

S1-BMS TRANSFORMS SCHOLARSHIP MANAGEMENT ONLINE STUDENT APPLICATIONS

The S1-BMS Benefits Management System provides a unique solution to the complex business of managing scholarships, grants and prizes. S1-BMS automates the benefit lifecycle. Access to benefit services is greatly improved, business processes are streamlined and the cost and complexity of managing scholarships, grants and prizes is greatly reduced.

A growing trend in Australia is the use of Scholarships, Grants and Prizes by Government, the Private and Non-profit sectors to engage the community and individuals for specific outcomes and/or goals.

Scholarships are an effective way for the private sector to secure the services of Australia's best and brightest early in their careers. Important Australian research and development is funded via multi-year scholarships. Government drives specific social and development outcomes through the provision of scholarships and grants. Annually, millions of dollars of scholarships, grants and prizes flow into the education sector. In fact, the federal government's \$238.5 million scholarship package announced in 2008, progressively doubles undergraduate scholarships from 44,000 to 88,000 across Australia by 2012 ¹.

But for many education organisations, the granting of benefits is often inefficient and cumbersome. Critical financial and business information is often stored in disparate systems in multiple locations, hampering any attempt to automate the requisite process steps, document status and work tasks. Information cannot be integrated into a single view, and users must navigate multiple systems and extract and compile key data manually. This drives up administrative costs, reduces productivity and slows customer service.

Education providers have unique challenges. The public demands transparency and accountability for how funds are managed and the resulting outcomes from the granting of those funds. In addition, transactions and data must be fully auditable. Most often, this is accomplished with no single view of all the relevant information.

The volume of benefits flowing into the sector is set to grow. With this growth comes the need for a robust, easy to use and fully supported software application to streamline benefit management.

In conjunction with several Australian Universities, S1 Consulting & Software Services has developed a comprehensive software solution to manage the end to end process of scholarship, grant and prize administration.

Optimise Processes and Improve Efficiencies

S1-BMS automates the business process of awarding and managing benefits including enquiry, application, assessment, agreement, claim, change request, benefit payment, monitoring and reporting. All benefit processing is done efficiently and easily via a web enabled enterprise-scale system.



Inquiry and Application Portal

The S1-BMS portal utilises an Institute's existing web home page to provide a powerful search engine allowing students and graduates to enquire and apply online for Scholarships, Grants and Prizes. Users can browse available scholarships by name or keyword search. Applicants can register and apply online for as many scholarships as they wish. Alternatively, paper based applications can be manually entered by an administrator or the institute's call centre.

Key features include:

- Save an unfinished application and return later to complete prior to submission
- Auto populate common question responses when submitting multiple applications
- Upload documents and academic transcripts
- Web access to monitor application progress online
- View payment history online

Record All Scholarship Applications including multiple applications, approved and declined applications. S1-BMS can link to pre-existing web pages so customers can retain the look and feel of their current web site.

Intelligent Evaluation reduces the onerous task of manually evaluating selection criteria. All evaluation measures are recorded in S1-BMS and, wherever possible, the user defined assessment against criteria is fully automated. Configurable qualitative and quantitative criteria algorithms automatically rank and award benefits to candidates in the order of highest eligibility. Status and outcomes can be applied to applications and monitored and managed through the S1-BMS intelligent reporting capability. Correspondence acknowledging the initial application and application outcome can be generated according to user defined parameters.

Payment and Audit Capability

All facets of the payment and distribution of student scholarships are managed. Successful applicants and the benefit administrator have online access to payment records. Scholarship payments are not restricted to "cash" payments. Other types of payments such as student fees, vouchers for books, accommodation subsidies and other services are available. Payment summaries and records are provided along with a wide range of payment reports.

S1-BMS provides greater regulatory compliance through increased visibility on all financial management and administrative functions. Managing public funds transparently contributes to fulfilling legal regulations concerning security, governance and data protection. Payments are scheduled on a defined period basis and accurately accounted with a full audit trail.

Funding Source Management

Securing a constant and sustainable list of funding providers is an essential requirement to attracting appropriate students. S1-BMS features a module dedicated to the management of this key relationship between funder and education institution.

Benefit providers need to feel confident that institutions use their funds responsibly and achieve measurable outcomes. S1-BMS provides the ability to record and report on details associated with multiple sources of funding including where a benefit is split across multiple funders. To streamline the process for both the benefit provider and education institution, S1-BMS provides comprehensive functionality to maintain budgets and extract reports. Alternatively, S1-BMS can interface to external systems such as the Institute's financial system.

Intelligent Reporting

Reports are available covering scholarship applications, on-going scholarship management, assessment, payments and funding sources. Report information is easily exported for use with other systems. A rich selection criterion is available with drill down capability.

Correspondence

S1-BMS provides the ability to generate data for various types of correspondence including paper based documents and email. Correspondence is easily mapped to data sources and configured by end users to produce user defined, customised correspondence, export for mail merge or for use in spreadsheets. All correspondence sent and received can be registered.

Hosted or Local Solution

S1-BMS can be deployed as either a hosted or a locally installed solution.

Access S1-BMS via your web browser and leave the technical support to S1. All support and maintenance, such as backups, database administration, upgrades and communications are managed by S1. This model provides the power of an Oracle Database at a fraction of the cost. S1 provides a scalable, hosted model at an attractive price, freeing benefit managers from administrative encumbrances.

Alternatively, for those customers who prefer an in-house solution, S1 will install the application and database on a server of your choice within your intranet environment.

Like all S1 products, S1-BMS comes with user and administrator training.

Powered by.....

S1-BMS is developed in Oracle Application Express using Oracle database. S1-BMS runs on all operating systems supported by Oracle.

S1 Consulting & Software Services is an Oracle Partner . Source code is available for customers upon request.

S1 Consulting & Software Services

S1 Consulting and Software Services Pty Ltd (S1) is a consulting practice focused on helping customers worldwide extract superior returns from their Information Technology investments.

The S1 Consulting practice leads the industry in functional, operational and technical domain expertise. S1's primary area of domain expertise lies in the tertiary education sector. In-depth industry experience and business process understanding is the cornerstone of S1's major CRM, ERP, Internet/Intranet and point solution selections, implementation, development, localisation, training and support services.

Summary

The S1-BMS solution provides an integrated, streamlined benefits management system that commences with offering and acceptance of scholarships and continues through the benefits lifecycle and automates all core processes to make the marketing and management of benefits more efficient.

Current Challenges

- Managing the increasing volume of benefit information from diverse funding sources
- Costly, time consuming eligibility assessment lacking transparency
- Existing systems are largely manual with information often stored in disparate systems
- No online enquiry or application system

Supported Business Processes and Software Functions

- Online enquiry and application
- Records all Scholarship Applications
- Intelligent Evaluation
- Transparent awarding
- Manage and monitor scholarship payments
- Funding Source Management
- Intelligent Reporting
- Correspondence management

Business Benefits

- Time spent processing applications is dramatically reduced, improving cost efficiency
- Benefit information is online, managed accurately and efficiently improving customer service.
- Online search and student application dramatically improves data accuracy, eliminates the risk of duplication and reduces the time taken to process individual applications and award benefits.
- The S1-BMS online self-service function allows students to independently investigate application status via the Institute's web site. Student satisfaction is increased and administrative workloads reduced.
- Eligibility criteria stored in S1-BMS means the time to evaluate and process an application is dramatically reduced. Benefits can be granted earlier and with greater confidence.
- Improved transparency of the application and awards process provides customer facing staff with vital information. The processing of applications up to and including the award stage is no longer a "black-hole".
- The potential for human error involved in the processing of payments is greatly reduced. Payments are accurate and made on-time according to the pre-defined payments schedule.
- Institutes can clearly demonstrate to their funders that benefits granted are consistent with their stated goals lending credence and confidence to this important relationship.

For More Information

Call your S1 Consulting & Software Services representative on 02 9887 3980 or visit us online at www.s1consulting.com.au