

TESTIMONIAL AUSTRALIA PROJECT

a guide

A project by The Malaysian Students Department of Australia*
with the assistance of MASCA National†

May 15, 2009, version 1.2

Abstract

This document details the Testimonial Australia Project, an awards program to recognise the academic and co-curricular achievements of Malaysian students studying in Australia. It contains information on the structure of the Awards, guidelines of the application process and a summary of the qualifying criteria.

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1 Introduction

The Testimonial Australia Awards is a program organised by the Malaysian Students Department Australia (MSDA) with the assistance of the Malaysian Students Council of Australia (MASCA) to recognise the academic achievements of Malaysian students as well as their contributions in a leadership capacity or other community roles.

The awards program is divided into two categories, which are the Gold and Silver standards. The administration of the award is based on a points system, available from two tiers. The first tier is academic achievement, where the student is awarded points based on the tertiary education results achieved thus far. This tier is a hurdle requirement. The second tier is based on extra-curricular activities and leadership roles the student has been involved in over their time in Australia.

It is the hope of MSDA and MASCA that these awards successfully recognises the vast achievements and abilities of Malaysian students studying in Australia and acts as a positive reinforcement in spurring the students to achieve greater heights of success.

2 Relevance of the Award

The Awards will be a form of certification by MSDA of a student's excellence in his or her pursuits and abilities.

MSDA, with the assistance of MASCA National will promote the award amongst Malaysian employees as well as Australian ones. Students who are awarded the Testimonial gain an advantage when entering the job market.

3 Overview of the Testimonial Australia Project

The following are the main points of the Awards:

1. Testimonial Australia is awarded by the Malaysian Students Department, Australia
2. There are two standards, the Gold and Silver Standards.
3. To achieve the Gold standard, candidates must receive a *total of a 100 points* or more from the two tiers.
4. Candidates who achieve *a total of 85 points* or more receive the Silver Award.
5. Gold Award recipients receive a Trophy and a certificate (testimonial) from MSDA listing their accomplishments. Silver Award recipients receive only the certificate (testimonial) from MSDA, also listing their accomplishments.
6. Any Malaysian student is qualified to apply for the award, but we recommend later year students or those that have recently graduated.
7. Candidates need to achieve a minimum of a 60% average in their studies to be considered for the award.
8. Application to the awards system is free, as a form of service to the students.
9. The judging committee's role is merely to validate and clarify an applicant's achievements and their decision is final.

3.1 Testimonial Australia Project : Marks Allocation

The following table shows the points allocation system of the Testimonial Australia Project, as of 20/4/2009. It is divided into two tiers: Academic Achievement and Extra-Curricular Achievement.

1. Tier One: Academic Achievement
 - (a) High Distinction = **50 pts**
 - (b) Distinction = **40 pts**
 - (c) Credit = **30 pts**
2. Tier Two: Extra-Curricular Achievement
 - (a) Club Involvement
 - i. An Executive Committee Member of a Club = **20 Points**
 - ii. A non-Executive Committee Member of a Club = **10 Points**
 - iii. A member of a Club = **5 Points**
 - (b) Sports
 - i. Representing University Sports = **20 Points**
 - ii. Achievement in MASCA NCG Sports = **10 Points**
 - iii. Participation in MASCA State/Intervarsity Sports or equivalent = **5 Points**
 - (c) Community Service
 - i. Community Service/Voluntary work over the course of a year or equivalent = **20 Points**
 - ii. Community Service/Voluntary work over the course of 6 months or equivalent = **10 Points**
 - iii. Community Service/Voluntary work for one off large events or equivalent = **5 Points**
 - (d) Cultural Involvement
 - i. Involvement in a Music Club/ Band or Cultural Activities at University level = **20 Points**
 - ii. Involvement in a Music Club/Band or Cultural Activities at club level or equivalent = **20 Points**
 - (e) Receipt of a recognized personal award by a University = **20 Points**

4 Tier One: Academic Achievement

It is in our view that as students, our academic responsibilities surpass all else. Being an active contributor to the community but failing in one's studies is surely not the way to go. That is why, as a requirement, we have set academic achievement to be a qualifying criteria for the whole award. This means that a student must achieve at a minimum, a 60 percent average if he or she is to be considered for Testimonial Australia.

1. High Distinction (80 and above) = **50 pts**
2. Distinction (70 and above)= **40 pts**
3. Credit (60 and above)= **30 pts**

4.1 Elaboration of Tier One

1. The Grade is awarded based on the latest overall average that the student has achieved at University.
2. The Grade figures are considered to apply to all Universities in Australia. If a University awards a credit from 65, we will still consider a student from that University with a 64 average to be eligible.
3. Students of universities that do not use a 100% scale, please convert your grades to that scale. Your student advisory office will be able to assist you in that.
4. A student may only receive one set of points only.
5. If a student's academic grade average is below 60 (Credit), he or she is automatically disqualified for the awards.

5 Tier Two : Extra-curricular Achievement

5.1 Elaboration of Tier Two

1. Club Involvement
 - (a) An Executive Committee Member of a Club = **20 Points**
 - (b) A non-Executive Committee Member of a Club = **10 Points**
 - (c) A member of a Club = **5 Points**
2. Sports
 - (a) Representing University Sports = **20 Points**
 - (b) Achievement in MASCA State Sports = **10 Points**

- (c) Participation in MASCA State/Intervarsity Sports or equivalent = **5 Points**
3. Community Service
 - (a) Community Service/Voluntary work over the course of a year or equivalent = **20 Points**
 - (b) Community Service/Voluntary work over the course of 6 months or equivalent = **10 Points**
 - (c) Community Service/Voluntary work for one off large events or equivalent = **5 Points**
 4. Cultural Involvement
 - (a) Involvement in a Music Club/ Band or Cultural Activities at University level or equivalent = **20 Points**
 - (b) Involvement in Music Club/Band or Cultural Activities at MSO level or equivalent = **10 Points**
 5. Receipt of a recognized personal award by a University = **20 Points**

For each of the divisions in Tier Two, a student may only receive points for one subsection. For example, if a student were a President of a club, he or she may only receive 20 points for that subsection, regardless of whether the student held or currently holds the position of community member or member of another club. He or she may also only be awarded the 20 points once (in the case of multiple club presidencies). Other possible issues are addressed below:

5.1.1 Sports

Representing one's University is the ultimate achievement, garnering 20 points. Representing MASCA State however is up for debate. In certain sports at the NCG, participation is at times based on availability of players, not necessarily of skill. Therefore, we have drawn the line at only those who have excelled in that sport (medal winners) be awarded the 10 points. Similarly, for participation alone, whether at State level or at NCG level (or equivalent), we have established the awarding of 5 points. A candidate who participates in sports, at any level, shows competitiveness and initiative, and this deserves recognition. This is also in line with the awarding of 5 points for nominal membership of a club.

5.1.2 Community Service

To receive 20 points, a candidate must be actively involved in an activity for at least one year. This includes on-going voluntary tutoring, soccer coaching for a community and active involvement with a recognised voluntary organisation (such as Red Cross, Engineers without Borders etc) or equivalent. For 10 points, a candidate must have been involved in at least 5 one off activities or equivalent. For 5 points, they need only have actively participated once.

Similar to the Club criterion, the award of these points are mutually exclusive, with preference to the highest achieved points. At the committee's discretion, a student may receive 20 points for a cumulative heavy involvement in different voluntary organisations.

5.2 Cultural Involvement

This subsection recognizes talent, and the courage to step up and share this talent. We will only be awarding points for two standards. To receive 20 points, a student must have represented the University or an equivalent organisation at a high standard. Examples include performing in a Professional Play, in the University choir, State Philharmonic Orchestra and so on. For 10 points, we award the involvement of any Music Club/ Band or Cultural Activities at a lower level, such as at a Malaysian student event and so on.

5.3 Award by a University

A receipt of an Award by a University includes any excellence award for involvement within the University community. It can be a Dean's List Award, A Best Subject Award, an award for a contribution to the University community, a Best Sportsman Award (Blue/Half Blue) and so on. The idea is that the University recognizes the contribution of a student to the academic, cultural and sporting atmosphere of the University community.

6 Application Process

Please submit your application, based on the form in the next section along with supporting documents, to testimonialaustralia@gmail.com.

While every effort is made to recognise the full extent of students' contribution and excellence in Australia, there will probably be positive aspects or worthwhile activities that do not seem fall into any of these categories. Please send us a query regarding the matter.

Apart from that, we also realise that some activities may be too good for the lower points but not quite good enough for the higher level. In cases such as these, it is up to the committee's discretion to award the points based on the nature of this activity as well as a candidate's overall application. For most cases, the committee could award points between those two standards, such as 7 or 15 points or any figure the committee feels to be a good compromise.

The deadline for submission is *15th June 2009*.

We realise that this date is within the examination period, the application process is intended not to be rigorous. We only require the form, and photocopied documents. A phone interview may or may not be implemented. No essays will be required.

7 Forms and other matters

The form is attached as a separate Word document. Please fill in all the details as well as attach relevant documentation as proof.

8 Conclusion

It is in your best interest to submit an early application. Any doubts, issues or queries please direct them to testimonialaustralia@gmail.com. Thank you.

Last updated : 15 May 2009.