



RSL Scholarships

2020 Partner Guidelines



RSL
Queensland

RSL QUEENSLAND PARTNER EDUCATION & TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

CALENDAR YEAR 2020

The RSL Queensland Partner Education & Training Scholarship (Partner Scholarship) guidelines will aid you in preparing your application. Please read the guidelines in full prior to submitting your application to ensure you meet the eligibility criteria for the program and have provided all relevant documentation.

Purpose:

The Partner Scholarship guidelines provide information for applicants wishing to apply for the following initiatives:
Education & Training courses

Assessment of Applications:

All applicants submitted to RSL Queensland will be assessed to confirm eligibility.

Outcome of Applications:

RSL Queensland will email applicants with advice of the outcome of their applications. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days from receipt of a complete and correct application (inclusive of completed application form and any required attachments).

Your Responsibility:

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have read these guidelines, that their application meets the eligibility criteria and that the information provided in their application is true and correct. Approved applicants must advise RSL Queensland (partnerships@rslqld.org) of any subsequent changes in circumstances relating to:

- a) change in relationship status
- b) change to residential location
- c) change in employment status
- d) change to approved study (including fee alterations)

Applicants should be aware that RSL Queensland will disregard any applications which contain false or misleading information. In the event an applicant receives a scholarship using false or misleading information on their application, they will be required to return any scholarship funding provided by RSL Queensland.

Application Assistance:

If you require assistance in completing the Partner Scholarship application process contact RSL Queensland on partnerships@rslqld.org.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| PART 1 – INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| PART 2 – ELIGIBILITY..... | 5 |
| PART 3 – SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE..... | 7 |
| PART 4 – LIMITATIONS ON SCHOLARSHIPS | 8 |
| PART 5 – HOW TO APPLY | 9 |
| PART 6 – APPROVED PARTNER SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS..... | 10 |
| PART 7 – PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT | 11 |
| PART 8 – ADMINISTRATION | 12 |
| PART 9 – ADMINISTRATION / DEFINITIONS..... | 13 |

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A career in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) presents unique opportunities for Defence families, however the dynamic nature may cause disruption to ongoing employment for partners of ADF members.

INTENT OF PARTNER SCHOLARSHIP

- 1.2 Partner Scholarships provides funding to support education and training to contribute to the employability of partners who have experienced difficulty maintaining employment due to their partner's military service;
- 1.3 A Partner Scholarship does not guarantee employment

AIMS

- a) Partner Scholarships provide RSL Queensland scholarships to approved applicants to contribute to their employability; and
- b) Partner Scholarships support Defence families during and post the course of a military career

GENERAL

- 1.4 These guidelines apply to a spouse or a recognised interdependent partner (as defined in DI(G)PERS 53-1) of an ADF member. For the purposes of these guidelines the term 'partner' will be used to mean spouse or interdependent partner.
- 1.5 Funding for Partner Scholarships will be considered from applicants whereby partners are located in both Queensland and inter-state. Priority will be provided to applicants residing in Queensland and for partners of current serving ADF members in Queensland and the Northern Territory. Scholarships must be undertaken through providers who are registered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) or are Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPHIL) will not be considered.

PARTNER SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVES

- 1.6 Applicants can apply to access funding for the following:
- a) Education & Training scholarships.

PARTNER SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

- 1.7 The scholarship amount for Partner Scholarship initiatives is a contribution towards a partner's employability; it is not the responsibility of RSL Queensland to fund the full cost where the cost exceeds the Partner Scholarship funding cap.
- 1.8 The scholarship amount provided to Partner Scholarship successful applicants is up to \$4,000 annually for up to three (3) years, with the maximum total scholarship amount being \$12,000. For any courses that are less than three years in full time study, then the scholarship amount will be reduced accordingly, as deemed appropriate by RSL Queensland (in its absolute discretion).
- 1.9 Scholarships positions are limited and it is entirely up to RSL Queensland's discretion as to which applicants are successful.
- 1.10 The scholarship amount provided through the Partner Scholarship can be used for educational expenses directly associated with the approved TEQSA or RTO course, including course fees, textbooks and resources associated with course and administration fees and equipment required to complete course. Travel costs will only be considered if applicant demonstrates long distance travel is required to attend course components in order to complete course and this part of course cannot be completed at a closer location. The scholarship amount cannot be used to cover accommodation, meals, postage, regular travel to and from any venue or location from which the education or training is conducted, or electronic devices.
- 1.11 Scholarship funding can only be used for reimbursement of expenses incurred from the date the RSL Queensland Scholarship has been formally accepted by the recipient and cannot be used to offset expenses incurred post the completion of either the scholarship end date or the course end date.

For the avoidance of doubt, in the event that a scholarship is awarded mid-semester, scholarship funding cannot be utilised for expenses incurred at the commencement of the semester and will only be approved for expenses incurred from the date the scholarship is formally accepted by the recipient.
- 1.12 It is the responsibility of the scholarship recipient to request pre-approval for the use of scholarship funding. Application of funds is conditional on pre-approval by RSL Queensland.

PART 2 – ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Partner Scholarship eligibility criteria is based on the following:

- a) Applicants must demonstrate they are the partner of a current or former ADF member with either operational service (as defined by legislation) or three or more years continuous full-time or other service. The applicant must include a copy of an official document showing the member's operational service and the period or periods of continuous full-time service (eg Discharge Certificate or Certificate of Service listing, the enlistment date and if relevant, discharge date).
- b) Applicants must demonstrate they are either married or in a recognised de facto relationship with a current or former ADF member at time of application. Alternatively, applicant must be the partner of a current or former ADF member for more than three years continuous duration. Two of the following must be provided to demonstrate relationship and evidence must be provided to demonstrate minimum three-year relationship if not married:
 - Household bill with both partner and member name listed
 - Medicare statement for both partner and member with same residential address listed
 - Bank statement demonstrating joint bank account
 - Drivers Licence copy of both partner and member with same residential address listed
 - Marriage certificate
(if marriage certificate provided no other documentation required to demonstrate relationship)
 - A member signed, statutory declaration witnessed by a Justice of the Peace (JP) confirming the relationship with the partner for a minimum three year period
- c) Applicant must not be receiving any other education / training benefit or scholarship.
- d) Partners who have regular employment will not be eligible for Partner Scholarship funding. Applicants must be able to demonstrate employment status.
- e) Partners are eligible to apply for the Partner Scholarship if the member is deceased, as long as partner can demonstrate a minimum three year continuous relationship with the member and was a partner to the member at time of death.
- f) Applicant must be enrolled (or planning to enrol) in an undergraduate, tertiary course or training course of one or more academic years duration provided through a registered TEQSA or an RTO. Under certain circumstances, short courses will be considered but scholarship amount will be altered accordingly, and postgraduate courses (in the absolute discretion of RSL Queensland) will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate the need for completion to increase employability. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPHIL) will not be considered.

- g) Applicant must demonstrate the employment options related to the proposed course of study.
- h) Applicant must demonstrate hardship or vulnerability due to member's military service. Examples of hardship or vulnerability would be:
 - a. A partner who has been a stay at home parent, is now returning to work to be the sole income earner for the family as member has medically separated and unable to work;
 - b. A partner has resigned from employment to become the recognised carer for member and due to health improvement, partner can now return to work;
 - c. A partner who has a professional career but member has been posted to a new location whereby jobs in trained profession are very limited and would require further education or training to increase employability in new location.
- i) Applicant must provide copies of bank statements and other relevant documentation, including partner's financial information (if applicable) as requested by RSL Queensland to demonstrate hardship or vulnerability listed.
- j) Approval will be granted for one course of study at a time and application forms with multiple courses listed will not be considered. Proof of completion and transcripts of results of proposed course / subject / unit will be required at set intervals throughout scholarship year, prior to further payments of approved scholarship occurring. Further scholarship payments will not occur until transcript of results received by RSL Queensland.
- k) Ongoing eligibility criteria exists during the term of the scholarship and applicants who become successful recipients of a scholarship are required to achieve satisfactory academic progress (at least 50% in each subject) to enable them to receive subsequent scholarship payments.

PART 3 – SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

EDUCATION / TRAINING TO SUPPORT EMPLOYABILITY

- 3.1 Funding may be available under Partner Scholarships for vocational courses and tertiary study up to and including an undergraduate degree. Postgraduate degrees to compliment an applicant's current qualifications, will only be considered if it is demonstrated this study is required to achieve employment. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPHIL) will not be considered.
- 3.2 Education and training covered by Partner Scholarships must be:
- a) accredited;
 - b) provided through a registered TEQSA or an RTO;
 - c) likely to add employment related skills; and
 - d) GST free.
- 3.3 Education and training can be provided:
- a) via face-to-face attendance; or
 - b) online; or
 - c) by correspondence.

PART 4 – LIMITATIONS ON SCHOLARSHIPS

EDUCATION / TRAINING TO SUPPORT EMPLOYABILITY

- 4.1 Applicants must clearly demonstrate the relevance of the proposed education/training to support their employability. Partner Scholarship funding is not available to fund a career change (without evidence this is required to obtain employment), ongoing professional development within a applicants current and/or established employment stream or self-interest/hobby courses.
- 4.2 Under Partner Scholarships, a career change will be deemed to be any variation to an applicant's current and/or established employment stream or educational qualifications. While it is acknowledged that career change can occur for a number of reasons, the intent of the Partner Scholarship is to provide funding to approved applicants to contribute to their employability, not to assist with increasing personal fulfilment, therefore without demonstration the career change is necessary to gain employment, it will not be supported by a Partner Scholarship.
- 4.3 Under Partner Scholarships, professional development will be deemed to be education/training undertaken to complement existing qualifications and therefore will not be accepted by the RSL Queensland unless it is demonstrated further education/training in the same field as the applicant's current qualifications is necessary to obtain employment i.e. retraining to fulfil a certification requirement.
- 4.4 Self-interest or hobby courses will not be funded under Partner Scholarships as these courses are not likely to improve a partner's employability.
- 4.5 Approved education and training, as part of the Partner Scholarship funding, that attract GST, will not be accepted.
- 4.6 Partner Scholarship funding will only be granted if the education/training course is accredited and provided through a registered TEQSA institution or RTO. Refer to link www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register for the TEQSA register and link www.training.gov.au for the register of RTOs. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) will not be considered.
- 4.7 Partner Scholarship applicants who have previously been a scholarship recipient will not be eligible to apply for secondary Partner Scholarship funding, unless the applicant can demonstrate extenuating circumstances exist and additional education/training will ascertain employment for the applicant.

PART 5 – HOW TO APPLY

- 5.1 Applications must be completed in full and be accompanied by all relevant documents. Failure to provide all documentation as requested may result in your application being unable to be processed and assessed appropriately.
- 5.2 Interested applicants need to read the eligibility criteria and then complete the Partner Scholarship application form online. Any additional documentation must also be submitted to partnerships@rslqld.org. If the member is absent due to deployment, training or exercise, please state this in his/her signature field on the application form. Incomplete or unsigned forms may result in your application not being processed.
- 5.3 Applicants need to clearly demonstrate the relevance of their education/training course to increasing employability.
- 5.4 Applicants must disclose any qualifications already held for anything higher than secondary education i.e. diploma or undergraduate degree.
- 5.5 Applicants who are currently studying in the course they are applying for a scholarship in should complete the details indicating the course, the institution and year of study. Please include a copy of course enrolment or similar document giving the name, institution and length of the course.
- 5.6 Applicants who are currently studying in the course they are applying for a scholarship in should attach a copy of their results and reports for the last academic year. If the applicant did not do as well as expected, please provide an explanation.
- 5.7 Applicants starting a new course next year who have an offer of place already should provide proof of offer. Applicants that have the completed first year of a course should provide proof of enrolment. In the event course enrolment cannot occur unless an applicant becomes an approved recipient of Partner Scholarship funding, enrolment verification must be provided prior to any scholarship funding to be provided if the applicant is subsequently successful in obtaining Partner Scholarship funding.
- 5.8 Applicants to prepare and provide to RSL Queensland copies of bank statements and other documentation to demonstrate hardship or vulnerability, if requested by RSL Queensland.

PART 6 – APPROVED PARTNER SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

- 6.1 If circumstances change and the applicant cannot complete or undertake the approved Partner Scholarship through ill health or for any other reason, it is the partner's responsibility to negotiate or arrange with the service provider to have the education and/or training deferred to a later date or for the scholarship funding to be reimbursed to RSL Queensland. Approved applicants are required to advise RSL Queensland in writing of the changes as soon as reasonably practical after the approved applicant becomes aware of such change in circumstances. If this is not undertaken then no further funding will be approved. Please refer to clause 7.6 of these guidelines for the process for reimbursing RSL Queensland.
- 6.1.2 RSL Queensland may permit a scholarship to be deferred for the maximum term of 12 months and deferment can only occur once during the term of the awarded scholarship. Confirmation must be provided from the course provider that they approve the course being deferred. It is up to RSL Queensland's sole discretion whether they will authorise a scholarship to be deferred.
- 6.2 Applicants who have previously been approved for a Partner Scholarship and want to apply for a secondary scholarship must complete a new Partner Scholarship application, disclosing they have been a previous recipient of Partner Scholarship funding.
- 6.2.2 Evidence must be attached that Partner Scholarship previously funded education and/or training has been completed.
- 6.4 Applicants must provide a transcript of results or other evidence of results at the completion of each academic semester and immediately upon the request of RSL Queensland. Applicants must be aware that sponsorship funds may be withheld if the applicant does not achieve at least 50% in each subject and RSL Queensland may in its absolute discretion, determine that no further scholarship funding will be awarded to that applicant.

PART 7 – PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT

PAYMENT / REIMBURSEMENT

- 7.1 RSL Queensland may pay the institution on a partner's behalf upon receipt of an authorised/official invoice. Alternatively, the partner may pay the institution **after** approval has been granted, and seek reimbursement from RSL Queensland, within a reasonable time frame, no longer than three months from date of payment to the institution. The applicant **must** provide a copy of the original invoice and an official receipt as evidence that payment has occurred. The expense will be reimbursed to the partner's nominated bank account.

RSL Queensland will not accept screen shots or print outs of online banking transactions as evidence of payment.

- 7.1.2 It is not the responsibility of RSL Queensland to make payments to Institutes prior to important tertiary dates, like Census dates. It is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure invoices for course fees are provided to RSL Queensland with sufficient time for payments to occur (please expect payments a fortnight for payments to occur) and important information regarding the payment is clearly communicated by the applicant.

- 7.2 Applications must be approved prior to commencing a scholarship. There is no discretion to approve applications for assistance retrospectively.
- 7.3 At the time of the scholarship being awarded the recipient will receive a Scholarship Funding Outline by RSL Queensland. This will confirm the maximum amount of scholarship funding the recipient is eligible for in each funding period (generally this is a 6-month period and aligns to traditional semesters). As a *general guide only*, recipients may expect to be eligible to access up to half of the annual scholarship amount awarded in each period, i.e. a scholarship awarded for up to \$4,000 annually will enable a maximum of \$2,000 to be accessed in the first 6-month period (semester) and upon demonstration of achieving satisfactory marks (50% or higher) will be eligible to access up to \$2,000 in the second 6 month period.
- 7.4 Invoices issued by the ATO for HECS-HELP/ FEE-HELP will not be considered. Reimbursement to applicants of course fees will only be considered if fees have been paid up front to the institution.
- 7.5 Partners who are obliged to repay Partner Scholarship funds to RSL Queensland pursuant to these guidelines should send a written request to partnerships@rslqld.org. RSL Queensland will seek written confirmation of the debt and then provide RSL Queensland bank details for the partner detailing the payment options available.

PART 8 – ADMINISTRATION

DISCLAIMER

- 8.1 RSL Queensland will not accept any responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

- 8.2 Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of RSL Queensland, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application. In the event an applicant is successful in receiving a scholarship, who has provided false or misleading information, the applicant must immediately return all scholarship funding provided by RSL Queensland.

APPROVING AUTHORITY

- 8.3 Applications will be reviewed and assessed by RSL Queensland staff, with applicants notified of outcome of application at the end of the assessment period (a minimum of 28 days from application submission). The decision on whether an application is successful or not is in the absolute discretion of RSL Queensland and the applicant acknowledges that it has no right to challenge any decision by RSL Queensland as to whether an applicant is successful or unsuccessful in obtaining Partner Scholarship funding.

DISCRETIONARY PROVISIONS

- 8.4 If a partner is not eligible for assistance, they may apply in writing to RSL Queensland requesting discretionary approval for special/exceptional circumstances. This must be sent to partnerships@rslqld.org and be accompanied by a completed application form and supporting comments. When forming their view, RSL Queensland will consider the following factors:
- that the application aligns with the intent and aims of the Partner Scholarship (refer to Part 1 clauses 1.2-1.4); and
 - any other factors relevant to the application.

PRIVACY

- 8.5 In general, RSL Queensland will only use your personal information for the primary purpose for which it is collected or any secondary related purpose within the meaning of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). If required for any other purposes, express consent will be sought from the applicant concerned.
- 8.6 All information provided in connection with an application (including in or associated with the Application Form) will be managed in accordance with RSL Queensland's Privacy Policy. The RSL Queensland Privacy Policy contains information about the way RSL Queensland collects and uses personal information and the purposes for which it is held. The RSL Queensland Privacy Policy can be found on RSL Queensland's website.

PART 9 – ADMINISTRATION / DEFINITIONS

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| Partner | A partner is a person who is the spouse or interdependent partner of an ADF member as defined in DI(G) PERS 53-1. |
| Member | For the purpose of these guidelines, a member is a current or former member of the Australian Defence Forces. |
| Employment Stream | Occupation/job. |
| Regular Employment | Work that is undertaken on a recurring basis. |