

Frequently Asked Questions

The Mental Health Scholarship Scheme provides financial support for completion of approved postgraduate level university studies in mental health clinical practice that will enhance the capability of Queensland Health Mental Health staff.

Q Who can access the scholarship scheme?

All Health Care Professionals who are:

- ◆ permanent employees of Queensland Health Mental Health Services
- ◆ temporary contract employees within Queensland Health Mental Health Services or
- ◆ casual staff who can demonstrate an ongoing commitment to Queensland Health Mental Health and have written support from their District Mental Health Service.

Q Who CANNOT access the scholarship scheme?

Only two conditions do NOT fulfil the granting of a scholarship:

- ◆ employees who are NOT Australian citizens or who do NOT hold a Permanent Residency Visa (this is a federal government requirement)
- ◆ Non Mental Health workers.

Q Which courses are NOT supported by the scheme?

Courses that are NOT eligible for scholarships include:

- ◆ those leading to a basic (undergraduate) qualification for practice or registration, unless the Scholarship Selection Panel have evidence that the course will address an identified workforce shortage; e.g. rural and remote
- ◆ undergraduate programs / courses unless subjects are part of a continuing education program by applicants already possessing a basic degree.

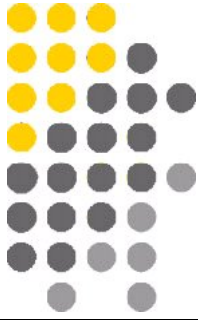
Q Which courses are supported by the scheme?

Two broad categories of postgraduate courses have been approved:

Category 1 Courses that lead to Mental Health Nursing Endorsement / Credentialing for Registered Nurses

Category 2 Courses that enhance advanced mental health clinical practice in all health care professionals (Allied Health and Registered Nurses). And that:

- ◆ link to national and state mental health policies, standards and priorities
- ◆ are directly relevant to advanced clinical practice in mental health
- ◆ focus on clinical skills or direct service provision (NOT research management, policy development, health promotion, etc.)
- ◆ focus on addressing identified workforce priorities such as skill shortages / skill development in the *National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce* (2002) and in the professional discipline competencies / standards.



Examples of Programs / Courses Eligible for Mental Health Scholarships

This list provides *examples* of programs / courses eligible for Mental Health Scholarships. Applicants are encouraged to contact individual universities to determine specific course content and requirements; e.g. clinical focus, compulsory residential schools.

Graduate Certificate in Mental Health, <i>The University of Queensland</i>
Master of Mental Health (Art Therapy, Community Mental Health, Family Therapy, Mental Health Nursing, Psychotherapy), <i>The University of Queensland</i>
Graduate Certificate in Mental Health Nursing, <i>Griffith University</i>
Master of Advanced Practice (Mental Health Nursing), <i>Griffith University</i>
Master of Forensic Mental Health, <i>Griffith University</i>
Master of Mental Health Practice, <i>Griffith University</i>
Master of Advanced Nursing Practice, <i>University of the Sunshine Coast</i>
Master of Mental Health Nursing, Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Mental Health & Well-Being, <i>University of Southern Queensland</i>
Post Graduate Certificate in Forensic Mental Health Nursing, <i>Edith Cowan University</i>
Graduate Certificate / Graduate Diploma in Mental Health (Child and Adolescent, Adult, Aged Care), <i>New South Wales Institute of Psychiatry</i>
Master of Mental Health (Adolescent, Child and Adolescent, Adult), <i>New South Wales Institute of Psychiatry</i>

This is **NOT** an exhaustive list. There are other courses that are eligible for Mental Health Scholarship support that have not been listed here.

Q What benefits will I gain from completing postgraduate studies in mental health under this scheme?

Benefits include:

- ◆ the ability to improve consumer outcomes
- ◆ advanced up-to-date skills and knowledge directly relevant to service delivery and care in mental health
- ◆ opportunities for professional development
- ◆ opportunities for career advancement in the diverse and dynamic area of mental health.

Q What benefits does Queensland Health gain?

Queensland Health is **committed** to people and partnerships as per the Vision and Mission Statements. The uptake of scholarships for studies in advanced clinical mental health practice will assist Queensland Health to meet its future mental health workforce requirements and provide skill acquisition and confidence to practitioners.

It is anticipated the scheme will assist to attract and retain a highly skilled and motivated mental health workforce in Queensland. Mental Health Scholarships are part of an overall Queensland Health incentive strategy.

Q Will Queensland Health give me time off to study?

Scholarship recipients will need to negotiate at a local level with their line manager to access leave for course requirements. At their discretion Health Service Districts may support scholarship holders in meeting their course requirements by granting:

- ◆ paid leave through the Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) where required for course of study
- ◆ flexible study and family friendly rostering to access annual leave, accrued days off, time off in lieu, working part-time (depending on what is routinely available in the district / facility)
- ◆ unpaid leave.

Q How are scholarship awards decided?

The Mental Health Scholarship Selection Panel meets to make recommendations to the Senior Director of Mental Health Branch.

Priority will be given to:

- ◆ Registered Nurses undertaking courses leading to endorsement as a Mental Health Nurse
- ◆ Registered Nurses undertaking approved post graduate studies courses in sub-specialties of Mental Health Nursing (e.g., Child and Youth, Dual Diagnosis, Older Persons Psychiatry, etc).
- ◆ previous scholarship recipients continuing in the same program for their second year of study
- ◆ Allied Health and other professionals undertaking approved postgraduate studies in Mental Health

Should all available scholarships be awarded, applicants who are considered meritorious but not successful in the first round will be placed on a Reserve List. Should a recipient decline the offer, or cease their course of study, the scholarship will be offered to applicants placed on the reserve list in order of merit.

Q How much financial assistance will the scheme provide?

All Mental Health Care Professionals receive a set rate of \$1,000.00 per subject for study completed in 2010.

Scholarship recipients who will not complete their program of study in one year must reapply for a scholarship in the second year of study. Priority is given to applications from previous scholarship recipients for their second year of study providing it is a continuation of the same program.

Q How do I apply for a Mental Health Scholarship?

- ◆ Complete the Mental Health Scholarship application form available on the website: <http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/qcmhl> from September 2009.
- ◆ Closing date for applications is **30 October 2009.**
- ◆ Forward your application to:

The Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator
Qld Centre for Mental Health Learning (QCMHL)
Locked Bag 500
SUMNER PARK BC QLD 4074

Written advice on the outcome of your application will be sent to you within six (6) weeks of the closing date, including reasons if you are unsuccessful.

Before submitting your application:

Complete the checklist included in the package to ensure that all necessary requirements have been completed.

Late applications may be considered at the discretion of the Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator.

Q How do I access my scholarship monies?

To obtain the scholarship recipients are required to complete the scholarship claim form and attach:

- ◆ a copy of the semester results
- ◆ evidence of course fee payment for the semester, eg. original tax invoice receipt for fees paid in full; or evidence of FEE-HELP deferment.

This application is then to be forwarded to the Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator. Claims for each semester must be finalised within 6 months of completion of the subject. Claims submitted outside of this timeframe will not be considered.

Q What do I do if I am having difficulties with my studies?

Depending on the reasons you experience difficulties with your studies, there are a number of different people who might be able to assist.

These people include:

- ◆ your course coordinator / lecturer/s
- ◆ your district / facility mental health nurse and other educators
- ◆ your line manager / team leader
- ◆ the Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator.

The **Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator** will periodically review the progress of scholarship holders. You may wish to notify the Coordinator of any difficulties and your strategies to overcome them via phoning: (07) 3271 8838 or emailing: MHScholarships@health.qld.gov.au

Q What should I do if I fail, defer, wish to withdraw or leave Qld Health?

You must inform the Mental Health Scholarship Coordinator **immediately.**

Reviewed July 2009