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LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA
QUEENSLAND BRANCH

RSL QUEENSLAND SCHOLARSHIPS

EX-DEFENCE MEMBERS

Guidelines 2019



RSL QUEENSLAND EX-DEFENCE EDUCATION & TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP (RSL ETS) GUIDELINES

CALENDAR YEAR 2019

The RSL Queensland Ex-Defence Education & Training Scholarship (RSL ETS) 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 RSL ETS 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 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, they will be required to return any scholarship funding provided by RSL Queensland.

Application Assistance:

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



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.



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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 RSL ETS program has been created to develop and extend these skills, to assist secure civilian employment.

INTENT OF RSL ETS

- 1.2 RSL ETS 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 RSL ETS is a pathway to permit serving personnel extend upon their military skills to achieve civilian employment post transition;
- 1.4 RSL ETS does not guarantee employment.

AIMS

- a) RSL ETS provide RSL Queensland scholarships to approved applicants to contribute to their employability; and
- b) RSL ETS support ex-serving Defence members remain independent and able to support their families (if applicable) post their military career.

GENERAL

- 1.5 These guidelines apply to an ex-serving Defence member (Defence member is as defined in Defence Force Discipline Act 1982-Sect 3).
- 1.6 Funding for RSL ETS scholarships will be considered from applicants located in both Queensland and inter-state, priority will be provided to those applicants residing in Queensland. 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).

RSL ETS INITIATIVES

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

RSL ETS FUNDING

- 1.8 The scholarship amount for RSL ETS initiatives is a contribution towards an applicant's employability; it is not the responsibility of RSL Queensland to fund the full cost where the cost exceeds the RSL ETS funding cap.
- 1.9 The scholarship amount provided to RSL ETS 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).

- 1.10 Scholarships positions are limited, and it is entirely up to RSL Queensland's discretion as to which applicants are successful.
- 1.11 The scholarship amount provided through the RSL ETS can be used for educational expenses 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.
- 1.12 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 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.

- 1.13 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 RSL ETS eligibility criteria is based on the following:

- a) Applicants must demonstrate they are an ex-serving Defence 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 former 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) Applicant must have transitioned from Defence Force either voluntarily with no Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) entitlements; or have transitioned out and under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (MRCA) receiving a Class A Comsuper benefit; or medically discharged with no accepted liability from DVA;
- c) Applicant must not be eligible for any other Defence education or training assistance, outside of the Career Transition Assistance Scheme (CTAS) or be receiving any other education / training benefit or scholarship.
- d) Applicants who have regular, full time employment are not eligible for RSL ETS funding. Extenuating circumstances will be considered in RSL Queensland's absolute discretion.
- 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. Under certain circumstances 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.
- f) Applicant may be required to provide evidence to demonstrate ability to complete course of choice.
- g) Applicant must demonstrate hardship or vulnerability since transitioning from ADF. Examples of hardship or vulnerability would be:
 - a. Member voluntarily transitioned from ADF into employment but due to circumstances outside of their control, are now unemployed and cannot secure further employment;
 - b. Member has transitioned with a Class A Comsuper Benefit, however has the desire to learn a new skill to gain employment in a field that would not be constrained by the injury sustained during service;



- c. Member has medically transitioned from the ADF with no accepted liability and needs to learn new skill / 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 year of the scholarship period (annual) prior to further payments of approved scholarship occurring. Further scholarship payments will not occur until transcript of results 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 RSL ETS 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.
- 3.2 Education and training covered by RSL ETS 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. RSL ETS funding is not available to fund a career change (without evidence this is require to obtain employment), ongoing professional development within a applicant's current and/or established employment stream or self-interest/hobby courses.
- 4.2 Under RSL ETS, 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 RSL ETS 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 the RSL ETS.
- 4.3 Under RSL ETS, professional development will be deemed to be education/training undertaken to complement existing qualifications and therefore will not be accepted by RSL Queensland unless it is demonstrated further education/training in the same field as the applicant's current qualifications is necessary to obtain employment ie retraining to fulfil a certification requirement.
- 4.4 Self-interest or hobby courses will not be funded under RSL ETS as these courses are not likely to improve a partner's employability.
- 4.5 Approved education and training, as part of the RSL ETS funding, that attract GST, will not be accepted.
- 4.6 RSL ETS 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.
- 4.7 RSL ETS applicants who have previously been a scholarship recipient will not be eligible to apply for secondary RSL ETS 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 RSL ETS application form. The form must be dated and signed by the applicant and submitted to partnerships@rslqld.org. 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 attach 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, 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 RSL ETS funding, enrolment verification must be provided prior to any scholarship funding to be provided if the applicant is subsequently successful in obtaining RSL ETS 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 RSL ETS APPLICANTS

- 6.1 If circumstances change and the applicant cannot complete or undertake the approved RSL ETS scholarship through ill health or for any other reason, it is the applicant'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 an RSL ETS scholarship and want to apply for a secondary scholarship must complete a new RSL ETS application, disclosing they have been a previous recipient of RSL ETS funding.
- 6.2.2 Evidence must be attached that RSL ETS 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 an applicant's behalf upon receipt of an authorised/official invoice. Alternatively, the applicant 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 applicant'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 6month period (semester) and upon demonstration of achieving satisfactory marks (50% or higher) will be eligible to access up to \$2,000 in the second 6month period.
- 7.4 Invoices issued by the ATO for HECS-HELP/ FEE-HELP will not be considered. Reimbursements to applicants will only be considered if fees have been paid up front to the institution.
- 7.5 Applicants who are obliged to repay RSL ETS 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 applicant 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 RSL ETS 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 must be sent to partnerships@rslqld.org and be accompanied by a completed application form and supporting comments. When forming their view, the delegate will consider the following factors:
- a) that the application aligns with the intent and aims of the RSL ETS (refer to Part 1 clauses 1.2-1.4); and
 - b) 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

Defence Member	<p>a member of the Permanent Navy, the Regular Army or the Permanent Air Force; or</p> <p>a member of the Reserves who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) is rendering continuous full-time service; orii) is on duty or in uniform
Ex-serving Defence Member	<p>For the purpose of these guidelines, a former member is an ex-service member of the Australian Defence Forces.</p>
Employment Stream	<p>Occupation/job</p>
Regular Employment	<p>Work that is undertaken on a recurring basis</p>