PARTNER EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (PEEP) GUIDELINES  
Financial Year 2015-16

These Guidelines will aid you in preparing your application. You should read them in full, and ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the Program.

**Purpose**  
The PEEP Guidelines provide information for applicants wishing to apply for any of the following initiatives:

- Personalised Resume Preparation
- Professional Employment Assistance
- Education & Training activities
- Professional Re-registration Payable on Relocation

**Assessment of Applications**  
All applications submitted to the Defence Community Organisation (DCO) will be assessed to confirm eligibility.

**Outcome of Applications**  
DCO 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 the application form and any necessary evidence as attachments to the application form.

**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 DCO (DefenceFamilyHelpline@defence.gov.au) of any subsequent change in circumstances relating to:

a. change in employment status (i.e gaining employment);
b. change in relationship status;
c. change to approved study/training (including fee increases); and
d. change to your residential location.

Applicants must also print and sign the application form with an understanding that the Program is Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) reportable.

**Application Assistance**  
If you require assistance in completing the PEEP application process contact the Defence Family Helpline (DefenceFamilyHelpline@defence.gov.au).

**For more Information**  
Go to the DCO website www.defence.gov.au/dco or call the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608 or visit your local DCO office.

Please keep these Guidelines for your information
Preface

These guidelines set out the intent of the Program along with the eligibility criteria that applications will be assessed against.

Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken depending on the circumstances. If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

RAY BROMWICH
Director General
Defence Community Organisation

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Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 The requirement for periodic relocations is often an integral part of the Defence lifestyle and can cause disruption to the ongoing employment of the partners of ADF members.

Intent of PEEP

1.2 PEEP provides funding towards initiatives aimed to contribute to the employability of partners when they are relocated as a consequence of their ADF partner’s military service.

1.3 PEEP does not guarantee employment; nor is it intended to fund career changes, professional development within employment streams (i.e. where the partner already possesses an existing qualification and/or employment) or self-interest and hobby courses.

Aims

1.4 PEEP aims to:
   a. provide Defence Community Organisation (DCO) funded PEEP initiatives to approved applicants to contribute to their employability in a new posting location; and
   b. strengthen the capability of the ADF and aid the retention of members.

General

1.5 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.

1.6 PEEP is not a statutory entitlement and is available to Defence recognised partners strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy document.

1.7 Funding for PEEP initiatives will be considered from applicants in both Australian and overseas posting locations. Initiatives must be undertaken through providers who are registered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) or are Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

PEEP Initiatives

1.8 Approved applicants can apply to access funding for the following initiatives:
   a. personalised résumé preparation;
   b. professional employment assistance, such as career advice and job search skills;
   c. education and training courses (up to and including first time undergraduate degrees); and
   d. professional re-registration costs under State legislative requirements payable on relocation.

PEEP Funding

1.9 Funding for PEEP initiatives is a contribution towards a partner’s employability; it should not be regarded as Defence’s responsibility to fund the full cost where the cost exceeds the PEEP funding cap for a posting location.

1.10 The maximum amount of funding that may be used for approved PEEP initiatives in any posting location is $6000. The total funding for approved PEEP initiatives during the maximum 10 year period is $12000, subject to the member continuing in effective service during that period.

1.11 Expenditure over the maximum of $6,000, available for approved PEEP initiatives in a single posting location, must be self funded.

1.12 Applications for PEEP funding cannot be guaranteed and are subject to the availability of sufficient funding in the relevant financial year.

1.13 Funding assistance for education and training activities only includes the course tuition costs. PEEP does not cover subscription fees, administration fees, workshops, police or working with children checks, textbooks, course material costs, uniforms, internet costs or equipment associated with the course. Nor does it cover accommodation, meals, counselling sessions, driving lessons, postage and travel to and from any venue or location from which the training is being conducted.
Part 2 – Eligibility

2.1 PEEP eligibility is based on the following criteria:

a. Applicants must be recognised on Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKeyS) as a partner of a full time member on effective service.

b. Members must have completed four years continuous full time service in the ADF before partners may apply for PEEP. Lateral recruits may count effective military service in other countries and should include evidence of this with their application.

c. Members who have completed four years service as a member of the permanent force who separate, or transfer to the Reserves, for greater than two years and then re-enlist, or transfer to the permanent force, will be assessed against the re-enlistment/transfer date.

d. Applications must be lodged within two years of the member’s partner being granted a removal to a new posting location within Australia or overseas.

e. Defence must have relocated the partner to a new posting location upon the posting of the member, or on marriage or recognition of an interdependent relationship resulting in relocation. If the member proceeds on a posting unaccompanied, the partner is not eligible for PEEP funding.

f. PEEP is not available to partners of members who are separating from the ADF. Once the intention to separate is recorded on PMKeyS, any further entitlement to PEEP ceases.

g. Current members are not eligible for assistance under PEEP. Former members may be eligible if they provide evidence that they are not eligible for, or have not received other similar assistance offered by Defence through the Career Transition Assistance Scheme (CTAS).

h. Partners who are also ADF reservists will be considered and assessed against all other eligibility requirements. Partners who are undertaking continuous full time Service are not eligible for PEEP funding.

i. Partners who have regular employment in their established employment stream will not be eligible for PEEP funding.

j. Partners who are on paid maternity leave will not be eligible for any assistance that replicates training that could be provided by, or is deemed to be the responsibility of, their current employer.

k. Should the member die during Service, an approved applicant may access PEEP funds for up to two years after the member’s death.

l. Partners who are approved for assistance under PEEP must access funding within twelve months of approval or they will be required to re-apply and will be assessed against the extant criteria. An application must include the proposed PEEP initiative.

m. Approval will be granted for one course of study at a time and application forms with multiple courses listed will not be considered. For courses with multiple semesters/ study periods, an application form is required each semester/ study period. Proof of completion of proposed course/subject/unit will be required before any further study will be considered. Applications for additional courses will require transcripts or results. Should these not be available at the time of applying for further funding assistance, partners may still apply however approval for funding will be delayed until this evidence is received.
Part 3 – Initiatives Available

**Personalised Resume Preparation**
3.1 Funding assistance of up to $500 is available upon receipt of a quote for a personalised resume to be prepared by a professional service provider of your choice.

**Professional Employment Services Assistance**
3.2 Funding assistance of up to $1,000 is available upon receipt of a quote from a professional employment service provider, of the applicant’s choice, to provide the following assistance:
   a. job search techniques and strategies; and/or
   b. preparation and presentation for interview; and/or
   c. application and selection criteria preparation; and/or
   d. identifying job options.

**Education/Training to support employability in a new posting location**
3.3 Funding may be available under PEEP for vocational courses and tertiary study up to and including a partner’s first undergraduate degree. Partners accessing this initiative overseas may only study via distance learning through Australian providers who are registered TEQSA or are RTOs.

3.4 Courses covered by PEEP must be:
   a. accredited;
   b. provided through a registered TEQSA institution or an RTO;
   c. likely to add employment related skills; and
   d. GST free.

3.5 Courses and training can be provided:
   a. via face-to-face attendance; or
   b. online; or
   c. by correspondence.

**Professional Re-registration Payable on Relocation**
3.6 Partners who relocate to a new location on posting (whether in Australia or overseas) and who are required to re-register due to State legislative requirements in order to be able to continue in the same profession in their new location, can apply for payment of such professional re-registration costs. This does not include annual registration fees. Overseas funding is only paid in Australian currency.

**Long Term Study**
3.7 For courses with multiple semesters/ study periods, an application form is required each semester/ study period. When applying for additional units/subjects, evidence must be attached that the previously funded study has been completed.

**Open Universities Australia**
3.8 Defence has a partnership with Open Universities Australia (OUA), which offers higher education and vocational study options from single units to entire degree programs. Partners are encouraged to take up distance learning through OUA, as it allows you to learn at your own pace and from wherever you are currently posted.

3.9 OUA’s value-added offer for Defence includes an advisory support team, financial assistance with text books, and tutorial support. Partners do not need to be a PEEP applicant to access the services offered by OUA. The offer extends to ADF personnel, Defence APS employees and their immediate families. To access this, you will need to obtain an OUA client code from the OUA website. Visit the OUA website at www.open.edu.au/peep for more information.

**Superannuation Set-up courses**
3.10 Funding assistance is available upon receipt of a quote to attend specific training to set-up a self managed superannuation fund. This funding is not available to engage brokerage services or to make contributions into a superannuation fund.
Part 4 – Limitations on assistance

Education/training to support employability in a new posting location

4.1 Partners must clearly demonstrate the relevance of the proposed education/training to support their employability in a new posting location. PEEP assistance is not available to fund a career change, ongoing professional development within a partner’s established employment stream or self-interest/hobby courses.

4.2 Under PEEP, a career change will be deemed to be any variation to your current employment stream or educational qualifications. Whilst it is acknowledged that career change can occur for a number of reasons, PEEP is to provide funding to approved applicants to contribute to their employability in a new posting location, not to assist with increasing personal fulfilment by trying a new career because of a changed location. (Please refer to the Discretionary Provisions of these guidelines at clause 7.5.)

4.3 Under PEEP, professional development will be deemed to be education/training undertaken to further existing qualifications. (Please refer to the Discretionary Provisions of these guidelines at clause 7.5.)

4.4 Under PEEP, applicants who already hold undergraduate (Bachelor degree) and/or post graduate (Graduate certificate, Graduate diploma, Masters or Doctorate) qualifications are deemed to have the requisite level of education to contribute to their employability in a new posting location.

4.5 Postgraduate study will not be approved.

4.6 Self interest or hobby courses will not be funded under PEEP as these courses are not likely to improve a partner’s employability.

4.7 Approved education and training, as part of the PEEP Education and Training initiative, that attracts GST, will not be funded.

4.8 PEEP assistance will only be granted if the education/training course is accredited and provided through a registered TEQSA institution or an 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.

4.9 All PEEP applicants who have been previously approved for study and wish to access additional PEEP initiatives or undertake subsequent study must seek prior approval by completing the PEEP application form located on the DCO website www.defence.gov.au/dco. This form also enables partners to update their address when they relocate. Proof of completion of an approved PEEP initiative will be required before any future applications for assistance will be considered.
Part 5 – How to apply

5.1 Applications can be lodged throughout the financial year (subject to the availability of sufficient funding).

5.2 Interested partners need to read the eligibility criteria and then complete the PEEP application form. The form must be printed and signed by both the member and the applicant, and submitted to DefenceFamilyHelpline@defence.gov.au. 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 application forms will be returned and not processed until all mandatory fields are completed.

5.3 Partners need to clearly demonstrate the relevance of the proposed initiative to their chosen field of employment.

5.4 Applications must be approved prior to commencing a PEEP initiative. There is no discretion to approve applications for assistance retrospectively.

5.5 DCO staff will assess applications in the order in which they are received against the eligibility criteria. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days from receipt of the application form (and any necessary evidence as attachments to the application form) for an assessment to be made. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

5.6 Approved applicants may be required to supply evidence at any stage subsequent to their approval to confirm their continuing eligibility having regard to the requirements and aim of PEEP.

Approved PEEP Applicants

5.7 If circumstances change and a partner is not able to undertake or complete an approved PEEP education and training initiative, it is the partner’s responsibility to arrange full reimbursement to Defence, prior to consideration of any further PEEP applications.

5.8 Partners who have previously been approved for PEEP and want to apply for further funding for study must complete the PEEP application form available from the DCO website. This process applies to partners wanting additional funding assistance for other PEEP initiatives or new course requests.

5.9 Evidence must be attached that PEEP previously funded study has been completed. Should transcripts or results be unavailable at the time of applying for further funding assistance, partners may still apply, however, approval or funding may be delayed until this evidence is received.

5.10 If circumstances change and the partner cannot undertake the approved PEEP initiative 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 training deferred to a later date or for the money to be reimbursed back to Defence. Approved applicants are required to contact DCO to advise of the changes. If this is not undertaken then no further funding will be approved.
Part 6 – Payment or reimbursement

Payment/Reimbursement

6.1 DCO may pay the service provider on a partner’s behalf upon receipt of an authorised invoice. Alternatively, the partner may pay the provider and seek reimbursement from DCO. The expense will be reimbursed to the member’s bank account on receipt of evidence of payment.

6.2 Applications must be approved prior to commencing a PEEP initiative. There is no discretion to approve applications for assistance retrospectively.

6.3 All requests for payments and reimbursements should clearly state the PEEP ID approval number to enable efficient payment and finalisation of accounts.

6.4 Invoices issued by the ATO for HECS-HELP / FEE-HELP will not be considered. Reimbursement will only be considered if fees have been paid in full up front.

Fringe Benefits Tax

6.5 Payment of this benefit may result in a Reportable Fringe Benefit Tax Amount (RFBA) being recorded against the ADF member. An RFBA will result when a member has received fringe benefits to the total of $2000 in a FBT year (1 April to 31 March). An RFBA does not have any income tax implications, but will have financial impacts if you are in receipt of any Government means tested benefits. Therefore it is recommended that applicants seek independent tax advice prior to lodging an application.

For further information regarding the impacts of a RFBA refer to the ATO website: https://www.ato.gov.au/General/Fringe-benefits-tax/In-detail/Employees/Reportable-fringe-benefits---facts-for-employees/
Part 7 – Administration

Disclaimer
7.1 The Australian Government will not accept 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
7.2 Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken depending on the circumstances. If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

Our Service Commitment
7.3 PEEP aims to provide a valuable service to its clients. As part of managing the Program, the following processes and procedures are applied ensuring that the needs of ADF partners are met in an efficient and effective manner:
- telephone queries are answered within 48 hours; and
- new applications and requests for payment are processed within 28 days, approved applicants will be notified when the payment has been processed.

Approving Authority
7.4 The Director General DCO is the approving authority for PEEP. However, the day to day approval of applications has been delegated to DCO staff that will assess applications and provide a response to each application where necessary.

Discretionary Provisions
7.5 If a partner is not eligible for assistance, they may apply in writing to the delegate requesting discretionary approval for special/exceptional circumstances. This must be sent to the Defence Family Helpline (DefenceFamilyHelpline@defence.gov.au) and be accompanied by a completed application form and supporting comments. When forming their view, the delegate will consider the following factors:

a. ensure the application aligns with the intent and aims of PEEP (refer to Part 1 clauses 1.2 – 1.4); and
b. instances where there is a recognised dependant with special needs; and/or
c. instances where there has been a long employment break due to parental responsibilities; and/or
d. instances where previous employment experience and/or qualifications are not recognised or are insufficient to assist with employability in the new posting location; and/or
e. any other factors relevant to the application.

Review of decision process
7.6 In cases where an applicant is dissatisfied with a decision concerning PEEP, there is an internal review process.

7.7 Requests for review of a decision are to be forwarded in writing to the Defence Family Helpline (DefenceFamilyHelpline@defence.gov.au) clearly identifying the reason/s for the request. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days for each review and applicants will be notified of the outcome, in writing.

7.8 In the first instance, a request for review of a decision will be considered by the Director, National Operations. If an applicant remains dissatisfied, a final request for review of a decision will be considered by the Director General, DCO.

7.9 Additionally, ADF members have access to the redress of grievance process.
Evaluation
7.8 DCO will conduct assessments of PEEP to assess that the aims of PEEP are being met and where necessary, adjust the initiatives to improve the assistance to ensure that the intent of the program is met.

Privacy

Why we collect information
7.9 DCO collects personal information in order to provide quality services, on behalf of Command, to members and their families. This includes assessing and evaluating issues that might impinge on the wellbeing of a family and/or harm their relationship with Defence.

How we collect information
7.10 DCO, in collecting personal information of current members and/or their family’s circumstances, is required to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 which regulates the manner in which the organisation collects, handles, stores, secures, maintains, provides access to, uses and discloses personal information.

Who uses the information, and how
7.11 Who has access to the information, and under what circumstances, depends on the situation, and the nature of the request for DCO services. Information may be used by:
   a. Command,
   b. member’s Commanding Officer, and/or
   c. other military agencies such as service career managers including to support individual preparedness for operations.

7.12 In general, DCO will use the information directly for the purpose it is collected. If required, for a use other than for that related to the primary purpose of collection, express consent will be sought from the client concerned.

7.13 This information may be recorded as a social work report, DCO report, case notes, DCO case plan, or a transition support separation plan, and filed in a DCO client file. DCO collects uses and/or discloses ONLY that information which is related to a function of the organisation.

Disclosure of your information
7.14 DCO may sometimes need to disclose personal information about you and/or your families’ circumstances to other domestic or international Agencies or organisations. These organisations may include those operating in such sectors as:
   a. health,
   b. community,
   c. medical,
   d. educational, and/or
   e. legal.

7.15 When a disclosure of personal information is made to an international authority, Defence will take reasonable steps to ensure that your information is only handled by those organisations that can practically provide an assurance/expectation of limited exposure.

More information can be found at http://www.defence.gov.au/dco/DCO_Privacy_Policy.htm
### Part 7 – Administration - Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member</strong></td>
<td>A member of the Permanent Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Removal</strong></td>
<td>Removal means a Defence approved removal on posting to a new locality and includes a removal on marriage or on recognition of an interdependent partner vide DI (G) PERS 53-1. It does not include a discharge removal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partner</strong></td>
<td>A partner is a person who is the spouse or interdependent partner of an ADF member as defined in PACMAN Chapter 1, Part 3, Division 2: Definition and DI(G) PERS 53-1.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New Posting Locality</strong></td>
<td>New Posting locality means a new locality within Australia or overseas where the Service member or partner has undertaken a Defence approved removal. It does not include postings within the same geographic area. For example: Brisbane to Amberley or from one side of Sydney to the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective service</strong></td>
<td>Effective service means service that meets all these conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. It is continuous full time service.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>b. It is paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment stream</strong></td>
<td>Like occupation/job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regular employment</strong></td>
<td>Work that is undertaken on a recurring basis</td>
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