



RSL Scholarships

2021 Ex-Defence Guidelines



RSL
Queensland

RSL Queensland Partner Education & Training Scholarship Guidelines

Calendar Year 2021

The RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Education & Training Scholarship (Ex-Defence 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 Ex-Defence Scholarship guidelines provide information for applicants wishing to apply for the following initiatives:
Education & Training courses

Assessment of Applications:

All applications 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 to residential location
- b) change in employment status
- c) 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, RSL Queensland may withdraw the offer of scholarship to the applicant and the applicant will be required to return any scholarship funding provided by RSL Queensland.

Application Assistance:

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

We value all voices:

We encourage people from all backgrounds who are eligible based on Part 2 of this document to apply.

Notifications:

Applicants are responsible for confirming with Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) if their DVA entitlements will be affected by receiving an education or training benefit.

Applicants are responsible for confirming with COMSUPER if their pension entitlements will be affected by receiving an education or training benefit.

RSL Queensland accepts no responsibility if DVA or COMSUPER entitlements are affected by an applicant accepting an RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Scholarship.

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PART 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 Careers in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) provide personnel a diverse range of expertise and knowledge and the Ex-Defence Scholarship program has been created to develop and extend these skills, to assist with securing civilian employment.

INTENT OF EX-DEFENCE SCHOLARSHIP

- 1.2 The Ex-Defence Scholarship provides funding to support education and training to contribute to the employability of ex-serving Defence Members who have experienced difficulty securing employment post their military career;
- 1.3 The Ex-Defence Scholarship is a pathway to assist personnel extend upon their military skills to achieve civilian employment post transition;
- 1.4 The Ex-Defence Scholarship does not guarantee employment.

AIMS

- a) The Ex-Defence Scholarship provides RSL Queensland scholarships to approved Applicants to contribute to their employability; and
- b) The Ex-Defence Scholarship supports ex-serving Defence Members to remain independent and able to support their families (if applicable) post their military career.

GENERAL

- 1.5 These guidelines apply to Ex-Defence Members (as defined in Part 9 – Definitions).
- 1.6 Applicants for Ex-Defence Scholarships must reside in Queensland. Studies 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 eligible for scholarship funding.

Ex-Defence Scholarships are intended to support study being undertaken or commenced in the relevant calendar year in line with the scholarship round.

EX-DEFENCE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

- 1.7 Applicants can apply to access funding for the following:
- a) Education & Training scholarships
- 1.8 The scholarship amount for Ex-Defence Scholarship initiatives is a contribution towards an Applicant's study costs; it is not the responsibility of RSL Queensland to fund the full cost where the cost exceeds the Ex-Defence Scholarship funding cap.
- 1.9 The scholarship amount provided to Ex-Defence Scholarship Recipients is up to \$4,000 annually for up to three (3) years, with the maximum total scholarship amount being \$12,000.

Recipients whose scholarships commence mid-year will be eligible for a maximum total scholarship amount of \$10,000.

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).

- 1.10 Scholarship positions are limited, and it is entirely up to RSL Queensland's sole discretion as to which Applicants are successful.
- 1.11 The scholarship amount provided through the Ex-Defence 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 an Applicant demonstrates long distance travel is required to attend course components in order to complete the course and this part of the 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.
- 1.12 Scholarship funding can only be used for reimbursement of expenses incurred for educational expenses relating to the scholarship term, from the date the RSL Queensland Scholarship has been formally accepted by the recipient. Scholarship funding cannot be used to offset expenses incurred post the completion of either the scholarship end date or the course end date.

Recipients **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 recipient's nominated bank account.

For the avoidance of doubt, in the event a scholarship is awarded mid-semester, scholarship funding cannot be utilised for expenses incurred at the commencement of the semester (prior to the award of the scholarship) and will only be approved for expenses incurred from the date the scholarship is formally accepted by the recipient.

- 1.13 It is the responsibility of the scholarship recipient to request pre-approval for the use of scholarship funding in accordance with item 7.2. Application of funds is conditional on pre-approval by RSL Queensland.

PART 2 – Eligibility

2.1 Ex-Defence Scholarship eligibility criteria is based on the following:

- a) Applicants must demonstrate they are an ex-Defence Member with either operational service or three or more years continuous full-time or other service. The applicant must include a copy of an official document showing the former member's operational service and the period or periods of continuous full-time service (e.g. Discharge Certificate or Certificate of Service including the enlistment date and if relevant, discharge date).
- b) Applicant must have either medically or voluntarily separated from the Australian Defence Force at time of application.
- c) Applicant must not be eligible for any other Defence education or training assistance, outside of the Defence Force Transition Program (DFTP) or be receiving any other education / training benefit or scholarship. Any educational benefit obtained through DFTP must be declared at time of application. Successful applicants are required to notify RSL Queensland if they are awarded additional education/ training benefit or scholarship at any point during the term of their RSL Queensland scholarship, including DVA educational benefits.
- d) Applicants who have Regular Employment (as defined in Part 9 – Definitions) are not eligible for Ex-Defence Scholarship funding. Extenuating circumstances will be considered in RSL Queensland's absolute discretion. Applicants must be able to demonstrate employment status.
- e) 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. Study undertaken overseas, outside Australia or with an education provider not based in Australia will not be eligible for scholarship funding. This includes semesters studied abroad organised through an Australian institution. Under certain circumstances and at RSL Queensland's discretion, short courses will be considered but the 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 eligible for scholarship funding.
- f) Applicant must demonstrate the employment options which may arise out of the proposed course of study to RSL Queensland's satisfaction.
- g) Applicant must demonstrate hardship or vulnerability either relating to ADF service or since transitioning from ADF. Examples of hardship or vulnerability would be:
 - a. Ex-Defence Member voluntarily transitioned from ADF into employment but due to circumstances outside of their control, are now unemployed and cannot secure further employment;
 - b. Ex-Defence Member has been medically separated from the ADF and must acquire a new skill to gain employment that would not be constrained by the injury sustained during service;

- c. Ex-Defence Member has been medically separated from the ADF with no accepted liability and needs to learn new skill / participate in higher education to increase their employability.
- h) 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 (if applicable).
- i) 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 the end of each Scholarship Funding Period identified in the Scholarship Funding Outline prior to further payments of approved scholarship occurring. Further scholarship payments will not occur until transcript of results is received by RSL Queensland.
- j) 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 Ex-Defence 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 eligible for scholarship funding.
- 3.2 Education and training covered by Ex-Defence 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. Ex-Defence Scholarship funding is not available to fund a career change (without evidence this is required to obtain employment), ongoing professional development within an applicant's current and/or established employment stream or self-interest/hobby courses.
- 4.2 Under the Ex-Defence Scholarship, 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 Ex-Defence 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 eligible for the Ex-Defence Scholarship.
- 4.3 Under Ex-Defence Scholarships, professional development will be deemed to be education/training undertaken to complement existing qualifications and therefore will not be eligible for the Ex-Defence Scholarship 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 eligible for an Ex-Defence Scholarship as these courses are not likely to improve an applicant's employability.
- 4.5 Approved education and training, as part of the Ex-Defence Scholarship funding, that attract GST, will not be eligible.
- 4.6 Ex-Defence Scholarship funding will only be granted if the education/training course is accredited and provided through a registered TEQSA institution or RTO. Refer to www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register for the TEQSA register and www.training.gov.au for the register of RTOs. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) and Masters of Philosophy (MPHIL) will not be eligible for scholarship funding.
- 4.7 Ex-Defence Scholarship applicants who have previously been a scholarship recipient will not be eligible to apply for secondary Ex-Defence Scholarship funding, unless the applicant can demonstrate extenuating circumstances exist and additional education/training will result in employment for the applicant.
- 4.8 Applicants and scholarship recipients are required to declare to RSL Queensland any circumstances which may give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest. This includes but is not limited to an applicant being related to an RSL Queensland board member or employee by birth or by marriage; an applicant being employed by RSL Queensland; an applicant being employed by or volunteering for a partner program of RSL Queensland. RSL Queensland reserves the right to determine eligibility based on the perceived level of conflict of interest.

PART 5 – How to Apply

- 5.1 Applications must be completed in full and will be assessed by RSL Queensland once all relevant documents have been submitted and received by RSL Queensland. 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 and submit the Ex-Defence Scholarship application form online. Incomplete applications will not be 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. Applicants will be required to submit a copy of the official handbook 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, an explanation must be provided.
- 5.7 Applicants starting a new course who have an offer of place already should provide proof of offer and enrolment. In the event course enrolment cannot occur unless an Applicant becomes an approved recipient of Ex-Defence Scholarship funding, enrolment verification must be provided prior to the payment of any 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.
- 5.9 Scholarship application periods remain open until all available scholarships for the relevant year are awarded, or until the 17th of August each year, prior to the following scholarship round commencing.

PART 6 – Approved Ex-Defence Applicants (“Recipients”)

- 6.1 If any circumstances change and the Recipient is unable to continue or complete their course of study for any reason, it is the Recipient’s responsibility to negotiate with the service provider to have the education and/or training deferred to a later date. Recipients are required to advise RSL Queensland in writing of the changes as soon as reasonably practical. If the Recipient does not advise RSL Queensland of the change in circumstances, ongoing scholarship eligibility may be impacted and scholarship funds may be required to be returned. Please refer to clause 7.7 of these guidelines for the process for reimbursing RSL Queensland. It is up to RSL Queensland’s sole discretion whether a recipient will remain eligible for the scholarship if changes are made to the scholarship approved course and/or Scholarship Funding Outline.
- 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 from the course provider must be provided to confirm their approval of the course being deferred. It is up to RSL Queensland’s sole discretion to authorise a scholarship to be deferred.
- 6.2 Applicants who have previously been approved for an Ex-Defence Scholarship and want to apply for a secondary scholarship must complete a new RSL Queensland Education and Training Scholarship application, disclosing they have been a previous Recipient of Ex-Defence Scholarship funding.
- 6.2.2 Evidence must be attached to demonstrate the Ex-Defence Scholarship previously funded education and/or training has been completed.
- 6.3 Recipients must provide a transcript or other evidence of results at the completion of each academic teaching period and immediately upon the request of RSL Queensland. Scholarship 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.
- 6.4 Recipients must inform RSL Queensland of any proposed change to the conditions of their Scholarship and seek confirmation of the Scholarship status. This may include (but is not limited to) a proposed change to their chosen course of study, course provider, length of course, employment status or residential address. RSL Queensland reserves the right to review the Scholarship eligibility should conditions be revised.
- 6.5 Recipients who complete their required study and achieve the course qualification must provide evidence to RSL Queensland in the form of a certificate of attainment/completion/graduation or academic transcript acknowledging the qualification is complete.
- 6.6 Recipients are expected to uphold the values of RSL Queensland and RSL Queensland reserves the right to cease the recipient’s scholarship in circumstances where values are not upheld, in the sole belief of RSL Queensland. The RSL Queensland values are able to be viewed on our [website](#).
- 6.7 Recipients must maintain communication with RSL Queensland and make contact at least once during each Funding Period identified in the Scholarship Funding Outline. The Funding Periods will be outlined in the Ex-Defence Scholarship offer that must be signed and returned by the Recipient. Failure to maintain contact in line with the above, may result in the Scholarship being cancelled at the sole discretion of RSL Queensland.

PART 7 – Payment or Reimbursement

- 7.1 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. 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 Funding Period, and upon demonstration of achieving satisfactory marks (50% or higher), Recipients will be eligible to access up to \$2,000 in the second 6 month Funding Period.
- 7.2 The scholarship Recipient must request pre-approval for the use of scholarship funding. Application of funds is conditional on pre-approval by RSL Queensland.
- 7.3 The Recipient pays the course related fees **after** approval has been granted, and seeks reimbursement from RSL Queensland, within a reasonable time frame, no longer than three months from date of payment to the institution, unless otherwise approved by RSL Queensland. The recipient **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 Recipient's nominated bank account.
- RSL Queensland will not accept screen shots or print outs of online banking transactions as evidence of payment.
- 7.3.1 In extenuating circumstances, RSL Queensland may pay course fees direct to an institution on a recipient's behalf upon receipt of an authorised/official invoice. It is not the responsibility of RSL Queensland to make payments to institutions prior to important dates on the Recipient's academic calendar, 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 and important information regarding the payment is clearly communicated by the applicant. Recipients should allow two weeks from the date of request for payments to be made.
- 7.4 Request for reimbursements and payments will only be approved for study within the current Scholarship Funding Period. There is no discretion to approve funding applications for assistance retrospectively.
- 7.5 Request for reimbursements for course related uniform items (including shoes) must be pre-approved. Recipients will be entitled to up to \$200 reimbursement per Funding Period for uniform items which will be taken from the maximum amount of scholarship funding set out in the Scholarship Funding Outline. Recipients will not be entitled to additional funding for reimbursements for course related uniform items. Reimbursement of shoes will only be permitted once per annum. Recipients will be required to provide evidence of the uniform requirements from their Tertiary provider and only items specific to the course (e.g branded clothing, industry-specific uniforms) will be considered.
- 7.6 Invoices or statements issued by the ATO for HECS-HELP/ FEE-HELP loans will not be considered. For the avoidance of doubt, payments by RSL Queensland directly to the provider will only be approved up to the fee due date. No direct payments to the course provider will be approved once the course fees have been accrued to HECS-HELP/ FEE-HELP.

- 7.7 For recipients who are obliged to repay Ex-Defence Scholarship funds to RSL Queensland pursuant to these guidelines, RSL Queensland will provide written confirmation of the debt, bank details and outline the payment options available.

PART 8 – Administration

DISCLAIMER

- 8.1 RSL Queensland will not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage caused by the Applicant, Recipient or any other person arising from the failure by an Applicant or Recipient 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 application is successful or unsuccessful in obtaining Ex-Defence Scholarship funding.

DISCRETIONARY PROVISIONS

- 8.4 If an applicant is not eligible for assistance, they may apply in writing to RSL Queensland requesting discretionary approval for special/exceptional circumstances. This request must be sent to partnerships@rslqld.org. When assessing this request, RSL Queensland will consider the following factors:
- a) that the application aligns with the intent and aims of the Ex-Defence Scholarship (refer to Part 1 clauses 1.2-1.4); and
 - b) any other factors relevant to the application and may require review of additional information to support the request.

PRIVACY

- 8.5 In general, RSL Queensland will use any information provided in connection with the RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Scholarship Application in accordance with the attached APP5 Notice.
- 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](#).
- 8.7 If an Applicant is unsuccessful, all information provided in connection with the application will be destroyed within a reasonable period of time after the scholarship round closing date (see item 5.9).

PART 9 – Definitions

Applicant	Person from whom an RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Scholarship Application has been submitted for consideration.
Employment Stream	Occupation/ job
Ex-Defence Member	For the purpose of these guidelines, an Ex-Defence member is an ex-member of the Australian Defence Forces or Reservists (as defined in the <i>Defence Force Discipline Act 1982</i> , Sec 3) who has rendered 3 or more years full time continuous service or operational service (as defined in the <i>Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986</i>).
Recipient	Approved Applicant
Regular Employment	Work that is undertaken on a recurring basis
RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Scholarship Application	An Applicant's completed online application form and the supporting documents provided by the Applicant.
Scholarship Funding Outline	The summary of the total Scholarship Funding Periods awarded for each successful Ex-Defence Scholarship Recipient, provided at time of offer of scholarship.
Scholarship Funding Period	The six-month period in which scholarship funding is allocated.