE) Limited
2. Auckland University of Technology
3. Centre for Applied Technology Development
4. Corpus Christi Teachers College
5. Fiji National University
6. Fulton Adventists University College
7. Keshals Business Education Institute
8. Massey University
9. Monash University
10. Mountfort Boys Town
11. Navuso Agricultural Technical Institute
12. Pacific Flying School
13. Pacific Polytechnics
14. Pivot Point
15. Queensland University of Technology
16. Sangan Institute of Technology
17. Service Pro
18. SPA Academy Fiji
19. Swinburne University of Technology
20. The University of Auckland
21. The University of the South Pacific
22. University of Fiji
23. University of New South Wales
24. University of Newcastle
25. University of Sydney

#### 4 Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (Budget Amendment)— of 2023

26. Vishan Infotech

27. Western Sydney University”.

## 16. 2024 SCHEMES - NEW FINANCIAL YEAR

2024 Schemes – New Financial Year	
<b>Grants</b>	
Micro Qualification/ Competency Based Training Scheme	1800
Apprenticeship Scheme	400
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>2,200</b>
<b>Scholarships</b>	
Masters & PhDs by Research Scheme	30
Merit Based Overseas Scheme	40
Merit Based Higher Education – Level 7 Local Scheme	700
Merit Based Skills Qualification Scheme	200
Students with Special Needs Scheme	20
In-Service Scheme	50
<b>New Scholarships Schemes Replacing Study Loans Scheme</b>	
Higher Education (Level 7) with minimum cut off Mark Scheme	2200
Skills Qualification Based on Offer Letter Scheme	2780
Tuition Only Hardship Assistance Scheme	2600
<b>Total Scholarships</b>	<b>8,620</b>
<b>Study Loan</b>	
In – Service Scheme	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,920</b>

## 17. Launch of Online Application & Processing System for Scholarships

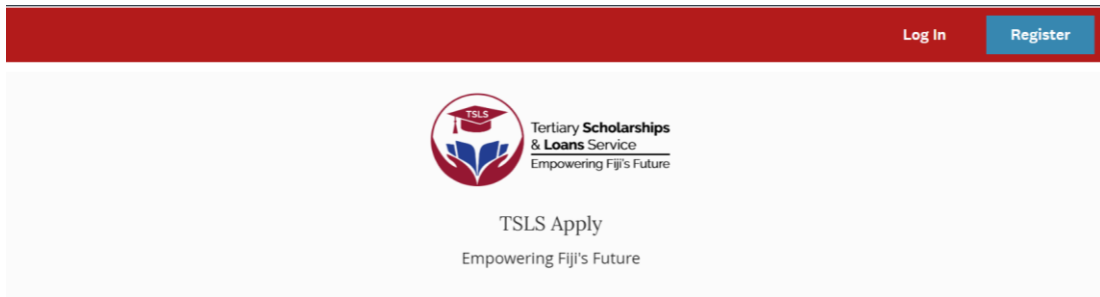
The Minister for Education, Honourable Aseri Radrodro, launched the Online Application & Processing System for Scholarships at the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service Headquarters on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023.



The Online Application and Processing System lays the foundation for TSLs to integrate modern day technology and digital innovation to enhance customer experience, strengthen ICT infrastructure and security, optimize business processes and internal systems, and foster a culture of innovation and collaboration. It also supports auto generated offer letters, bond form, and confirmation letters.

As we embrace this digital leap with our Apply Portal, TSLs is set to redefine the standards of educational support in Fiji.

**Link for the video: [Online Application & Processing System Video.mp4](#)**



The Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Service (TSLs) is a statutory body in Fiji that provides funding through scholarships and loans for Fijians to undertake studies in tertiary and vocational education. It was established in 2014 under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education funded by the Government of Fiji under the Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Act 2014 ('Act'). Under the Act, the Board's functions include the processing of applications made for schemes under the Act and the assessment of continuing scholarship holders. The Act also provides the Board with such powers necessary for the performance of its functions under the Act.

*The Online Application & Processing System for Scholarships*

## 18. Launch of Employer Connect Portal

The Minister for Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations, Honourable Agni Deo Singh, launched the Employer Connect Portal at the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service Headquarters on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023.



The newly developed portal will allow graduates to search for job vacancies according to their area of specialization. The portal allows graduates to create their own profile, upload and update their resumes and be notified if they get shortlisted for an interview.

Employers will also be able to use the Employer Connect Portal to post their vacancies, and sieve through the list of graduates seeking for a job

**Link for the video: [Employer Connect Video.mp4](#)**

**EMPLOYER  
CONNECT**  
*Connecting to workforce*

**Employer Connect Portal  
Sign in**

Don't have an account yet?  
[Sign up here](#)

Email address \*

Password \*

[Forgot password?](#)

*The Employer Connect Portal*



## 19. Unveiling of the TSLS 10-Year Anniversary Logo

The Minister for Education, Honourable Aseri Radrdro and Minister for Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations, Honourable Agni Deo Singh unveiled the 10-Year Anniversary logo at the TSLS headquarters on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

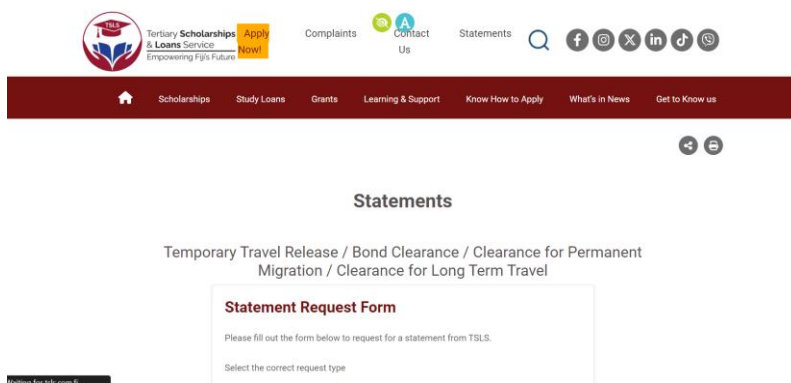


## 20. Online Account Statement Request

The Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service introduced the Online Statement Request Form replacing the manual application form which students were required to fill and email to TSLS. The new online application form is portal based and students are required to fill in their details online and submit. This allows request being submitted directly to the processing officer. The statement request is in 3 different categories of:

1. Temporary Travel Release
2. Bond Clearance
3. Clearance for Permanent or Long-Term Migration

The portal allows request to be processed within 5 working days and Statement Letters emailed directly to students email without them visiting TSLS office.



**THE END**



Tertiary **Scholarships**  
& **Loans** Service  

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Empowering Fiji's Future

