NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

Summerstrand North Campus
Financial Aid

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

Enquiries: FinancialAid@mandela.ac.za

Scholar Merit Award : 2026

Policy

This bursary is awarded to new first year students who have at least achieved a minimum Applicant Score (AS) based on their final grade 12 results. The rand value of the bursary is determined on a sliding scale between a predetermined minimum and maximum value and is linked to the specific AS achieved by an individual learner.

Applicable Rules/Criteria:

- Only South African citizens and permanent residents qualify for the award.
- The award is for one year only.
- The Scholar Merit bursary is regarded as a first payment towards fees.
- Prospective students do not have to apply for this bursary; they qualify automatically for this award, based on their Grade 12 results, if their AS is at least 410 .
- They must have passed Grade 12 not more than 2 years prior to their first year of study. If pass the year adjacent of their first year of study, then a Previous Activity Form should be completed and submitted to Financial Aid office, North Campus before **31 March 2026**.
- Their registration at University must be their **first** registration at a Higher Education institution;
- They must remain registered for the full academic year, otherwise the bursary is withdrawn;
- if a student cancels his/her registration before the end of the 1st semester the full award will be forfeited; if a student cancels before the end of the 2nd semester, 50% of the award will be forfeited;
- The Scholar Merit Award is for one year only and is awarded to South African and permanent residence citizens only. The award cannot be carried forward to a next study period;
- The student must be registered as a full-time student for degree/diploma purposes for the full duration of the academic year;
- Students who are funded by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) are not allocated the Scholar merit bursaries
- The calculation of a student's AS is based on the first release of the final Grade 12 results (expected January 2025); results obtained after a re-mark are not considered.
- Students who have achieved the minimum AS, but whose qualification for this bursary has not yet been confirmed by the University at the commencement of first year registrations, must submit their final Grade 12 results to the Financial Aid Office.

- Qualifying students who have only been allowed to register for the first time in the second semester, may be awarded 50% of the bursary value.

The AS score is calculated as follows,

- For applicants with **seven or more** Grade 12 subjects, their AS is calculated by adding the percentages for the best six subjects. This gives a score out of 600. Life Orientation is not included in the AS for applicants from quintile 4 and 5 school.
- For those applicants from quintile 1, 2 or 3 school* who attain 50% or higher for Life Orientation, 7 points may be added to their score out of 600 to arrive at their final AS.

The rand value of each award is determined on a sliding scale of AS scores according to the table below.

Total AS		Amount
Band 1:	500 and above	R16,500
Band 2:	470 - 499	R12,500
Band 3:	410 - 469	R8,500

School Leadership Awards
A student who has been a Head Prefect (or Learner Council President) at his/her school and who meets the criteria for a Scholar Merit Bursary, qualifies for the School Leadership award of R4,200 in addition to the Scholar Merit Bursary.

Students who were Head Prefects (or Learner Council Presidents,) but do not qualify for a Scholar Merit Bursary, nevertheless qualifies for a School Leadership Award of R4,200.

Documentary proof of Grade 12 results including Letter from the School verifying the Leadership role must be submitted to Financial Aid office at North Campus. The last day for submission is 31 March.

"Information contained in this document was correct at the time of publishing. The University reserves the right to amend the policy with regards to the bursary, and may in its sole discretion, decide to implement such amendments retrospectively".