

## **LEGION EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT GRANT SCHEME**

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The Royal British Legion's Employment Support Grant Scheme is a Legion welfare scheme funded by the annual poppy appeal. It is specifically designed to help low skilled and unemployed Legion beneficiaries with assistance to achieve a sustainable employment outcome or to assist those with one or more barriers to employment in the civvy street labour market.

This scheme is not for everyone and you should not apply for a Legion Employment Support Grant if you do not meet the eligibility criteria for this scheme. You can not apply for an award to pay for something you have already paid for or committed to paying for via pre-arranged agreements. Also you can not apply for an award to pay for anything that is, or could be, financed by statutory employment support programs or available publicly funded or sponsored employment, educational, or skills training loans or grants.

These guidelines contain everything you need to know about the Legion's Civvy Street Employment Support Grants and Bursary Awards Scheme. Read them carefully to find out if the scheme is for you, how it works and if you are eligible to apply.

**Make sure you have read and understood these guidelines fully before you apply.**

***Awards are granted entirely at the discretion of the Legion, which may refuse applications from eligible applicants; there is no appeals procedure***

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## Chapter 1

### Eligibility

**About your UK Armed Forces Service Connection:** To be eligible to apply for one or more of these schemes you must have served in the UK Armed Forces (Regular or Reserves) or be an eligible working age dependant of someone who has served in the UK Armed Forces.

**About where you live:** You must be a full time resident (or have leave to remain indefinitely) in the UK except Scotland (Poppyscotland manage a similar service for Scottish residents visit [www.civvystreet.org](http://www.civvystreet.org) for more details).

**About your employment status:** You must be unemployed and registered with the UK unemployment services as available and actively seeking work. Consideration will be given to those who are employed but in receipt of means tested employment support benefits e.g. working tax credit or those who are in receipt of a compulsory redundancy notice or confirmation of discharge from the UK Armed Forces and you are also within your last 13 weeks before your final discharge date.

**About your current financial circumstances:** You must be able to show that you are in financial need and that you do not have the means to pay or have access to the means to pay from statutory funded employment support programmes, grants or loan schemes inc MoD resettlement schemes or your own personal means.

**About the job outcome:** You must be able to provide documentary evidence to support that assistance from the scheme you are applying for will result in a sustainable employment outcome. For those applicants with low skills you must provide evidence from a statutory support agency to confirm the assistance requested will enhance your employability skills or assist you into employment.

**Retrospective Funding:** You cannot apply for an award if you have already started or enrolled on a course and paid or agreed to pay for the course from your own means or other payment agreements. You cannot apply for an award for anything that has already been paid for or you have made a commitment to pay e.g. HP agreements. Please contact Legionline 08457 725 725 to talk to the Legion's money advice team if you are experiencing financial difficulty because of a debt

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## Chapter 2

### **Types of Employment Support Awards Available**

**Skills Development Training Fees & Bursary Awards:** If you are considering applying for any skills development training assistance your current highest skills qualifications must be level 3 or below or you must show your current skills are not employable due to redundancy, disability or available employment opportunities in the area where you reside.

An Employment Support Grant may be awarded to pay for a skills development course (Inc VAT) as long as it is vocational and qualifies you for a job, trade or profession. The course must be wholly undertaken within the UK and if the course includes non-vocational modules, these will not be covered by a Legion Employment Support Grant. An Employment Support Grant may be used to help pay for assessment in achieving vocational qualifications where accreditation of prior learning (APL) is involved.

An Employment Support Grant can be used to assist eligible beneficiaries who have a disability or barriers to attending and remaining on a skills development course. The bursary award can be used to support course related costs only, these may include travel, and course related books and equipment that cannot be provided by the course provider or from normal statutory sources of assistance.

**What We Will Not Fund:** From time to time the Legion may introduce exemptions to the type of skills development courses it will assist with funding. This may be because the cost is restrictive and/or available evidence supports this type of course does not normally lead to sustainable employment outcome that is cost effective.

**Close Protection / Maritime Security / Ship Security Courses:** An Employment Support Grant is not available to support Close Protection / Maritime Security / Ship Security course fees or attendance costs on a Close Protection /

Maritime Security / Ship Security course. An Employment Support Grant may be awarded to assist eligible clients obtain an SIA license and/or attend a Door Supervisors course within easy commutable distance of the clients home address.

**Higher and Further Education (HE/FE) Awards:** An Employment Support Grant is not available to support HE/FE course fees or maintenance costs. An Employment Support Grant may be awarded to assist eligible disabled beneficiaries who have barriers to attending and remaining on a course of HE/FE vocational learning leading to a qualification that is a requirement of a recognised civilian trade or profession.

The course must be undertaken in a UK government funded HE/FE college/university. Course fees and normal attendance/maintenance costs and/or disability support cost will not normally be supported and these should have already been sourced from the local Education Authority, Student Loans Company (SLC) or University/College Student Support Services prior to an application for a grant award being submitted. Financial Assistance is not normally available to support attendance on post graduate courses of vocational training or education or a second degree or higher level (Level 4 or above) vocational education course.

**Foundation/Access Course Fees & Bursary Awards:** An Employment Support Grant may be used to assist eligible beneficiaries to attend a foundation or access course that leads to a vocational degree course or for a stand-alone foundation course that leads to employment.

**Careers Information, Advice & Guidance:** A Legion Employment Support Grant is not available to fund any course or activity that only provides you with careers information, advice and guidance. It may however be awarded to fund a course that will lead to a professional qualification in career guidance. The Legion provides a Careers Information, Advice and Guidance service which you can access via the Civvy Street website [www.civvystreet.org](http://www.civvystreet.org) or Helpline 0800 169 4073

**Vocational Assessment:** A Legion Employment Support Grant may be used to attend a vocational assessment. To be eligible you must show you are disabled and/or vulnerable to participating in the labour market and you must be

referred via a UK government funded support agency assisting you into employment.

**Business Start-up and Franchise Course Fees Awards:** A Legion Employment Support Grant may be awarded to support the vocational skills needed to start up a business or for attendance on a business-start-up or franchise course, but not to pay for the business or franchise or buy a license from the franchisor. Where an applicant intends to enter into self employment following completion of the course they will be required to provide evidence to support they are receiving professional business advice/support and the business plan is supported by a UK government approved business support service.

**Employment Start Up, Tools, Clothing and Equipment Costs:** A Legion Employment Support Grant may be awarded to assist eligible beneficiaries to fund the essential needs to starting and remaining in a job for the first month of the employment contract that is not normally provided by the employer or available from statutory sources. These costs may include protective clothing, tools or equipment that is not the responsibility of the Employer to provide. Or other essential costs associated with attending and remaining in employment for up to the first month of a new job and/or until the first salary payment.

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## Chapter 3

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**I have already started on a course and funded it from my own means, am I still eligible to apply?** No, you cannot apply for an award if you have already started or enrolled on a course and paid or agreed to pay for the course from your own means or other payment agreements. You cannot apply for an award for anything that has already been paid for or you have made a commitment to pay e.g. HP agreements. Please contact Legionline 08457 725 725 to talk to the Legion's money advice team if you are experiencing financial difficulty because of a debt

**Are there any restrictions on the type of course an award can fund?** Yes, the skills training course must be undertaken in the UK, lead to a recognised qualification and must be linked to a job outcome, trade or profession. In the case of employability skills you must be low skilled and the course must be linked to an employment action plan that has been produced by your employment adviser.

**Why do you not support funding for Close Protection courses?** CP courses are very expensive and we have little evidence to support they lead to jobs or sustainable employment. We are always reviewing what we will or will not support and if the research findings change then will review our guidelines.

**What does a sustainable employment outcome (SEO) look like?** This scheme is to support people into jobs. We will need to see that the money awarded is linked to a job and that you have researched that job outcome. We expect to see a letter from an employer organisation stating that you will be offered a job subject to meeting the requirements you have asked us to assist funding with e.g. a skills course or qualification.

**What if I do not have an SEO?** If you do not have an SEO then you must provide us with a letter of support from the following approved support

agencies that is assisting you into employment. Currently we accept letters of support from: The Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA), The Officers Association (OA), Jobcentre Plus, DWP Work Program Providers and Prison Education/Resettlement Services. If you have a letter of support from another agency assisting you with employment then please submit and we will confirm whether it is acceptable.

**How much is an Employment Support Grants or Bursary Award?** We assess an application and in consultation with our local welfare team determine the level of financial assistance we may support. We expect the applicant to have made every effort to source funding from his/her own efforts and have a realistic view on what funding may or may not be available from charitable funds and be prepared to accept alternative career or skills training options that are more affordable. Due to the number of requests we receive each year and the availability of funding it is unlikely we will support funding where the total cost is in excess of £1,500 although all applications are reviewed and exceptional circumstances will be considered.

**If my application is successful, how will I receive an award?** You will be informed by our admin team if your application has been successful. Awards are paid direct to the Provider of the Service/goods by the Legion on receipt of agreed official invoices/bills.

**What if my application is not successful?** Awards are granted entirely at the discretion of the Legion which may refuse applications from eligible applicants. There is no appeals procedure but we will try to assist you with other types of funding applications or discuss alternative support.

**I'm claiming benefits. Will they be affected?** If you are claiming state benefits or want to do so while you are studying or working it is important that you talk to the office that pays your benefits before you apply for a Legion Employment Support Grant. Receiving an award may affect your benefit entitlement, which will not be compensated from Legion benevolent funds.

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## Chapter 4

### Application guide

This step-by step guide will help you plan your application for a Legion Employment Support Grant and show you where to get help if you need it. Make sure that you apply for an award well before it is needed or the start of your course or job outcome. You may have to wait two to six weeks for an answer from the Legion (this can take longer in August/September/October).

- Step 1. Are you eligible to apply?
- Step 2. Will the application lead to a job outcome, trade or profession? Do you have the supporting evidence from the Employer or approved support agency?
- Step 3. If you are applying for course related costs check the course is the right one for you and you are confident you will be able to understand and complete the course. Check that you can afford the time to attend the course, study and complete the course.
- Step 4. Have you taken account of any disability or health problems that might make it difficult for you to take up the job, trade or profession or complete the course?
- Step 5. Make sure you're happy with the provider you have chosen. You can find out about your chosen provider by talking to people who have already used them. It is worthwhile comparing several different providers before making a final decision as the cost of the service or course can vary. The Royal British Legion does not approve providers although we monitor feedback from previous users.
- Step 6. Look closely at areas such as the type of costs you want the award to cover and check if you are eligible for funding from any other

source. If additional requirements are needed above what the award may cover you will have to contribute to the cost from your own means

- Step 7. If you have any questions you can contact the Legion Employment Support Grants Adviser service via the Help Line on 0800 169 4073 or Email [info@civvystreet.org](mailto:info@civvystreet.org).
- Step 8. Work out how much you need. Our application form asks you to calculate the costs including VAT.
- Step 9. Make sure that you fill out the application form fully and accurately. If you do not supply all of the information requested your application may be returned or we may have to contact you and this will delay your application.
- Step 10. The Legion may need supporting documentation such as proof of service, address, copies of financial statements, proof of employment status and proof the grant is linked to a job, trade or profession.
- Step 11. If you need help filling out the form, contact the Legion Employment Support Grants Adviser service via the Helpline on 0800 169 4073 or Email [info@civvystreet.org](mailto:info@civvystreet.org). Information given on the form may be used by the Legion to monitor and evaluate the Legion's Employment Support Grant Scheme within the provisions of the Data Protection Act.
- Step 12. Once you have completed the application form fully then submit your form by post or online.
- Step 13. Wait to hear from the Employment Support Grants Adviser service. As part of the assessment process we may arrange a visit by a Local Legion Welfare Officer or their representative to confirm the information you have provided within your application and confirm a financial need exist. Please note the welfare officer who visits is unable to discuss whether your application will be successful or not. The Civvy Street service has

no control over the time this visit may take to complete, our welfare teams are very busy and your application will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

- Step 14. The Royal British Legion will then let you know whether or not your application has been successful. (Remember you may have to wait two to six weeks for an answer and this can take longer at the start of the academic year August/September/October).
- Step 15. If an award is agreed, you will be sent an official letter from the Legion confirming an award has been made and for what purpose. The Legion will not release any funds until your provider has provided an official invoice for the costs for the award agreed.
- Step 16. If any of your circumstances change after you have made an application or after you have received the award, you must tell the Legion Employment Support Grants service immediately.

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## Chapter 5

### Complaints Procedure

**Complaints about the management of the scheme:** The scheme is managed by the Legion's resettlement, learning and work service. Complaints about the service you have received and the staff who have dealt with your application or enquiries should be directed to:

The Civvy Street Partnership Manager  
The Royal British Legion,  
Haig House  
199 Borough High Street  
London  
SE1 1AA

**Complaints about the decision to recommend an award:** Throughout the application process you will have been reminded awards are granted entirely at the discretion of the Legion, which may refuse applications from eligible applicants and that there is no appeals procedure.

The Royal British Legion reserves the right to make changes to the information set out in his document at any time.