

# Defence Employer Recognition Scheme

The Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support

## About the scheme

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the [Armed Forces Covenant](#).

The ERS is designed primarily to recognise private sector support although public sector organisations such as the emergency services, local authorities, NHS trusts and executive agencies are also eligible to be recognised.

Pledge your organisation's support via the Bronze award or express your interest in a Silver or Gold award via the links below.

## Bronze award

Bronze award holders:

- are self-nominated by employers who pledge to support the armed forces, including existing or prospective employees who are members of the community
- must have signed the [Armed Forces Covenant](#)
- promote being armed forces-friendly and are open to employing reservists, armed forces veterans (including the wounded, injured and sick), cadet instructors and military spouses/partners
- receive an electronic certificate and logos to display on their website, stationery and other collateral

[Nominate your organisation for a Bronze award](#)

View the ERS [Bronze award holders](#)

## Silver award

Silver award holders:

- must have signed the [Armed Forces Covenant](#)
- the employer must already be accredited as a holder of ERS Bronze Award and held it with sufficient time to develop suitable plans and policies and evidence to support the ERS Silver application. The employer must proactively demonstrate that service personnel and the armed forces community are not unfairly disadvantaged as part of their recruiting and selection processes
- the employer must actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues. For example, an employer nominated for support to the Reserves must have an internally publicised and positive HR policy on Reserves
- within the context of Reserves the employer must have demonstrated support to mobilisations or have a framework in place. They must demonstrate support to training by providing at least 5 days' additional unpaid/paid leave (wherever possible not to Reservist employees' financial disadvantage)
- the employer must not have been the subject of any negative PR or media activity
- the employer should demonstrate support to the Cadet movement as a whole by providing proactive support to individual cadets and/or to local cadet units

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) 2024 Silver Award Expression of Interest (EoI) window is now closed.

View the ERS [Silver Award Holders](#)

## Gold award

Gold award holders:

- must have signed the [Armed Forces Covenant](#)
- employers must have an existing relationship with their National Account Manager/Regional Employer Engagement Director/appropriate defence representative
- the employer must already be accredited as a holder of ERS Silver Award and held it with sufficient time to develop suitable plans and policies and evidence to support the ERS Gold application
- the employer must proactively demonstrate their forces-friendly credentials as part of their recruiting and selection processes. Where possible, they should be engaged with [Career Transition Partnership](#) (CTP) in the recruitment of service leavers and have registered for the [Forces Families Jobs](#) (FFJ) portal
- the employer must actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues. For example, an employer nominated for support to the Reserves must have an internally publicised and positive human resources policy on Reserves

- the employer must be an exemplar within their market sector, advocating support to defence people issues to partner organisations, suppliers and customers with tangible positive results
- within the context of Reserves the employer must have demonstrated support to mobilisations or have a framework in place. They must provide at least 10 days' additional leave for training, fully paid, to the Reservist employee
- the employer must actively encourage a positive environment for Reservists by ensuring that positive policies in support of Reservists within the workforce are communicated to line managers
- the employer must not have been the subject of any negative public relations or media activity
- the employer should be an exemplar in demonstrating support to the Cadet movement. This could, for example, be through mentoring cadets in key employment skills, by providing guaranteed interviews for cadets, by direct investment in equipment and infrastructure for a local cadet unit, or by funding and sponsoring competitions, events, and specific activities for cadets such as overseas expeditions
- the employer promotes volunteering with the cadet forces from their workforce, by providing additional leave for employees who are Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs)

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) 2024 Gold Award Expression of Interest (EoI) window is now closed.

View the ERS [Gold award holders](#)

## Nomination and award process

Employers can sign up themselves for each award.

Nominations will be validated to determine the level of defence personnel employment within the nominated organisation and to check that the organisation has signed the [Armed Forces Covenant](#).

Once the nomination has been validated it will be considered by a selection board at national level for gold awards and regional level for silver awards. The selection boards will be a panel chaired by a senior military officer and they will consider each nomination against the award criteria. Organisations selected for gold and silver awards will be formally notified in writing and invited to the relevant award event.