

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme

Updated 18 April 2019

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.

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

Silver award

Silver award holders:

- must have signed the Armed Forces Covenant
- the employer must have already stated their intent to be supportive by using the ERS website to register at the Bronze level
- the employer must proactively demonstrate that service personnel/armed forces community are not unfairly disadvantaged as part of their recruiting and selection processes
- employers must employ at least one individual from the armed forces community category that the nomination emphasises. For example, an employer nominated for support to the Reserves must employ at least one Reservist
- 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

Gold award

Gold award holders:

- must have signed the Armed Forces Covenant
- employers must have an existing relationship with their National Account Manager/REED/appropriate defence representative
- the employer must have already stated their intent to be supportive by using the ERSwebsite to register at the Bronze level
- 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
- employers must employ at least one individual from the armed forces community category that the nomination emphasises. For example, an employer nominated for support to the Reserves must employ at least one Reservist
- 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
- 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 not have been the subject of any negative PR or media activity

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.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-employer-recognition-scheme/defence-employer-recognition-scheme#bronze-award>