

POST 16 EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BEREAVED SERVICE CHILDREN

1. This Defence Information Note (DIN) describes a scheme to provide post 16 education scholarships for the children of Service Personnel whose death has been attributed to Service since 1990. It explains the eligibility criteria, how those eligible should apply and the amount of the contribution that will be paid. This edition of the DIN includes changes to the levels of qualifications that are now eligible; qualifications below English level 3 and Scottish SCQF level 6 are now eligible for scholarships.

AIM

2. The aim of this scheme is to give the children of those whose death is attributable to Service a head start in life by enabling them to progress in their post 16 education.

THE SCHEME

3. **Eligibility.** The scheme is open to an applicant who meets all of the following criteria:

a. **Cause of Death.** A parent of the applicant died whilst serving in HM Armed Forces and the parent's death was deemed to be attributable to their service, and for which the child or surviving parent is receiving benefits under a MoD attributable benefits scheme.

b. **Date of Death.** The deceased parent died after 0001 hours on 1 January 1990.

c. **Relationship.** At the time of death the applicant was a child of the deceased service person, or the applicant was the biological child of the deceased and was born within 42 weeks of the parent's death. For the purpose of these regulations, a child is defined as a legitimate or legitimated child or step-child; a child statutorily adopted; a child of the family (a legal term meaning any other child who is being brought up in the household of the deceased at their expense. A child is deemed to be below the age of majority (18 years). If over that age, a son or daughter must be 24 years or under, unmarried or not in a civil partnership and in receipt of full-time education at a school, college or university (studying for a first degree only), or be out of full-time education for up to one year between secondary education and Further Education (FE) or Further Education and Higher Education (HE) . The age limits do not apply to a son or daughter who is physically or mentally incapable of contributing to their own support. Fostered children are not eligible.

d. **Age on application.** The applicant must be due to start or started the FE course either while still in compulsory education or within 3 years from finishing school education. For HE the applicant must be due to start or have started the HE course within 3 years of finishing FE. If more than 3 years the applicant must provide justification why FE or HE has been delayed¹.

¹ Applicants already in the scheme who are outside of these age limits retain grandfather rights to carry on being eligible until the completion of the course for which they are currently enrolled on.

4. **What the Scheme Provides.**

a. **Further Education (FE).** This includes English 'Technical Education' (TE). The scheme will provide a scholarship to enable a bereaved child to stay in further or technical education for up to three years. Any programme equivalent to English level 3 or Scottish SCQF level 6, or below, is eligible. This scholarship will normally be paid for the last two years at school, college or other appropriate provider but can be extended to three years if required by the syllabus being studied or the personal circumstances of the learner. It will not be extended in order to repeat part of a syllabus or to retake exams.

b. **Higher Education/University/Higher Level Technical Education.** The scheme will provide a contribution towards the cost of a first undergraduate course at a publicly-funded UK higher education institution, or one higher level technical education programme at a provider funded by the relevant funding agency regardless of course length. The scholarship contributes towards both the tuition fees and maintenance costs. Since tuition fees vary across the UK according to place of domicile and place of study the university scholarship is adjusted to provide a similar level of support to all applicants across the UK.

c. **Amounts.** The amount of the further education and university scholarships are given at Annex A. These amounts will be reviewed annually.

5. **Place of Study.** Scholarships will only be provided for study in the UK. Those who are resident in either the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, residence in England will be assumed. Funding will not be provided for study at any institution outside the UK, except as an integral part of a degree course at a UK university. For example a year in France as part of a degree in French.

6. **Foreign and Commonwealth.** Applicants who are not domiciled in the UK must obtain a place at a UK institution before applying for a scholarship. Scholarships will be provided as though the applicant were resident in England. Arrangements and costs for visas and travel will be the responsibility of the applicant; they will not be covered by this scheme.

7. **Payments.** Scholarships will be paid to either the parent or guardian or directly to the bereaved child. For both scholarships three payments will be made each year by 31 October, 31 January and 30 April or as soon as confirmation has been received from the education establishment that the student has registered and is attending the specified course. Veterans UK are to confirm both registration and attendance at the beginning of the academic year.

8. **Income Tax.** Scholarship payments will not be liable for Income Tax.

9. **Means Testing.** The award of a scholarship will not depend on the financial situation of the applicant or their family. The receipt of a scholarship should not preclude a recipient from applying for other financial support, such as the Government's Access to Learning Fund or university funds, should they find themselves in hardship.

10. **Death of Service Parent while at School or University.** If a child becomes eligible for a scholarship during an academic year while in further education or at university,

payments will be backdated to the start of the term in which their parent died or will begin from the start of the next term following a death during the holidays.

11. **Academic Year.** For the purposes of this scheme the academic year is deemed to run from 1 September to 31 August of the following year.

12. **Scheme Administration.** The scheme is administered by Veterans UK. All correspondence for the Scheme Administrator, including applications, should be sent to the Armed Forces Bereavement Scholarship Administrator at:

**Veterans UK
Thornton-Cleveleys
FY5 3WP**

HOW TO APPLY – FURTHER EDUCATION

13. An application for a FE or TE scholarship should be made either by the parent or guardian of an eligible child or by the bereaved child and sent to the Scheme Administrator at the address in paragraph 12.

14. The application must be made on FORM AFBSS1 at Annex B to this instruction. An electronic copy of this form may be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afbss-form-1>

The form must be printed and a signed hard copy sent to the Scheme Administrator.

15. The application must be received by the Scheme Administrator by 31 January in the academic year for which the scholarship is to apply. Applications submitted after this deadline will be considered on a case by case basis, and may be approved in exceptional circumstances.

16. On receipt of a valid application the Scheme Administrator will confirm in writing to the applicant that the child is eligible.

17. If the child is not eligible for this scholarship, the Scheme Administrator will write to either the parent or guardian or directly to the bereaved child who submitted the application to inform them of the reason why the child is not eligible. If the applicant believes that the decision of the Scheme Administrator is incorrect they should write, explaining why they believe the decision is incorrect, to the scheme Adjudicator at the address in paragraph 12.

18. Applications for each subsequent year of study should be made in accordance with this policy. The Scheme Administrator will write to the academic institution to obtain confirmation that the scholarship recipient has started the next year's studies. Once such confirmation has been received the scholarship will be continued for the next year.

19. If the child intends to continue into a third year of the FE or TE course the parent or guardian should write to the Scheme Administrator at the address in paragraph 12 requesting an extension of the scholarship and enclosing a letter from the school or further education establishment where the child will study confirming that the child will continue to

be enrolled in that establishment for a further year. This confirmation must be received by Veterans UK no later than 30 June in the second year of the further education course.

20. A further education scholarship will not be extended beyond 3 years.

21. If at any stage the child withdraws from the course, the parent or guardian of the child, or the bereaved child must write immediately to the Scheme Administrator at the address in paragraph 12 to inform the Scheme Administrator of the date of withdrawal from the course. No further scholarship payments will be made after the date of withdrawal. However, if education ceases due to a period of ill health, the grant may still be issued if the student returns to complete the course. Failure to inform the Scheme Administrator of the withdrawal of the child from the course before any further payments have been made will render the recipient of the payments liable for repayment of all money received after the date of withdrawal from the course.

HOW TO APPLY – HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)/UNIVERSITY/HIGHER LEVEL TECHNICAL EDUCATION

22. An application for a HE/University/Higher Level TE scholarship should be made by the eligible child and sent to the Scheme Administrator at the address in paragraph 12.

23. The application must be made on Form AFBSS1 at Annex B to this instruction. An electronic copy of this form may be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afbss-form-1>

The form must be printed and a signed hard copy sent to the Scheme Administrator.

24. The application must include a copy of a letter from the education establishment confirming that their offer of a place to study has been accepted and showing proof of the tuition fees being charged.

25. An application may be submitted after 1 April in the calendar year in which the course will start. Applications will not be accepted before this date. The application must be received by the Scheme Administrator no later than 31 January of the following year (i.e. 31 January in the academic year for which the application is made). Applications which are submitted after this deadline will be considered on a case by case basis and may be approved in exceptional circumstances.

26. On receipt of a valid application the Scheme Administrator will confirm in writing to the applicant that the child is eligible. The applicant will be required to provide their bank account details for direct payment of the scholarship money.

27. If the applicant is not eligible for this scholarship, the Scheme Administrator will write to them to inform them of the reason why they are not eligible. If the applicant believes that the decision of the Scheme Administrator is incorrect they should write, explaining why they believe the decision is incorrect, to the scheme Adjudicator at the address in paragraph 12:

28. The applicant must also register with the Student Loans Company for student finance. This is to ensure that fees charged are those for a UK student. Failure to register may mean that the applicant is charged fees as an overseas student, which may be higher.

Registering for a student loan does not mean that a loan must be used, however, the scholarship may not cover all of the tuition and living costs incurred and so the scholarship recipient may also take out a student loan to cover additional costs.

29. Scholarship payment amounts may vary across the UK depending on the country of domicile and the country in which the applicant chooses to take their degree course. The scholarship levels are given at Annex A to this instruction. Eligible children from overseas will be treated as resident in England for the purposes of these scholarships.

30. Applications for each subsequent year of study should be made in accordance with this policy. The Scheme Administrator will write to the academic institution to obtain confirmation that the scholarship recipient has started the next year's studies. Once such confirmation has been received the scholarship will be continued for the next year.

31. If a scholarship recipient fails to progress into the next year of studies the scholarship will be suspended. If the course is subsequently resumed, the scholarship will normally be continued. Scholarship payments will not be made while part of a course of study is repeated or while exams are retaken.

32. If at any stage the applicant withdraws from their course, they must write immediately to the Scheme Administrator at the address in paragraph 12 to inform the Scheme Administrator of the date of withdrawal from the course. No further scholarship payments will be made after the date of withdrawal. However, if education ceases due to a period of ill health, the grant may still be issued if the student returns to education. Failure to inform the Scheme Administrator of the withdrawal from the course before any further payments have been made will render the applicant liable for repayment of all money received after the date of withdrawal from the course.