Ministry of Defence

Chapter 8: Elective Education

Chapter version 5.0 (Oct 26)

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Chapter 8: Elective Education

Chapter version 5.0 (Oct 26)

1 Preface

1.1 How to use this Chapter

1.1.1 JSP 822, Chapter 8 sets out Defence Policy on Elective Education in Defence[1]. The Chapter contains the majority of Defence Learning and Development policies for Elective Education in Defence; where Defence Learning and Development policy sits outside of Chapter 8, it is clearly referenced throughout the Chapter.

1.1.2 The Chapter is made up of Direction and Guidance:

- **Policy Directives** provides the Direction that must be followed in accordance with statute or policy mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government.
- **Policy Guidance** provides the Guidance and best practice that will assist the user to comply with the Directives.

1.1.3 The Chapter employs '**must**,' '**should**' and '**could**' in line with JSP 822 Preface.

1.1.4 JSP 822 is the authoritative policy that directs and guides Defence people to ensure that Defence Learning (training and education) is appropriate, efficient, effective and, most importantly, safe. Organisations across Defence have their own policy documents which local policy teams populate and manage, based on their interpretation of the policy contained within JSP 822.

1.1.5 Users should consult those policies and policy teams, within their organisation prior to JSP 822 and the TSLD Training Policy Team that manages JSP 822.

1.1.6 **MOD External stakeholders and contractors accessing DTSMs, and internal hyperlinks referenced within JSP 822.** JSP 822 is published on gov.uk. If the Authority (customer) requires a supplier to have access to additional documentation that is not available on gov.uk, this should be captured within the contract and the onus is with the Authority to ensure that the provider has access to that documentation in accordance with the Information Security policy in JSP 440. If in doubt as to whether documents can be shared with external audiences, the owner of the document must be consulted.

1 Note that Organisational Learning is captured under the Defence Organisational Learning Structure (DOLS) Framework owned by Joint Warfare in STRATCOM and is not within the scope of JSP 822. The Pan Defence Skills Framework (PDSF) currently sits in Chapter 4 of JSP 755

2 Defence Direction for the Standard Learning Credit Scheme

Policy Sponsor: TSLD, Defence People

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is committed to promoting lifelong learning among members of the Armed Forces, recognising its value in both personal and professional development. The Standard Learning Credit (SLC) scheme provides financial assistance to Service Personnel (SP) throughout their careers, enabling them to undertake multiple small-scale learning opportunities. By doing so, the scheme aims to inspire and motivate both Regular and Reserve SP to continuously invest in their personal growth and development during their time in Service. To maximise the benefits of this scheme, it is essential for Defence to actively promote its availability and advantages at every stage of an SP's career. This ensures they are fully aware of the opportunities it offers. All SP seeking SLC support are required to adhere to this Direction, reinforcing the importance of lifelong learning as a core element of their Service journey.

2.1 Introduction

SCOPE

2.1.1 The term 'Standard Learning Credit' is defined as: Training designed to impart, instil, improve, or reinforce any knowledge, skills, or personal qualities. These are, or are likely to prove, useful to the employee when performing their duties, or will qualify or better qualify the employee to undertake the employment, or to participate in charitable or voluntary activities arising through the employment as described in HMRC's tax exemption for work-related training (480: Appendix 9) - GOV.UK.

- The term "SP" in this Direction refers to all serving Regular and Reserve Armed Forces personnel who meet the eligibility criteria for the scheme. The following definitions outline the scope of this Direction:

- 'Ed Staff' refers to all RN/RM, Army and RAF education and resettlement staff, including: RN Regional Service Resettlement Advisors (RSRA), RM Unit Education Officers (UEOs), RN Learning & Development Advisors (LDAs), Learning and Development (Operations) Officers (LDO Ops) and Army Learning and Development Officers (LDOs); and Individual Education and Resettlement Officers (IEROs), and RAF Learning Centre and Education Staff including Regional Resettlement Officers (RROs) and Personal Learning Advisors (PLAs) and Resettlement and Education Coordinators (RECs).

- The term 'Learning Provider' (LP) refers to any accredited educational or training institutions delivering courses that may or may not result in the award of a nationally recognised qualification. Education staff must ensure as far as reasonably practicable that the learning provider is legitimate and can provide

course details, evidence of training qualifications and any other relevant documentation if requested.

- The term 'Learning Purpose' is used to describe the reason or objective of learning, which **could** be in direct pursuit of a nationally recognised qualification to be eligible for SLC support. There is no restriction on the way the training can be delivered, i.e., self-tuition packages, computer-based training, distance learning, informal teaching are all acceptable as are more formal classroom-based methods.

- The terms 'applicant," "claimant' and 'learner' describe individuals accessing this education support scheme. For ease, the term SP will be used throughout.

AIMS

2.1.2 The aims of the SLC scheme are:

- **Support Personal and Professional Development:** Facilitate lifelong learning by providing financial assistance for small-scale educational and training opportunities. This enables Service Personnel (SP) to enhance skills and knowledge for both current roles and future career aspirations.

- **Enhance Operational Effectiveness:** Strengthen Defence capability by supporting SP in acquiring or improving skills that directly or indirectly contribute to operational effectiveness.

- **Promote Retention and Morale:** Demonstrate organisational commitment to SP growth and well-being, improving morale, job satisfaction, and retention within the Armed Forces.

- **Encourage Flexibility and Adaptability:** Offer a broad range of learning opportunities, empowering SP to tailor their development to individual needs and adapt to evolving roles and career pathways.

- **Prepare for Transition to Civilian Life:** Support SP in gaining transferable qualifications and skills to ensure a smooth transition to civilian employment and enhance post-service employability.

- **Foster Engagement in Voluntary and Charitable Activities:** Enable SP to undertake training that supports charitable or voluntary activities, reflecting the Armed Forces' ethos of service and community engagement.

- **Maintain Tax Efficiency:** Align with HMRC's work-related training tax exemption to ensure cost-effective and accessible funding for eligible training without unnecessary tax liabilities.

FEATURES

2.1.3 SLC is a personal development refund scheme and operates as an annualised allowance, available each financial year (FY).

- It does not operate as an account in which the allowance can be carried forward from FY to FY, nor does the scheme permit retrospective payments from previous FY, except in exceptional operational or compassionate circumstances.

- SLC is paid, as a refund, to SP upon completion of a Learning Purpose.

- Where SLC courses are due to be completed after the March payroll but before 31 March, claims would normally be processed on 1 April and applied to the next financial year's entitlement. However, if a Service Person (SP) wishes to claim against their current financial year's entitlement, they must obtain written confirmation from the learning provider at the beginning of March stating that they have been satisfactorily attending the course and will complete it by 31 March. The SP must then submit their claim in advance of the March payroll to their Local Training Manager or Unit HR Administrator. It is solely the SP's responsibility to obtain the confirmation and ensure timely submission. (Link to JPA BPG for SLC claims is here).

2.1.4 SLC is not an entitlement. Provided SP fulfils the relevant criteria (set out below) they will be eligible to claim SLC support. Eligible SP may claim 80% of fees, up to a maximum of £175 per FY, paid to LPs for certain personal development courses, examinations, and support. This support is provided on a 'sharing' basis reflecting the mutual benefit that personal development brings to the SP and the Organisation. SP receiving funding must make a personal contribution using their own funds and undertake study during off-duty or leave periods. Undertaking SLC funded study does not confer duty status and does not count towards Reserve training commitments or bounty arrangements.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

2.2.1 Before embarking upon an activity for which SLC may be claimed, the SP is to be interviewed by Ed Staff. SP should consider:

- Relevance of the course, books, training materials, or qualification to their personal development goals and funding choices.

- Their ability to cope with the pressures of study (or provision of evidence for assessment), the flexibility of the study method, and the risk of disruption or loss of course fees due to the exigencies of Service life.

- All the following conditions must be satisfied:

- The SP must be authorised to undertake the activity and registered with Ed Staff in accordance with single Service (sS) instructions.

- The SP must demonstrate that the activity will directly be of benefit to Defence (as described in the tax exemption work-related training (480: Appendix 9) - GOV.UK) unless the activity is being undertaken by a Service Leaver (SL) as part of their planned resettlement.

- The proposed activity has substantial developmental value or, where applicable, resettlement content, and is appropriate to the SP personal development needs and within their ability. Providing evidence that the activity is part of a Personal Development Plan (PDP) included in a Personal Development Record (PDR) will help secure this support.

- SP who claim Enhanced Learning Credit (ELC) support may not simultaneously claim SLC support for the same learning purpose (e.g., SLC may not be used to fund an exam for a course which has been supported by ELC funding). SLC can be claimed in the same FY as ELC if it is for a different learning purpose.

- For eligible courses, SL undergoing resettlement can use the Individual Resettlement Training Cost (IRTC) grant, in addition to SLC. It is permitted, in these circumstances only, for SL to use the IRTC grant to offset, or pay in full, the 20% personal contribution required when using SLC. Allowing SL to use both funding streams ensures that they have the greatest level of flexibility when financing their preferred Learning Purpose.

- Claims for both SLC and IRTC to pay towards a single resettlement learning activity should continue to be submitted in accordance with each scheme's regulations. Any unspent IRTC may be directed towards another training activity. It is the SL's responsibility, using the advice and guidance from Ed Staff and Service Resettlement Advisors (SRAs), to determine how best to optimise the funding support available when undertaking resettlement.

- Other than the use of SLC and IRTC when undertaking resettlement, the SP must not be in receipt of any other funding from Service sources for the proposed activity, including ELC[2].

- Proof that learning has taken place must be produced. This is not limited to formal certificates and can include electronically held records of learning, such as progress reports and records of learning hours. The SP must agree what evidence will be produced at the time of the SLC authorisation with their Ed Staff.

2 SLC is not to be used to pay for Summer/Residential school fees.

2.3 Eligibility to Claim

2.3.1 Subject to the eligibility criteria above, where applicable, Regular, and Reserve[3] SP are eligible to claim from SLC for the following:

- External courses.
    - Part-time academic and vocational courses at Further Education (FE) colleges and similar institutions.
    - Learning courses which require regular attendance at a local access Centre.
    - Courses of individual tuition (including foreign language) which can be used to benefit Defence unless the individual is registered for resettlement.

- **Scottish/National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs).** S/NVQs are recognised as national qualifications designed to be gained in the workplace and are eligible. SLCs cannot be claimed for an S/NVQ gained only through submission of a portfolio of evidence. There must be evidence of fresh individual work (not merely work previously undertaken) leading to the completion of a portfolio. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment fees leading to partial or complete qualifications are eligible. Applicants must prove to Ed Staff that they have undertaken a minimum of 30 hours of new additional work.

- **Distance learning courses**. Distance learning and online courses are eligible for approval by Ed Staff, or appropriate sS Authority. Distance learning and online courses for resettlement purposes are administered under normal SLC arrangements.

- **External examinations**. Fees paid for examinations are eligible. This includes fees paid for examinations[4]taken following an eligible resettlement training course, including those at Regional Resettlement Training Centre's. A refund is also admissible for the cost of an assessment, which leads to the award of a recognised qualification following a course for which no fees have been paid.

- **Professional bodies and institutes**. Initial registration and accreditation fees paid to professional bodies and institutes expressly to gain qualifications (i.e., Certificates or Diplomas rather than categories of membership) are eligible.

- **Credit transfer fees**. Fees charged by Further Education (FE) or Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to calculate the amount of course credits which may

3 From 1 Apr 2014, the following categories of Reserve personnel may be eligible to SLC: • Volunteer Reserves – RN Reserve, RM Reserve (excluding List 7 personnel), Army Reserve (excluding Reserves in category B), Royal Air Force Reserve. Part time Volunteer Reservist (PTVR). • Full-Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (including personnel serving on Full Commitment, Limited Commitment, Home Commitment and Home Commitment Reserve Staff Group (RSG). • Additional Duties Commitments (ADC).

4 SLC cannot be used to pay for an exam for a course which has been funded by ELC.

be awarded to a SP based upon previous academic and vocational qualifications and experience are eligible.

- **Coaching and management of sport and Adventurous Training (AT)**. Courses and qualifications required for coaching and management of sport or Adventurous Training (AT) in the Services are eligible for funding, providing they support a Service Person's (SP) Personal Development Plan (PDP) and are recorded. These cases should be examined by Education Staff and, if in doubt, referred to the appropriate single Service (sS) Authority. SP must prove that the activity is not available through Joint Service Adventurous Training Schemes (JSAT)[5]. In some cases, qualifications are available through courses sponsored and authorised by sS Sports Boards. SP should check availability before applying for use of SLC.

- **Driver training courses**. SLCs may be used to fund all categories of UK driving licenses, including but not limited to categories A, B, C, D, and E. Funding also covers driving lessons, online learning packages, all theory and practical tests, advanced driver/rider training, and Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) for motorcycles.

- **Paid maternity, paternity or shared parental leave** qualifies as eligible service for SLC use. However, unpaid additional maternity or paternity leave does not qualify.

5 A list of JSAT courses can be found in JSP 419: Adventurous Training in the UK Armed Forces.

- **Resettlement preparation courses**. Resettlement activities are eligible once a SL has formally commenced their resettlement. Fees paid for courses which form part of a SL's resettlement strategy may be eligible for a full or partial refund (refer to Table 1)

Ser	Time Period Eligibility and Admissibility	SLC for educational purposes (inc personal development, S/NVQ)[1]	SLC for resettlement purposes[2]
1	Throughout career up to last 24 months	YES	NO
2	Last 2 years of Service - eligible for Graduated Resettlement Time[1, 2, 3]	YES	YES[3]
3	Earlier than last 2 years of Service for those over 50 years of age or with 30 or more years' Service [1, 3]	YES	YES
4	Last 2 years of Service - ineligible for Graduated Resettlement Time	YES	YES

[1] S/NVQ - Individuals cannot claim SLC for an S/NVQ gained through witness testimony only. There must be evidence of fresh individual work, preferably in written format, although audio/video recording is an acceptable form of evidence of a professional discussion. Branch or trade training is not admissible.
[2] Agreed Tri-Service resettlement preparatory phase normally the last 24 months.
[3] For details of the Graduated Resettlement Time Scheme, see JSP 534: Tri-Service Resettlement Manual.

Table 1: Time Period Eligibility and Admissibility

- **Deferred resettlement**. The use of SLC during deferred resettlement is subject to the scheme regulations that would have applied if the SLC had been used pre-discharge. A request to defer SLC is subject to SRA approval and will be deferred alongside all other resettlement entitlements at their value at the point of exit.

- **Specific Learning Differences (SpLD)[6].** SP identified by a SpLD Adviser as likely to have a SpLD are eligible at any stage in their career to claim SLC support for formal external assessment, in line with sS policies. Before such an external professional[7] is engaged, clearance for funding must be sought in line with this Direction. The external professional must be made aware of the overarching ethos behind the Defence approach to SpLD. Specialist tuition and support[8]for a SP professionally diagnosed with a SpLD need can be funded through SLC, provided:

6 Defence Direction for SpLD is provided within JSP 822 Chapter 7 and is in line with sS policies.

7 Such as an Educational or Occupational Psychologist.

8 Such as assisted technology. Note this excludes tints/lenses for use by SP with SpLDs.

- the support has been recommended in the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) produced by the SpLD Adviser or the external professional's report.

- any software is purchased in direct support of the SP's SpLD and all other requirements for claiming SLC are observed.

- where appropriate, SLCs may be used as part payment for counselling or therapeutic support, where such provision is recommended by a qualified professional and contributes to the individual's personal development.

- **Online Courses.** Payments and individual course fees where these are required for certification of completion, earning of academic credit, or retention of learning material beyond the end of the course. This refers to a one-off payment or upgrade necessary to access a particular course or programme of courses. SLC funding cannot be used to pay for subscriptions, which are regular payments (e.g., monthly) without specific learning outcomes attached.

- **Books and training materials.** Where a course requires the purchase of books or training materials (i.e., audio/video tapes or digital files, course books or literature, other stationery, compact discs), these can be funded by SLC. At the end of the course, the SP could retain them tax free. However, SLC funding cannot be used by SP to purchase study books unless they are related to a course the SP is actively undertaking.

2.3.2 **Language courses or language refresher courses** are eligible if they are in preparation for a possible (but not agreed) move to an overseas location, in support of Defence Engagement activity, or for the development of a Defence priority language. However, refer to paragraph 2.3.3. The maximum proportion of any fee which may be refunded is 80%; the SP is responsible for the balance through a personal contribution. The total amount which may be refunded to an individual in respect of fees paid in any of the above categories on any FY is £175. The MOD forbids the acceptance of inducements or incentives from Learning Providers (LP), including subsidies, free accommodation, travel, meals, alcohol, and equipment. SP who breaches these rules risk forfeiting their SLC support.

2.3.3 Where SLC **may not be claimed.** SLC may not be claimed for:

- **Service training**. All General Service training, courses or qualifications undertaken for the benefit to the employer/MOD, branch, trade, or specialism.

- **Civilian accredited Service training**. The funding of qualifications and examinations of this kind is not within the spirit of SLC. The only case for authorising a refund under SLC in this area is where both criteria are met:

    - A minimum of thirty hours of additional work, which is not an integral part of the Service course syllabus and is completed in the SP's own time.

Applicants must prove to Ed Staff that they have undertaken a minimum of **30 hours of new additional work.**

- An examination, assessment or assignment which is not an integral part of the Service course syllabus, is assessed by an external assessor and is undertaken by the SP as an option.

- **Professional bodies and institutes**. Annual membership fees for institutes or professional bodies, other than in the first instance where membership is required as part of gaining a qualification **(paragraph 2.3.1 refers).** Membership fees and subscriptions to professional bodies may be reclaimed against income tax. Further details are available on the HMRC website: www.hmrc.gov.uk/incometax/relief-subs.htm.

- **Pure sport and AT.** All sport and AT activity, including courses, where the aim is solely to learn the sport or activity or improve by undertaking that sport or activity **(refer to paragraph 2.3.1).**

- **Battlefield tours**.

- **City and Guilds Professional Recognition Awards scheme**. These are not eligible as no additional study is undertaken towards this qualification.

2.3.4 **Continued eligibility during resettlement**. In the event of medical discharge of SP, the eligibility to continue payment of SLC is to be assessed using the qualifying criteria detailed in JSP 534 - The Tri-Service Resettlement and Employment Support Manual. The SLC allowance may be used by the SP post-discharge at the discretion of the sS.

2.3.5 **Transfer of eligibility to spouse or partner**. In the event of death or medical discharge of a SP due to injury or illness, caused or worsened by Service in the Armed Forces[9]and whose condition renders them unable to utilise their SLC, it may be permissible to transfer payment of tuition fees to the individual's spouse, eligible partner, or family member under a tax exemption.

2.3.6 **Authority for travel and subsistence**. There is no entitlement to travel at public expense or to claim subsistence allowance for SLC-funded training purposes, unless the SLC is drawn for resettlement activities in accordance with JSP 752: Tri-Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances.

2.4 Making a Claim

2.4.1 **Making an application**. sS have procedures for processing and implementing SLC applications. **Before embarking on a SLC-funded course**, SP must make an SLC application in accordance with sS direction, e-SLC or complete the Tri-

9 Injury or illness which is made worse by service is described in JSP 765 and requires endorsement under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

Service application form (MOD Form 1950 - link here: SLC Application Form)[10] and ensure it is signed by their Ed Staff and Line Manager. Without this, SP will be ineligible for a refund. MOD F1950 can be obtained from all RN/RM, Army, RAF education, and resettlement staff.

2.4.2 **Submitting a claim**. The SLC claim submission process is:

- **Courses up to 12 months**. The refund payment will be made on course completion. This means after the SP has taken the relevant examination or, for non-examination courses, provides evidence of satisfactory attendance throughout, or a certificate of course completion from the Institute concerned. This is not limited to formal certificates and can include electronically held records of learning, such as progress reports and records of learning hours. Only one payment may be made per course, even if it begins and ends in different financial years (FYs). The payment is normally to be made on the FY on which the course is completed. Where there are exceptional operational or compassionate circumstances that prevent the authorised claim being made by FY end, a case should be presented to the relevant sS at the earliest opportunity, in accordance with JPA guidelines.

- **Courses exceeding 12 months**. For courses lasting longer than 12 months, the refund payment may be paid at the end of each study year, upon submission of evidence of satisfactory attendance for that period. SP must complete the appropriate sS application for each year of study for which they intend to claim a refund. Further claims may be made at 12 monthly intervals, and upon completion, are normally subject to a maximum of three refunds for any one course of study.

2.4.3 **Refund payments**. The SLC refund payment procedure is:

- **Payment of refunds**. The authorisation and payment of refunds is to be carried out in accordance with sS procedures[11].

- **Assignments and withdrawals**. If, as a result of assignment, discharge or retirement, a SP must withdraw from a course, or complete it after discharge, a refund of fees will not normally be admissible. However, if the assignment, discharge, or retirement could not have been foreseen at the time of enrolment, a refund up to the full value of SLC may be authorized; A refund in excess of £175 per FY will not be authorised. The information on any refunds authorised or paid during the current FY is to be included with the SP's personnel records according to sS instructions.

- **Refunds to members of other Services**. Refunds may be authorised within the scheme to members of other Services providing the above criteria are met and the SP cannot be expected to process a claim through their parent Service. All such

10 RN applications now completed via MyNavy App.

11 Army procedure in accordance with SOI_3006_AES_Individual_Education_and_Resettlement.docx

refunds are to be carried out in accordance with the instructions of the administering Service.

2.4.4 **Further Guidance**. Further sS Guidance is available from:

RN	Regional Resettlement Advisors at Learning & Development Hubs. Unit Education Officers (UEOs), Learning & Development Advisors (LDAs), and Learning and Development (Operations) Officers (LDO Ops). Seeking further clarification of sS instructions should contact NAVYTRGHQ-LDORESETELC@mod.gov.uk
Army	Individual Education and Resettlement Officers (IEROs) and Learning and Development Officers (LDOs) are available at Army Education Centres, which must be used by SLs on resettlement. Education and Resettlement Staff seeking further clarification of sS instructions should contact the relevant SO2 Retention and Resettlement in Regional Command (RC): ETS-N-RetResSO2 or ETS-S-RetResSO2
RAF	Personal Learning Advisors (PLAs), and Resettlement and Education Coordinators (REC) at RAF Learning Centres. Education and Resettlement Staff seeking further clarification of sS instructions should contact SO2 Accreditation and Education Wing at 22Gp-AndEWg-HE SO2'.

3 Defence Direction for the Enhanced Learning Credit Scheme

Policy Sponsor: TSLD, Defence People

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is committed to promoting lifelong learning among members of the Armed Forces, recognising its critical role in enhancing both personal and professional development. The Enhanced Learning Credit (ELC) scheme provides financial support to eligible Service Personnel (SP) and Service Leavers (SL) to cover learning costs. The scheme allows for a single award in up to three separate financial years or a single aggregated lower-tier award, supporting learning that leads to the cost-effective achievement of nationally recognised qualifications at Level 3[12]or above.

The ELC scheme empowers Regular SP to invest in their personal development both during their Service and for up to five years after discharge[13], provided they meet the eligibility criteria. To ensure SP fully benefit from this opportunity, it is vital for Defence to actively promote the scheme throughout a SP's career. This includes raising awareness of its benefits and encouraging participation at every stage of their Service journey.

This Defence Direction outlines the rules of the ELC scheme, which are based on legislation[14], and all SP eligible for ELC support are required to adhere to these rules. By embedding the principles of lifelong learning into the culture of Service life, Defence can better equip SP for success both during and after their military careers.

3.1 Introduction

SCOPE

3.1.1 The following terms, defined as below, are used in this Direction:

- 'Ed Staff' refers to all RN/RM, Army and RAF education and resettlement staff, including: RN/RM Education and Resettlement Officers (EROs), Regional Resettlement Advisors (RRAs), Learning and Development Advisors (LDAs), Learning and Development Operations Officers (LDO Ops); Army Learning and Development Officers (LDOs) and Individual Education and Resettlement Officers (IEROs); and RAF Learning Centre and Education Staff including Regional Resettlement Officers (RROs) and Personal Learning Advisors (PLAs) and Resettlement and Education Coordinators (RECs).

12 (A level and equivalent) and above as defined by the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland), a Level 6 or above on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) or, if pursued overseas, an approved international equivalent higher-level qualification.

13 See paragraph 3.4.2.

14 The Armed Forces (Enhanced Learning Credit Scheme and Further and Higher Education Commitment Scheme) Order 2012, S.I. 2012/1796 (as amended, most recently by S.I. 2021/226).

- The Designated Officer for the ELC scheme is 'People-TSLD-PersDev Ed HEO' and works on the staff of TSLD, Defence People in the MOD.

- The contractor to administer the ELC scheme is QIA Services Ltd branded the Enhanced Learning Credit Administration Service (ELCAS) and known as the Customer Service Provider (CSP).

- The term 'ELCAS website' refers to the official Enhanced Learning Credits website, which can be accessed online http://www.enhancedlearningcredits.com.

- The term 'Learning Provider' (LP) refers to any accredited educational or training institution that is eligible to provide courses under the ELC scheme and is properly registered and endorsed by the CSP.

- The term 'Learning Purpose' is used to describe the reason or objective of learning, which must be in direct pursuit of a nationally recognised qualification at Level 3 or above in order to be eligible for ELC support.

- The terms 'applicant,' claimant' and 'learner' describe individuals accessing the ELC scheme. For ease, the generic terms 'SP' and 'SL'[15] are used and include serving Regular and ex-Regular Armed Forces personnel who meet the eligibility criteria for this scheme.

- 'Date of enlistment' also includes date of commission (where relevant).

AIMS

3.1.2 The aims of the ELC scheme are to:

- **Support Lifelong Learning**: Encourage continuous personal and professional development for Service Personnel.
- **Facilitate Higher-Level Education**: Provide financial support for education or training at Level 3 or above on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).
- **Enhance Career Transition**: Help personnel prepare for civilian life with valuable skills and qualifications.
- **Promote Retention and Morale**: Boost morale and retention by investing in personal development.
- **Encourage Personal Responsibility**: Motivate individuals to take ownership of their learning by requiring a financial contribution.

15 SL in accordance with JSP 534: The Tri-Service Resettlement and Employment Support Manual.

- **Support Accredited Learning**: Ensure funded courses are accredited and meet recognised standards.

3.2 Features of the ELC Scheme

3.2.1 The features of the ELC scheme:

- ELC is not an entitlement unless SP and SL fully satisfy the eligibility criteria of the scheme to claim ELC support.

- ELC is not a refund scheme. Under no circumstances will MOD refund any SP or SL who pay for or commence their learning in advance and subsequently seek a retrospective ELC claim.

- Prior to 1 Apr 16, SP were required to make a positive commitment to Level 3 to 8 lifelong learning by registering as a member of the ELC scheme to claim ELC support. From 1 Apr 16, those completing Phase 1 training, as well as all currently serving SP/Veterans who are not already members of the ELC scheme, are eligible to register for the scheme. Registration is not automatic; SP/SL must contact their sS to complete registration process.

- Three types of ELC award are available:

    - The Lower Tier level provides funding for up to a maximum of 3 awards of up to £1k per FY. SP or SL must have completed 6 or more years' qualifying service.

    - Aggregated Lower Tier is available to SP who have completed 6 or more years of qualifying service on or after 1 Apr 16. This provides a single award of up to £3k. This type of award may not be taken by a SP or a SL who left the Service before 1 Apr 16, previously accessed a Lower Tier award, or qualify for Higher Tier awards.

    - The Higher Tier level provides funding for up to a maximum of 3 awards of up to £2k per FY. SP or SL must have completed 8 or more years of qualifying service.

- Providing SP and SL meet all the eligibility criteria, they may make a maximum of three ELC claims in separate FYs. These claims need not be consecutive and may result in a mixture of Lower Tier and Higher Tier awards, depending on time served. Claims can be made either while in Service or generally for 5 years after discharge[16]. ELC funds may be directed at one Learning Purpose (such as successive years' study towards a particular qualification) or different Purposes in each of the 3 years. An Aggregated Lower Tier award replaces the 3 Lower Tier awards that could otherwise be made.

16 See paragraph 3.4.1.

- ELC is an individual award to assist in the personal development of eligible SP and SL. It cannot be transferred to any other individual except under the terms stated in Paragraph 3.4.9.

- This support is provided on a 'burden-sharing' basis reflecting the mutual benefit that personal development brings to SP and the organisation. SP in receipt of ELC funding are expected to make a personal contribution of at least 20% of fees using their own funds, as well as using off-duty or leave periods for study. Undertaking ELC-funded study does not confer duty status and sS regulations should provide further clarification, if required.

3.3 Membership

3.3.1 All current SP who have completed Phase 1 training are eligible to register for the ELC scheme if they are not already registered members. New Regular and FTRS SP are eligible for scheme membership but must contact their sS education staff to initiate registration as this is not an automatic process.

3.3.2 On enlistment, all new recruits are to be made aware of the existence of the ELC Scheme during the recruitment process. During Phase 1 (initial) training, recruits are to be briefed by the appropriate staff on the detailed benefits of ELCs.

3.3.3 SP/SL may not make an ELC claim unless they have completed the required qualifying service.

3.3.4 **SP on other engagements**. Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS), Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), and Non-Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS)[17] may have elected to join the ELC scheme in the expectation of meeting the eligibility requirements, noting:

- Eligible service, for the purpose of calculating qualifying service as a requirement to establish eligibility, includes only that time on active service after 1 Apr 00.

- Qualifying service may include a mix of periods of Regular and non-Regular service and does not need to be continuous. It should be recorded on the 'Interrupted Service' form, which is available from the ELCAS website, and should be submitted with the registration application and each ELC claim.

3.4 Eligibility Criteria

3.4.1 To make ELC claims, scheme members must:

- Complete the required length of eligible service before submitting the ELC claim form and starting the course of study for which ELC support is being claimed.

17 All other Reserve engagement types are ineligible for this support.

- The SP or SL must start the course in respect of which the claim is made before the end of their period of eligibility[18].

- The SP must demonstrate that the activity will directly be of benefit to Defence (as described in the tax exemption work-related training (480: Appendix 9) - GOV.UK) unless the activity is being undertaken by a Service Leaver (SL) as part of their planned resettlement.

3.4.2 **Length of eligible service requirement**. SP or SL must complete 'eligible service' (i.e. sufficient qualifying service[19]) to qualify for distinct levels of award:

- For Lower Tier claims, those who have completed 4 years of qualifying service before 1 Apr 17 are eligible.
- For those who have not completed 4 years of qualifying service before 1 Apr 17, 6 years of qualifying service is required.

- For Aggregated Lower Tier claims, 6 years of qualifying service is required. This is not available to SP/SL who left prior to 1 Apr 16.

- For Higher Tier claims, 8 years' qualifying service is required.

3.4.3 Time spent on an unpaid career break does not count as qualifying service. However, an ELC claim can be submitted for learning undertaken during a career break.

3.4.4 Paid maternity or paternity leave counts as qualifying service but unpaid additional maternity or paternity leave does not.

3.4.5 **Period to use ELCs**. SP and SL must start the course for which they are claiming an ELC award before the end of their entitlement period, which is defined as follows:

- For SL who ceased to be members of the Armed Forces on or after 1 Apr 16, the entitlement period is 5 years after discharge.

- For a SL who is medically discharged on or after 1 Apr 11 and receives a disablement pension under the War Pension Scheme or a guaranteed income payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, the entitlement period is 10 years after discharge.

3.4.6 **Personnel on Recovery Duty (PRD)**. SP who has completed initial (Phase 1 and 2) training and are on PRD before achieving the required ELC qualifying service

18 See paragraph 3.4.2.

19 'Qualifying service' means service in the Armed Forces and includes time spent on ordinary maternity leave, additional maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave, additional paternity leave, ordinary adopting leave or additional adoption leave, but does not include time spent on any unpaid career break.

may be authorised to claim ELC at the Lower Tier. The use of ELC while on PRD must be part of an Individual Recovery Plan (IRP) managed by sS recovery schemes. Specific regulations are:

- The SP/SL must be registered for the ELC scheme, and the injury or illness must be wholly or predominantly caused or worsened by Service[20].

- SP must be briefed on, and agree, the implications of using a Lower Tier ELC claim at this stage of their career.

3.4.7 Effects of attributable medical discharge on eligibility.

- SL who are medically discharged from Service before achieving the required qualifying service, may be eligible to claim ELC at the Lower Tier. In such cases, the SL must be registered for the ELC scheme[21] and the injury or illness must be wholly or predominantly caused or predominantly worsened by, Service. The period in which ELCs must be used is described in paragraph 3.4.5.

- SLs in receipt of a disablement pension or Guaranteed Income Payment have 10 years from the date of discharge to use their funding entitlement. This is a fixed eligibility period, so if a claimant waits until the final financial year of that 10-year window to begin their first claim, they will only be able to access that one claim, provided it is submitted before the deadline. They will not be able to make any further claims after the 10 years have passed, even if they have not used their full entitlement. To access all three claims, SLs should ensure they start their first claim well before the end of the 10-year period.

3.4.8 **Transfer of Eligibility to Eligible Adult Dependent**. In the event of the death of a Service Person (SP), **which is caused either wholly or predominantly by Service**, or the attributable medical discharge of a SP who cannot use ELC support due to their injury or illness, it may be permissible to transfer all remaining ELC awards to the SP's 'eligible adult dependent'. The 'eligible adult dependent' is the SP's spouse, civil partner, or 'eligible partner' (or surviving spouse, civil partner or 'eligible partner').

3.4.9 A person is an 'eligible partner' if:

- The person and SP cohabit as partners in an exclusive and substantial relationship.

- The person and SP are not prevented from marrying or entering into a civil partnership.

20 Injury or illness which is made worse by service is described in JSP 765: Armed Forces Compensation Schemes.

21 See paragraph 3.4.2. on eligibility.

- The person is financially dependent on the SP, or the person and the SP are financially interdependent.

3.4.10 A person is a 'surviving eligible partner' if they met the requirements of paragraph 3.4.9 at the date of the SP's death.

3.4.11 If the SP dies, the SP's eligible adult dependent will be eligible to use the SP's ELC in the following circumstances:

- The SP died on or after 1 April 2004 and, on the date of their death, was a member of the ELC Scheme and had completed the eligible service described in paragraph 3.4.2 and calculated according to paragraph 3.4.3. This gives eligibility to a Lower Tier, Aggregated Lower Tier, or Higher Tier award depending on the eligible service the SP completed; and

- The SP died on or after 1 Nov 10 and on the date of their death was a member of the ELC Scheme and had completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 training. This gives eligibility to Lower Tier awards.

3.4.12 If the SP has an attributable medical discharge and is unable due to the illness or injury to use the ELC, the SP's eligible adult dependent will be eligible to use the SP's ELC in the following circumstances:

- The discharge occurred on or after 1 April 2004 and on that date the SP was a member of the ELC Scheme and had completed the eligible service described in paragraph 3.4.2 and calculated according to paragraph 3.4.3. For attributable medical discharge on or after 1 April 2017, the SP must also be in receipt of a disablement pension under the War Pension Scheme or a Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. This gives eligibility to a Lower Tier, Aggregated Lower Tier, or Higher Tier award depending on the eligible service the SP completed; and

- The discharge occurred on or after 1 November 2010 and on that date the SP was a member of the ELC Scheme and had completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 training. For attributable medical discharge on or after 1 April 2017, the SP must also be in receipt of a disablement pension under the War Pension Scheme or a Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. This gives eligibility to Lower Tier awards.

3.4.13 The eligible adult dependent must start learning before the tenth anniversary of the SP's death or attributable medical discharge.

3.4.14 **Effects of Redundancy on Eligibility**. SP who are made compulsorily redundant and who are ELC scheme members, will cease to accrue qualifying Service for ELC eligibility on the day they leave Service. Their entitlements to Lower Tier,

Aggregated Lower Tier, and Higher Tier awards are related to their length of qualifying service as for other SP.

3.5 Submitting a Claim

3.5.1 **Eligibility of a Claim**. Applicants for ELC awards must satisfy these conditions:

- The Learning Purpose must be of direct benefit to Defence and have a substantial developmental value, appropriate to the SP's personal development goals. SP is required to demonstrate that their proposed course of study is derived from a process of careful planning. They must provide evidence of such planning (such as from Personal Development Plans in their PDR) as a condition of claim approval.

- An activity undertaken by Personnel on Recovery Duty to achieve a qualification as part of a managed IRP, must demonstrate that it has substantial developmental value appropriate to their personal development needs and ability. Exceptionally, this does not have to be of direct benefit to Defence.

- SLC may not be used simultaneously to fund elements of a course of study which is supported by ELC funding.

- SL undergoing resettlement may use their Individual Resettlement Training Cost (IRTC) grant, in addition to their ELC, to finance the undertaking of a nationally recognised higher-level qualification[22]. The qualification must be delivered by an approved ELC LP[23]. It is permitted, in these circumstances only, for SL to use their IRTC grant to offset, or pay in full, the 20% personal contribution required when using ELC[24]. Allowing SL to use both funding streams ensures that they have the greatest level of flexibility when financing their preferred Learning Purpose. In addition, the costs of gaining a RQF Level 3 qualification or above will generally exceed the sum of ELC and IRTC, meaning that in the majority of cases the principle of a personal contribution (at the higher educational level) will continue.

- ELC and IRTC may be put towards a single resettlement Learning Purpose and should continue to be submitted in accordance with the individual scheme regulations, noting: the 20% minimum personal contribution will be paid on receipt of the Claims Authorisation Note (CAN) from student, and MOD will be invoiced separately by the LP to pay the difference. The SL may then submit a retrospective IRTC claim on completion of the course and claim back the difference up to the maximum of £534 or, alternatively, they may continue to

22 At RQF Level 3 or above.

23 Publicly and Privately funded Learning Providers must request and have each course they wish to offer learners approved by ELCAS.

24 Noting that all other policy regarding the use of ELC remains extant, it is not permissible to use the ELC in concert with the IRTC for courses supplied by non-approved ELCAS LP.

routinely apply for an advance of IRTC[25]. Any unspent IRTC may be directed towards another Learning Purpose. IRTC may be used to finance multiple Learning Purposes whilst ELC cannot. It is the SL's responsibility, with advice from Ed Staff, to determine how best to optimise the funding support available when undertaking resettlement.

- SP/SL are permitted to apply for other payments from public funds that may be used towards the cost of tuition fees for higher-level learning, for example:
    - The Publicly Funded Further Education Higher Education scheme if eligible.
    - A bursary.
    - Scholarship.
    - Student loan.
- All of which can be used towards a range of the costs of a course. When using additional public funding sources for tuition fees the total value of ELC and other funding must not exceed the stated annual cost of tuition. A maintenance grant for additional living costs, where there is **no discretion to use toward tuition fees,** is also permissible and should not be included in the above calculation.
- Any Learning Purpose undertaken must be done so by the most cost-effective means available.
- The LP must be an Approved Provider, which is administered by the CSP, and their courses **must** be approved for participation in the scheme[26]. LPs who are also resettlement Preferred Suppliers who are suspended or removed from the Preferred Suppliers List will also be suspended or removed from the approved Learning Providers List.
- All training must be delivered directly by the registered approved LP. Training delivered by third parties that are not registered under the scheme is not permissible and will result in the LP's immediate removal from the approved Learning Providers list.
- The SP must be authorised to undertake the activity and registered in accordance with sS instructions.
- For second and third claims, SP/SL must provide proof that they have completed their Learning Purpose and have completed the Electronic Course Evaluation

25 Using the procedure laid down in JSP 534.

26 LP may be eligible to apply for inclusion on the list of Approved Providers by applying to the CSP on the ELCAS website. The application process includes the submission of course structures for approval and these may be added to by further submission.

(ECE) on ELCAS website. A separate claim form must be submitted for each year of a course.

- If a number of separate courses are undertaken but combined to form a discrete, single Learning Purpose, delivered by one LP, then ELC can fund the total cost. SP, with Ed Staff advice, must be able to prove the validity of the proposed combination of courses in contributing to the Learning Purpose. The PDR enables demonstration that a claim is part of a PDP.

- You can make only one ELC claim per financial year (1 April - 31 March), and it must be for learning that starts within that financial year. For longer courses that do not align with the financial or academic year, you can use one claim for multiple modules as long as they form a continuous block of study and start within 12 months of each other. If a modular course lasts less than 12 months but spans two financial years, you cannot make two ELC claims for it.

- ELC funding is based on the principle that the SP/SL will make a personal financial contribution towards the cost of learning. The ELC award will fund up to 80% of the total course cost subject to maximum tier limits, which includes tuition fees and VAT.

- SP/SL will meet their 20% personal contribution from their own resources. The MOD forbids the acceptance of inducements or incentives from LP, including subsidies, free accommodation, travel, meals, alcohol, and equipment.

3.5.2 **Overseas Resettlement Training (ORT) Application Priority Over ELC**. Where a Service Leaver (SL) intends to use their ELC entitlement with ORT, it is the SL's responsibility to ensure that they apply for and obtain the ORT authority **first**. Only on the receipt of a successful ORT approval authority may the SL make their ELC application. Under no circumstances may a SL make an ELC application for a non-UK based provider for resettlement purposes without having first obtained the ORT authority. Failure to follow this policy may result in the SL not being granted ORT approval with the outcome that they are unable to use their ELC.

3.5.3 **Making a Claim**. Before applying, and having discussed their needs with their Ed Staff and Chain of Command, SP must consider:

- Relevance of the course or qualification to their personal development goals and choice of funding; as well as resources in terms of time and money required.

- Their ability to cope with the pressures of study (or provision of evidence for assessment), the risk of disruption due to Service life and the flexibility of the study method.

- The time required to process the ELC claim. Claims should be submitted to Authorising Ed Staff with a minimum of 15 clear working days prior to the course

start date[27]. Equally, if a LP is not already registered on ELCAS, the SP must allow for the time it will take for a new LP to apply for ELCAS registration. It is important for the SL to understand that the contract is between the SL and the LP.

3.5.4 **Effect of Assignment**. The effects of assignment and forced withdrawal from an ELC-funded Learning Purpose, should be carefully understood by SP, as the contract is between the LP and the SP/SL. Normally, failure to complete the course will result in further claims being denied. However, if failure to complete is due to Service or compassionate reasons that could not have been foreseen at the time of enrolment, then this ruling will not apply.

3.5.5 **Importance of Completion**. First applications for ELC funding will take account of the likelihood of completing the proposed course of study. Ed Staff will assess this through interview and any supporting evidence. Should a SP subsequently fail to complete a course of study, they may have to repay the subsidy. For subsequent claims, a SP's previous completion/non-completion will inform the decision as to whether to approve the claim. Electronic Course Evaluation for previous Learning Purposes is evidence to support subsequent claims.

3.5.6 **Admissibility of Proposed Study/Course**. For SP, Ed Staff will provide advice as to whether or not a proposed course qualifies as appropriate use of ELC. If in doubt, Ed Staff should approach sS Authorities for assistance, who in cases of continuing doubt will seek direction from the Designated Officer. Where required, the SP is responsible for providing proof that the qualification is at Level 3 or above (or equivalent).

3.5.7 **Purposes for which ELC may be claimed**. ELC may be claimed for part- or full-time higher-level study, whether conducted centrally, or through distance learning. Study must result in the cost-effective achievement of a nationally recognised Level 3 (or above) qualification[28]. Useful references are[29]:

- The list of Awarding Bodies approved to make awards accredited by the regulatory authorities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland as listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications; http://register.ofqual.gov.uk.
- The Scottish Qualifications Authority; http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/41278.html.
- British Qualifications (a guide to educational, technical, professional, and academic qualifications in Britain) and British Vocational Qualifications (a directory of vocational qualifications available in the United Kingdom).

27 While claims can be submitted in this time frame, their processing cannot be guaranteed. SP should contact their authorising Ed Staff immediately if under the time frame.

28 As defined by the RQF (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland), a Level 6 or above on the SCQF (Scotland) or, if pursued overseas, an approved international equivalent higher-level qualification.

29 SP should be aware that the burden of proof of the Level of a course rest with them. They should seek proof from their LP.

- UK ENIC – National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills; https://www.enic.org.uk

- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) Directory; https://www.ucas.com.

- Other national governing or regulatory bodies who recognise qualifications in their own right, e.g., Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

3.5.8 **Study Meriting ELC Support.**

- Study towards first degrees (including Foundation Degrees).

- Study towards postgraduate qualifications, including teacher training.

- Other academic study, such as AS/A Level study, Higher Educational Institute (HEI) access courses, or foreign language study.

- Professional self-development in addition to that provided in Service training.

- Accreditation of prior learning assessment fees, including accreditation of Service professional skills, leading to partial or complete qualifications providing there is evidence that the SP has produced new, original work.

- Vocational courses, providing there is direct benefit to Defence.

- Examination fees for qualifications that meet the ELC eligibility criteria.

- Initial registration fees and accreditation fees for professional bodies and institutes expressly to gain qualifications (such as certificates, diplomas, or equivalent schemes of work rather than categories of membership)[30].

- Refresher training, provided that training results in the re-qualification or re-award.

- Courses and qualifications which are required for the coaching and management of sport or Adventurous Training (AT) in the Services, provided that they are in support of a SP's PDP. There must be evidence of intellectual development. Cases of this kind are to be examined by Ed Staff and where there is any doubt, they should be referred to appropriate sS Authority. SP must prove either that the activity is not provided under the auspices of Joint Service Adventurous Training Schemes (JSAT) or that a place is not available on such a course[31]. In some

30 It may well be, however, that the modest scale of expenditure would make SLCs, together where appropriate with IRTC, a more useful vehicle, thus enabling SP/SL to reserve for future use the larger-scale support which ELCs provide.

31 A list of JSAT courses can be found in, JSP 419: Adventurous Training in the UK Armed Forces.

cases, qualifications are available through courses authorised by sS Sports Boards. Ed Staff should check before approving the use of ELC.

- Some LP may offer discounts for certain qualifying courses to SP/SL i.e., where Recognition of Prior Learning negates the need to complete all modules of a course. SP should ensure any such discounts are fully considered in calculating the course fee and their personal contribution before submitting their claim.

- Overseas courses and qualifications may be eligible for ELC support. However, the LP must be approved through the CSP, and the activities must lead to a qualification recognised by UK ENIC as meeting the Level 3 or above equivalent qualification.

- Resettlement preparation courses. ELC can be used for resettlement purposes once a SL has formally commenced their resettlement. Fees for courses or training, which form part of a SLs resettlement strategy may be eligible for a partial refund are shown in Table 2.

Ser	Time period eligibility & admissibility	ELC for educational purposes (including personal development)	ELC for resettlement purposes
1	Throughout career up to last 24 months	YES	NO
2	Last 2 years of Service	YES	YES[1, 2]
3	Earlier than last 2 years of Service for those over 50 years of age, or with 30 or more years' Service.	YES	YES[1, 2]

[1] Providing the SP meets the ELC qualifying criteria and has identified a higher-level qualification. The course of study must be an integral part of, and result, in the cost-effective achievement of a nationally recognised qualification at Level 3 (A level and equivalent) and above as defined by the RQF; a Level 6 or above on the SCQF or, if pursued overseas, an approved international equivalent higher-level qualification.

[2] The LP must be on the Approved Provider List held by the CSP.

Table 2: Fees for courses or training, which form part of a SLs resettlement strategy may be eligible for a partial refund.

3.5.9 **Specific Learning Differences (SpLD)**[32]. SP with SpLD may be eligible for funding support under the ELC scheme. Funding arrangements for an assessment of SpLD are dealt with under separate sS funding arrangements or through the use of SLC. ELC may be used to support training designed to assist SP with SpLD[33]. The LP must be approved by the CSP. Where such training is considered

32 As described in Defence Direction on Specific Learning Differences contained elsewhere within this JSP 822 (Chapter 7).

33 Where SpLD needs have been formally assessed and diagnosed (noting that assessment leading to a diagnosis comes under separate sS funding arrangements).

essential for military Service, however, the costs should be met from sS training budgets, not through ELC.

3.5.10 **Where ELC may not be claimed.** ELC may not be claimed for:

- **Service training**. General Service training, courses, or qualifications undertaken for the benefit of a Service branch, trade, or specialism.
- **Civilian Accredited Service training**. The funding of qualifications and examinations of this kind is not permitted. The only case for authorising a partial refund under ELC in this area is where both these criteria are met:
    - A minimum of thirty hours of additional work, which is not an integral part of the Service course syllabus and is completed in the SP's own time.
    - An examination, assessment, or assignment which is not an integral part of the Service course syllabus, is assessed by an external assessor and is undertaken by the SP electively.
- **Professional bodies and institutes**. Annual membership fees for professional bodies or institutes.
- **Course material**. Course material for which there are additional charges[34].
- **Pure Sport and AT**. All sport and AT, including courses where the aim is solely to learn the sport or activity or improve by undertaking that sport or activity.

3.6 Administration

3.6.1 **Procedure for submitting a claim**. All claims are to be submitted online via the ELCAS - Enhanced Learning Credits Administration Services website. Only in exceptional circumstances are forms to be used, which are also available on the ELCAS website. SP are only to use the current version of the form, which ELCAS has placed on the website. The procedure:

- SP must ensure they have line management permission prior to submitting a claim via the CSP, which will then be reviewed and authorised by Ed Staff. A copy of all paperwork is held in the SP's PDR and personal records where appropriate. The claim process is explained at Annex B.
- All Claims should be submitted to Ed Staff/sS authority for approval at least 15 clear working days prior to the course start date. SP must ensure there is sufficient time to receive the CAN in order to present to their LP before the course starts.

34 Textbooks may be obtainable on loan from the Joint Service Central Library through Education/Learning centres or via sS arrangements.

- Applications for Self-Paced Learning: Online courses with rolling enrolment dates offer students the flexibility to control their own learning pace. While advantageous, this flexibility can sometimes result in a lack of focus on achieving the learning outcome, increasing the risk of the course remaining incomplete. To ensure compliance with the approval process, all ELC claims must include a start date that aligns with the claimant's initial interaction with the learning content. Incomplete claims may impact a claimant's ability to submit future applications. Accurate start dates are essential for approval and effective fund allocation.

- Payments will be made directly to the LP on receipt of a correctly completed invoice on or after the course start date. LP invoices should be submitted to MOD (through ELCAS) no later than 9 months after the SL starts their course[35]. The SP is responsible for meeting the personal contribution balance ensuring that the personal contribution is rounded up. Any calculation of less than the 20% minimum will be rejected by Ed Staff.

- Retrospective claims will not be allowed under any circumstances if received after an agreed course/module start date. Any money paid to LP (as a deposit or to secure a place, for example) prior to receiving the CAN is paid purely at the personal risk of the SP. When making a claim, such an amount may count as part of the SP's personal contribution, but any money that exceeds this amount is not reclaimable under the Scheme. SP are not to commence a course without first receiving the CAN and formally presenting it to the approved LP. SP are not permitted to transfer the CAN to a different course or LP. SP may not pay a LP and then seek reimbursement directly from the LP on receipt of their CAN.

- On receipt of the CAN, the SP is to submit the CAN to the LP and pay the balance of the total cost of the course. Thereafter, LP will deal directly with the CSP.

3.7 Cancellation of CAN and Reinstatement of ELC

3.7.1 **Cancellation**. SP may only cancel their place on a course by adhering to the scheme cancellation regulations. Under certain operational or compassionate circumstances, SP will be permitted to cancel their course, and their CAN, but only if the LP has not yet sent the invoice to the CSP. If the LP has sent the invoice, the CSP is obliged to honour it, and the SP is then to follow sS ELC reinstatement regulations. Where approval is given for cancellation, the ELC earmarked for the [cancelled] course will not be used. SP who do not follow the procedures become personally liable for the payment of all fees and other costs due to the LP, and risk forfeiting their ELC and membership of the scheme.

3.7.2 **Reinstatement**. SP may only withdraw from the course by adhering to the scheme regulations. Under certain operational or compassionate circumstances, SP will be permitted to withdraw from the course and have that particular ELC instalment

35 If after 9 months, please contact sS rep.

reinstated. The procedure may well involve money being reimbursed both to MOD and the SP. The MOD will not be held liable for any losses incurred in the recovery of personal contributions previously made by the SP to the LP as the contract is between the SP and the LP. SP should note that they may not be reimbursed to the full value of their personal contribution. SP who does not follow the procedure becomes personally liable for the payment of all fees and other costs due to the LP, and risk forfeiting their ELC and membership of the scheme.

3.7.3 **Amendment**. SP may amend their submitted application by adhering to the scheme regulations governing amendments. What constitutes an amendment can be found on the ELCAS website. Under certain operational and compassionate circumstances, SP may be able to arrange with their LP to extend the duration of their course dates to complete their qualification. SP cannot transfer their CAN to a different course or start date unless, under exceptional circumstances, they are authorised to do so by their sS Authority.

3.7.4 **Service Quality Assurance Process**. On completion of a course, SP are required to evaluate their learning using the Electronic Course Evaluation form available via the ELCAS website. The CSP will collate evaluations and forward an annual summary report to the Designated Officer. Failure to complete the end-of-course evaluation will result in future claims being denied.

3.8 Second and Third Claims

3.8.1 Claims will not be approved without receipt of the required documentation. For SP, see Paragraph 3.5. For Claimants No Longer in Service, see Paragraph 3.8.4.

3.8.2 The LP may require SP to register prior to the onset of the FY in which the course is due to start. This is likely to affect SP whose course starts early in the FY (April and May) and those who may be progressing from one module or element of a course to the next. In such circumstances, SP may be permitted to submit a claim no more than 3 months before the FY in which the course is due to start. The Ed Staff will send the CAN, which SP can give to their LP, along with the balance of payment their personal contribution. SP are to ensure that the LP understands that the CAN cannot be honoured until after the start of the relevant FY, for which the ELC instalment is being drawn. The CSP will not accept or authorise invoices before the course start date.

3.8.3 **Submitting a Claim**. sS ELC claims should be submitted through:

RN	RN/RM Regional Service Resettlement Advisor (RSRA), Learning and Development Organisation Operations Officers (LDO Ops Officer), and Learning & Development Advisor (LDAs) at RN/RM Learning Centres.
Army	Individual Education and Resettlement Officers (IEROs) at Army Education Centres, which must be used by SL on resettlement.
RAF	Personal Learning Advisors (PLAs), and Resettlement and Education Coordinators (REC) at RAF Learning Centres.

3.8.4 **Procedure for Claimants No Longer In Service (CNLIS)**. SL[36] may apply within their post-service eligibility period. Claims are to be submitted on the ELC Portal and endorsed by the sS:

RN[37]	NAVYPEOPLE-TMGLDOELCVets@mod.gov.uk
Army	Army SO2a Pers Dev Education Branch Zone 4, Floor 2, Leadership, Education and Development Group (LEDG) Ramillies Building, Marlborough Lines Monxton Road, Andover SP11 8HJ Email: Army-ELC-Veterans@mod.gov.uk
RAF[38]	22Gp-AandEWg-LCA@mod.gov.uk

3.8.5 A SL claiming after they have been discharged from Service must submit all of the documents listed below:

- Claim form.
- Information about the course.
- Copy of Service discharge document.
- Copy of utility bill (for address).

36 Who meet the eligibility criteria and have left Service.

37 SP still serving are not to use this POC but are to consult the staff in their local RN Education Centre.

38 SP still serving in the RAF are not to use this POC but are to consult the staff in their local Learning Centre. CNLIS are encouraged to refer to the RAF Learning Forces website for further information.

3.8.6 **Claims by eligible adult dependents**. Eligible adult dependents or nominated proxies may submit ELC claims to the sS Authorities using the same procedures detailed above for CNLIS.

3.8.7 **Payment Approval**. Approval Authorities are:

- **RN**. NCHQ, Training HQ, DACOS Trg.
- **Army**. Army HQ, AITC Ed Branch.
- **RAF**. Air Command, 22 Gp, Comdt CTS.

3.8.8 **Tax Liability**. Most courses undertaken by SP will be exempt from taxation either as income or as a 'benefit in kind' if they can be justified as being **'work related.'** Evidence that the course has a demonstrable developmental value (e.g., within the PDR) will aid the justification of a course as 'work-related.' SP should be able to demonstrate that the Learning Purpose will be of direct benefit to Defence in order to qualify as 'work-related.' However, if in doubt, a SP should always seek advice from sS Ed Staff in the first instance. With effect from 2 September 2012, ELC awards for courses undertaken after leaving Service are unlikely to be chargeable to tax. However, if in doubt, a SL should always seek the advice of HMRC.

3.8.9 **Authority for Travel and Subsistence**. There is no entitlement to travel at public expense, or to claim subsistence allowance, for ELC Learning Purposes, unless the ELC is used by a SL as part of their resettlement[39]. Where ELC is being used in conjunction with IRTC and/or Graduated Resettlement Time, it may be permissible to claim both subsistence and travel[40].

39 In accordance with JSP 534: The Tri-Service Resettlement and Employment Support Manual.

40 In accordance with JSP 752: Tri-Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances.

4 Defence direction for the Publicly Funded Further Education and Higher Education Scheme for Service Leavers

Policy Sponsor: TSLD, Defence People

The Government announced to Parliament on 17 July 2008[41] a package of cross-government support to Armed Forces personnel, their families, and veterans[42], which included a commitment to establish the Publicly Funded Further Education and Higher Education Scheme to provide SL with access to a first full Level 3 (GCE A level or vocational equivalent), or a first higher education qualification (a foundation degree or a first undergraduate degree or vocational equivalent). Subsequently, the MOD engaged with Other Government Departments (OGDs)[43]and Devolved Administrations (DA)[44] to define and agree the parameters of this support, develop the policy, and implement the proposals.

The support has been reviewed by MOD and OGDs to ensure that it correctly meets the needs of SL. This Direction outlines the eligibility criteria for Publicly Funded Further Education and Higher Education (PF FE/HE) support under the scheme (pertinent to submissions after 6 April 2011).

In addition to the Defence Direction regarding the ELC scheme, detailed in the previous Chapter, the following additional Direction applies to SL seeking to receive PF FE/HE support using their enrolled ELC scheme entitlement. The rules of the PF FE/HE Scheme set out in this JSP are based on legislation and apply to SL applying for PF FE/HE support[45].

4.1 Introduction

AIMS

4.1.1 The aims of providing PF FE/HE support for SL are:

- To provide full state subsidised tuition fees for eligible SL undertaking their first FE or HE level qualification.

- To build on the extensive range of professional and personal development opportunities made available to SP during a Service career and provide an

41 2009DIN07-042 refers.

42 Cm 7424 dated Jul 08 - The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans.

43 This was originally the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

44 Scottish Government (SG) and Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) .

45 The Armed Forces (Enhanced Learning Credit Scheme and Further and Higher Education Commitment Scheme) Order 2012, S.I. 2012/1796 (as amended most recently by S.I. 2016/310).

incentive, especially to raise their skills levels in preparation for, and on returning to, civilian life.

- To enhance the reputation of the Armed Forces by returning high-quality personnel to the UK skills pool, by providing the opportunity for them to raise their skill levels by achieving nationally recognised qualifications in economically viable skills which benefit the nation.

4.2 Supported Qualification Levels

4.2.1 A first full Level 3 qualification or a first full Higher Education (HE) qualification at Level 4-6. The scheme specifically supports the achievement of a first full qualification. If the scheme is used to achieve a first full Level 3 qualification, or the SL has already achieved 120 credits at Level 4 or above in higher-level studies, it cannot be used to achieve a HE qualification. SL are permitted to apply for funding for learning leading to one of the following 'First' full qualifications:

- A first full Level 3 qualification as defined by the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF). A full Level 3 achievement is equivalent to 2 or more A-levels.
- A first full Level 4 Certificate of HE as defined by the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF). A first full Level 4 HE qualification equates to 120 credits[46].
- An Undergraduate Degree (including a Foundation Degree).
- Higher National Certificate or a Higher National Diploma for which the entry qualification is lower than a degree.
- Any qualification on the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) equivalent to those listed within paragraph 4.2.1.

4.3 Features

4.3.1 The additional features of the PF FE/HE scheme are:

- The PF FE/HE scheme does not cover SL who left Service before 17 July 2008. SL who left on or after 17 July 2008[47] are eligible if they meet the qualifying criteria.
    - If a SL's ELC has already been exhausted or is used up during the course of supported studies, the commitment to fund the full tuition fees for eligible SL transfers to the PF FE/HE Scheme.

46 120 credits equate to credits obtained from one Learning Provider for a single learning purpose or aggregated credits from several Learning Providers relating to the same learning purpose which can be used towards a higher-level qualification. Credits gained from courses on unrelated subjects should not be aggregated.
47 This includes if an SP has died or has an attributable medical discharge on or after this date, and FE/HE support is transferred to the SP's eligible adult dependent.

- Both publicly funded and privately funded **UK-based** institutions delivering FE and HE qualifications may be approved LPs for this scheme. If not already listed as an approved LP, they must apply for approved learning provider status and agree to work within the specific administrative requirements of the ELC/PF FE/HE Schemes. In all cases, the final decision regarding eligibility for course funding rests with the single Services authorising Designated Officer or Ed Staff.

4.4 Eligibility Criteria

4.4.1 In order to make claims for PF FE/HE support, a SL must:

- Be an active member of the ELC scheme and have left Service on or after 17 July 2008. It is essential that all new recruits are made fully aware of the existence and opportunities provided by the ELC and PF FE/HE Schemes as part of the recruitment process. This early introduction ensures recruits understand the long-term benefits these schemes offer for their personal and professional development. During Phase 1 (initial) training, it is the responsibility of the appropriate staff to deliver comprehensive briefings on the detailed benefits and practical applications of both schemes. By embedding this knowledge early in a recruit's career, Defence can foster a culture of lifelong learning and ensure Service Personnel are equipped to make informed decisions about their development throughout their Service journey.

- Complete the required eligible service before submitting the PF FE/HE online claim form and prior to commencing the course of study for which FE/HE support is being claimed (see paragraphs 4.4.4 and 4.4.5).

- Be applying for payment of tuition fees to undertake at least half of a full-time course[48] which is either a first full Level 3 qualification or a first HE qualification (Level 4-6).

- The course of study must commence prior to the period of scheme membership entitlement ending (paragraph 4.4.4 applies). The SL will be responsible for self-funding periods of study which extend beyond the period of entitlement (see paragraph 4.4.5).

- Meet the residency requirements specified by the DfE/DA.

- As tuition fees for the PF FE/HE scheme are fully funded, a SL is not permitted to apply for, or be in receipt of, any other payment from public funds which is permissible to be used towards the cost of tuition fees for qualification-level

48 SL must be applying for an award to undertake at least the equivalent of half of a first full Level 3 (GCE A level or vocational equivalent), or a first higher education qualification (a foundation degree or a first undergraduate degree or vocational equivalent). If studying part time, SL must be studying at a minimum of 25% of the full-time commitment and must allow sufficient time to complete a part-time degree within the remaining post-Service discharge period, or self-fund the remaining period of study.

learning, unless such payment is made under the ELC scheme via a joint claim. A maintenance grant for additional living costs, where there is **no discretion to use towards tuition fees** is permissible.

4.4.2 **Length of Eligible Service Requirement**. SL must complete 'eligible service' (i.e., sufficient qualifying service[49]):

- At least 6 years' qualifying service.
- For SL who have an attributable medical discharge[50], the completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2 training.

4.4.3 **Eligible service'** runs from 1 April 2000 or the date of enlistment, whichever is later.

4.4.4 **Period to Use PF FE/HE Support**. SL must apply for funding within the period of entitlement, which is defined as follows**:**

- SL may apply for resettlement support upon entering their resettlement phase[51], or for up to 5 years after leaving Service. SP who either reach the age of 50 or complete 30 years of service, whichever occurs first, may register for resettlement support earlier than the standard two-year point, in line with ELC and resettlement policy[52].
- A SL who is medically discharged on or after 1 April 2011 and who receives a disablement pension under the War Pension Scheme or a Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme the entitlement period is 10 years after discharge.

4.4.5 **Transfer of Eligibility to Spouse or Eligible Partner**. In the event of the death of a SP/SL on or after 17 July 2008 which is caused by service, or the attributable medical discharge of a SP who cannot use PF FE/HE support due to their injury or illness, PF FE/HE support may be transferred to the SP's 'eligible adult dependent'[53].

4.4.6 The eligible adult dependent can claim PF FE/HE support if:

49 'Qualifying service' means service in the armed forces and includes time spent on ordinary maternity leave, additional maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave, additional paternity leave, ordinary adopting leave or additional adoption leave, but does not include time spent on any unpaid career break.

50 Medical discharge due to an injury or illness wholly or predominantly caused by or worsened by Service. An injury or illness which is made worse by service is described in JSP 765: Armed Forces Compensation Schemes.

51 Notwithstanding the general rule that SL enter their resettlement phase at the start of their last 2 years of service, in many cases this is unlikely to align with the start date of courses. Therefore, SL may be authorised to commence a course under this scheme some months earlier if all other requirements are met. In these cases direction should be sought from the sS ELC managers and/or People-TSLD-PersDev Ed SEO in TSLD.

52 Refer to JSP 534.

53 See paragraphs 3.4.9-3.4.20 in ELC Direction.

- The SP/SL was a member of the ELC Scheme at the date of death or attributable medical discharge. For attributable medical discharge on or after 1 April 2017, the SL must also be in receipt of a disablement pension under the War Pension Scheme or a Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

- The SP/SL had completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 training before that date.

- The eligible adult dependent meets the residency requirements specified by the relevant DfE/DA.

4.4.7 The eligible adult dependent must start learning before the tenth anniversary of the SP/SL's death or attributable medical discharge.

4.4.8 **Residency Requirements**. PF FE/HE support is available only to ELC members who reside in the UK. To qualify SL must have been resident in the UK for at least 3 years, prior to the start of the course and they must continue to remain in the UK until the qualification completes (overseas Service counts towards UK residency). Any period during which the SL served outside the UK as a member of the armed forces is treated as a period of ordinary residence in the UK. SL who reside outside the UK after leaving Service do not qualify for this UK-based support. If, however, they return to reside in the UK they may be eligible for support within any remaining eligibility window but only after having first completed a minimum of 3 years' residency. However, for SLs accompanying their still serving spouse on posting overseas, who are ordinarily resident in the UK, it will be permitted that they can use the PF FE/HE scheme to complete an eligible distance learning course with a UK-based ELCAS approved LP for the duration of the overseas posting until their return to the UK. Funding responsibility lies with the MOD for individuals residing in England and with the Devolved Nations for those individuals residing in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. If an SL moves between regions (e.g., from England to Wales) funding responsibility remains with the initial department, until 3 years' residence has been completed in the new location. It is also possible that some SL may have resided overseas in excess of 3 years whilst on Service duty prior to application.

4.4.9 **Foreign and Commonwealth Personnel**. This support is available to eligible Foreign and Commonwealth (F&C) SL including Gurkha SL residing in the UK who must also meet the residency requirements. In addition, F&C personnel who have left Service will also be required to meet the relevant DfE/DA requirements in regard to settlement and citizenship in the UK to attract funding. The residency and citizenship rules for dependents are different. For further guidance, covering members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, see: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/IDIs/idischapter15/

4.4.10 F&C SL who have been medically discharged prior to achieving sufficient qualifying service are still required to meet the residency requirements specified by

the DfE/DA before they can apply to study using this support. Medically discharged F&C SL who have achieved eligibility to access the scheme and are remaining in the UK may apply to commence studies after the required residency period has been achieved. In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible for a SL to submit a case to the relevant sS for exceptional treatment, with the decision resting with the TSLD.

4.5 Education Provision Attracting Support for SL

4.5.1 This support is targeted at eligible SP who are registered on JPA for resettlement and have become a SL. Support is available for 5 years post discharge[54]. Application may be made for payment of tuition fees to undertake at least half of a full-time course[55] or full-time study and SL must have enrolled to undertake an eligible first full further or first full higher-level course of study (level 4-6) or vocational equivalent (level 4-6) which results in the achievement of a nationally recognised qualification. Only qualifications listed on website links below are eligible for support:

- **FE** (Level 3 or national equivalent):
    - **England, Wales, and Northern Ireland**. The Learning Aims Database (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency) for full Level 3 qualification, that is a qualification equivalent in size and breadth to two GCE A-Levels or vocational equivalent, or a qualification that if achieved would mean the SL has reached the full Level 3 threshold. Full details at http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/. Additionally, for Wales, http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/090115creditsleafleten.pdf.
    - **Scotland**. Working towards a first Level 6 qualification (SVQ Level 3) within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The qualification must be delivered by a FE college, holding a valid registration with the National Learning Opportunities Database (NLOD). Full details at www.sqa.org.uk.
- **HNC**, HND, foundation degree, full undergraduate degree (including integrated master's degree), or national equivalent):
    - **England and Wales**. Working towards an HE courses at levels 4-6 on the FHEQ. Full details at Ofqual - GOV.UK and The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

54 See paragraph 4.4.6.

55 SL must be applying for an award to undertake at least the equivalent of half of a first full Level 3 (GCE A level or vocational equivalent), or a first higher education qualification (a foundation degree or a first undergraduate degree or vocational equivalent). If studying part time, SL must be studying at a minimum of 25% of the full-time commitment.

- **Scotland**. Working towards an HE course at levels 7-10 on the SCQF, holding a valid registration with NLOD. Full details at www.sqa.org.uk.

- **Private Pilot's License and courses not listed on the national databases**. Qualifications not included on the national databases must not attract support. These, for example, may include some categories of sport or outdoor skills, flying, such as pursuit of a Private Pilot's License[56] and the wider range of 'industry standard or vendor' qualifications which are not accredited by a UK nationally recognised Awarding Body.

4.5.2 **Accreditation of Service Courses**. An SL who has attained a Level 4 (e.g., HNC) qualification purely by dint of completing Service training courses and has undertaken no extra personal study in order to obtain the qualification which has been accredited by the relevant civilian awarding body, **may** still be eligible to apply for support. SL should note the PF FE/HE Scheme aims to provide support for SL without a first HE qualification.

4.5.3 **Foundation/Introduction to HE Courses**. SL who undertake a Foundation Year/Introduction to HE course will be allowed to continue with it through this support, provided that they give an undertaking that they are completing the foundation year/intro to HE course as preparatory work for a full degree to commence immediately after the end of their initial studies. No gap in study is permitted.

4.6 Approved LPs

4.6.1 LPs are limited to approved institutions in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland[57]. The relevant national bodies and websites[58] are:

- **FE**.
  - Department for Education - GOV.UK
  - England - The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency
  - Wales - The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) (DCELLS): Education and skills | Topic | GOV.WALES
  - Scotland - Scottish Funding Council (SFC): http://www.sfc.ac.uk/.

56 In this case, ELC funding may be utilised for these courses; however, standard regulations still apply.

57 SL must use approved English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland based LPs delivering publicly funded FE/HE qualifications listed on the national databases. If, for the purposes of this support, a LP is not already listed as approved ELC LP, the SL must first apply for approval through ELCAS.

58 The websites are not exclusively limited to publicly funded institutions; they also contain ineligible non-publicly funded LP.

- **HE**.
    - England – Office for Students: www.officeforstudents.org.uk and www.ucas.ac.uk.
    - Wales - HE Funding Council of Wales (HEFCW): www.hefcw.ac.uk
    - Scotland - Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS): www.saas.gov.uk/

4.6.2 Having identified a LP, the onus is on the SL to first check that the provider is eligible to participate in the scheme. If the institution is not already listed on the ELC website as an approved LP, the institution may apply to join the scheme. This will require the LP to complete an application and agreeing to participate within the rules of the ELC scheme. Full details of LP status can be obtained from ELCAS at the ELC website. New LPs will, therefore, be added progressively to the ELC approved database.

4.7 Administration

4.7.1 In the case of courses funded by the MOD (the relevant sS) and the Devolved Administrations (DA): fees will be initially paid up to £9,535 (Higher Floor Amount) for Publicly Funded LPs and up to £6,000 for Privately Funded LPs for each year of study. Tuition fees above the capped amount must be paid by the SL. The fee caps for England are contained in The Higher Education (Fee Limits and Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2018 (2018 No. 903 Education England).

4.7.2 The effects of any assignment within the resettlement phase and withdrawals from the scheme should be carefully understood. Normally, failure to complete the activity or breaks in study outside of the usual term time breaks will result in any further application being denied. A gap year is not permitted under the Scheme unless this is integral to the course, e.g., to undertake a work placement as part of a ‘year in industry’ requirement. This must be declared at the outset otherwise no funding under the Scheme will be provided. If failure to complete the course of study is due to Service or compassionate reasons that could not have been foreseen, then this ruling will not apply. The single Service representatives will need to keep TSLD informed.

4.8 Making an Application/Claim

4.8.1 Claims can be made via the ELCAS website. Alternatively, current forms (as published online) must be completed by the SL and countersigned by line managers and appropriate Ed Staff. Claims are **not** to be submitted directly to ELCAS. A copy of the form and interview record is to be held in the SL’s Personal Development Record (PDR) and personal records, where appropriate. **A separate**

claim must be submitted for each year of a course. The application and claim process is described at Annex B.

4.8.2 The claim must state the cost of the tuition fees to be paid; for longer courses, this is to be calculated by each FY, so that the cost is evenly spread. The course fee must include any existing discounts or fee reductions. The claim must state the MOD contribution (up to a maximum of £1k or £2k depending on Tier eligibility) with the remaining balance (the amount which would have equated to the individual's personal contribution). The two amounts, when added together, should total the course fee quoted by the LP. As normal, the ELC contribution will in no case exceed 80% of the gross course cost (tuition fees only). This includes VAT but excludes payment for food, accommodation, travel, subsistence, and course material, which are the SL's responsibility. The MOD will meet the minimum 20% cost towards the tuition fees. Where all ELC has been exhausted, but the SL still qualifies for full state subsidy then course tuition fees will be met in full by the MOD/DA.

4.8.3 On receipt of a properly completed and authorised application, the sS Authority will send a Claim Authorisation Note (CAN) to the SL. The CAN is effectively a promissory note to the LP that the SL is eligible to receive fully subsided state support. The claim should be submitted to Ed Staff/sS Authority for approval at least 15 clear working days prior to the course start date. SP/SL must ensure there is sufficient time to receive the CAN, in order to present to their LP before the course starts, which for many LPs means the CAN must be submitted before the final course registration date.

4.8.4 All payments will be made directly to the LP by MOD on receipt of a correctly completed invoice once the applicant commences the course. LP invoices will be accepted by MOD (through ELCAS) no earlier than six weeks and no later than 9 months after the SL starts their course[59]. The LP must confirm that the SL has completed six weeks of study.

4.8.5 SL will not be able to claim a refund for any money paid to a LP. SL are not to commence a course without first receiving their CAN and presenting it to their approved LP. Furthermore, SL are not permitted to transfer their CAN to a different course or LP. SL cannot pay upfront to a LP and subsequently seek reimbursement from MOD on receipt of their CAN. If SL do not complete the first six weeks of study, the MOD/DA will not fund any tuition fee costs owed to the LP, and the payment of all costs become the responsibility of the SL.

4.8.6 sS points of contacts are in accordance with ELC Direction.

4.8.7 **Length of support**. Support will be available within the entitled period of eligibility. In some instances, such as illness, compassionate circumstances, or the SL being deployed during Resettlement or after Service (on transfer to the Reserves), it may

59 If after 9 months, LP to contact sS rep.

be possible for the support to be made available beyond the normal length of the course of study.

4.8.8 **Evaluation and achievement tracking**. In accordance with MOD Direction, ELCAS will evaluate LP training and support, incorporating student feedback and, where necessary, conducting site visits.

4.8.9 **Self-declaration**. SL are required to complete the self-declaration (on the application form) confirming that they are eligible to receive support[60] and that by receiving it, the support it is their intention to complete the full qualification. They must also declare that they meet the residency and citizenship/settlement criteria. Ed Staff are to advise the SL, as appropriate on what constitutes eligibility, but it will be the SL's ultimate responsibility to ensure they understand and fully comply with the scheme direction. SL should also be able to provide documentary proof through the Learner Records Service (Access your personal learning record - GOV.UK) once in receipt of a unique learner number.

4.8.10 **Cancellation and withdrawal procedures**. SL who have used up their ELC and are claiming full state subsidy and do not comply with cancellation and withdrawal regulations, risk forfeiting their membership of the ELC scheme, and thus their access to the PF FE/HE scheme. SL are also subject to the criteria laid down by the MOD/DA, who will not fund any tuition fee costs owed to the LP, a SL who does not complete the first six weeks of study. See Paragraph 4.8.7.

4.8.11 **SL Re-entering Full-Time Service**. SL who take up the PF FE/HE support during their resettlement, and subsequently remain in or re-enter Service may, with the agreement of the MOD/DA, continue with their chosen qualification until completion, without incurring any financial penalty[61]. The sS Authority must take account of the study and its duration and be prepared to endorse and support its continuation to completion. However, such SL will forego any further state support under this commitment on finally leaving Service, having used up their opportunity to draw down the subsidised tuition fees. Alternately, the LP and MOD/DA may agree to defer the completion of the course, for which final authority rests with the MOD/DA. A record is to be retained by the CSP if such circumstances arise.

4.8.12 **Other funding streams**. SL are not permitted to claim any other source of MOD funding including the IRTC or SLC related to any application made under this scheme (additionally refer to paragraph 4.4.1 above).

4.8.13 **Cost recovery process**. JSP 462[62] sets out the policy and process for TLBs to recover costs from OGD (such as the DfE) and agencies in accordance with HM Treasury guidelines titled 'Managing Public Money'. ELCAS will provide a monthly report to sS finance teams, to enable recovery action, from the devolved nations.

60 For their first full Level 3 or first HE qualification level 4-6.

61 This may require the SL to change the course to a part-time/blended learning basis, possibly with an alternate provider transferring CAT points etc.

62 JSP 462: Financial Management and Charging Policy Manual.

4.8.14 **Procedure for Claimants No Longer In Service (CNLIS)**. SL[63] may apply within their post-service eligibility period. All claims are to be submitted via the ELCAS Members Area, only in exceptional circumstances are forms to be used. Forms are available on the ELCAS website and are to be submitted to the sS for endorsement:

Royal Navy	South of England: NAVYTRGHQ-LDORESETELC@mod.gov.uk North of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland: NAVYPEOPLE-TMGLDORN-ELCVetsN@mod.gov.uk
Army	SO3 Int Dev Education Branch Zone 4, Floor 2, Army Individual Training Command, Ramillies Building, Army HQ Monxton Road, Andover SP11 8HJ Tel: 079 7722 9294 Email: Army-ELC-Veterans@mod.gov.uk
RAF	Learning Credits Administrator 22 Gp, Rm 221b Trenchard Hall, RAFC Cranwell, Sleaford, Lincs, NG34 8HB Email: 22Gp-AandEWg-LCA@mod.gov.uk

63 Who meet the eligibility criteria and have left the Services.

5 Annexes

A. Application for Standard Learning Credits (SLC) Funding – MOD Form 1950 (Revised 11/25)

B. ELC Scheme Process for SP and LP

C. PF FE/He Support Scheme Process for SL and LP

Annex A to
JSP 822 Ch 8
Dated Oct 26

Application for Standard Learning Credits (SLC) Funding

MOD Form 1950 (Revised 11/25)
Word Format

SLC funding cannot be claimed retrospectively. Prior authorisation must be obtained, or the application will be refused.

Part 1: Personal details (please use block capitals)

Rank/Rate:	Surname:
Forename:	Service Number:
TX/Discharge Date:	Section/Unit Address (in full):
Email:	

Part 2: Course details

Course Title					
Qualification Gained (if applicable)			Awarding Body		
Name & Address of Learning Provider					
Website of learning provider & course:					
Start Date			End Date		
Total Cost of Course	£	SLC Amount	£	Applicant Contribution (min 20%)	£
Method of Study					

Part 3: Reason for study/previous course details

Details of previous study/courses relevant to this application:
Reason for study:

What benefit will this course bring to Defence?

Part 4: Undertaking by Applicant

I have read the relevant policy. This learning activity forms part of my Personal Development Plan. I agree to inform the relevant Ed staff of any changes in circumstances that may affect my ability to complete my course of study.

Applicant's signature:	Date:

Part 5: Action by Applicant's Line Manager

I have noted the details of the course at Part 2, and I **approve/do not approve** this application to study.

Name:	Signature:
Date:	Contact Tel:

Part 6: Action by the sS specific Education/Training/Learning/Resettlement Officer

* I have consulted the applicant and confirm that this course is eligible for SLC funding in accordance with the relevant policy.	
* I have consulted the applicant and informed them that this course is ineligible for SLC funding.	

* Select tick box as appropriate.

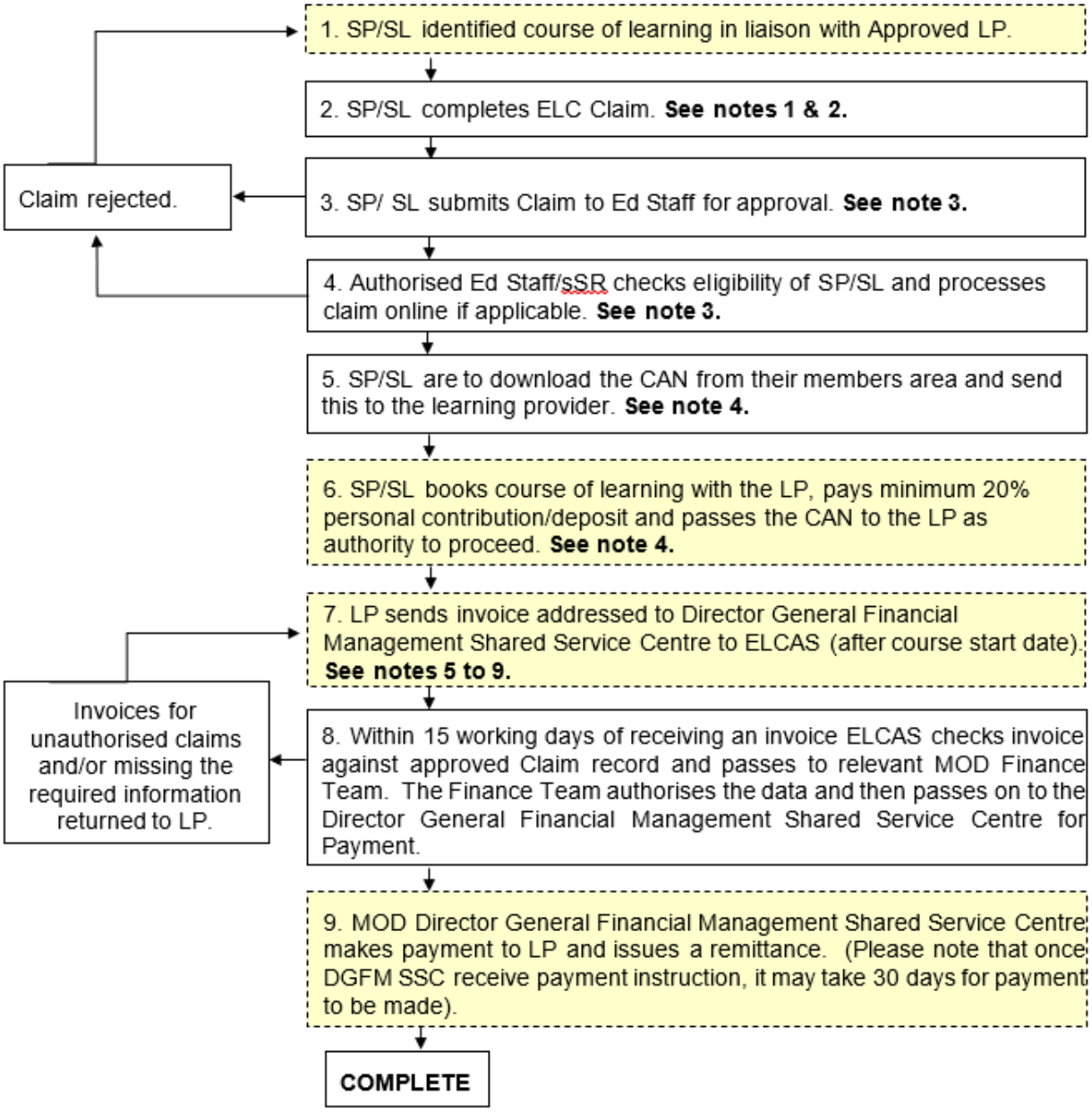
Ed Staff Name:	Contact Details
Ed Staff Signature:	Date:
Explanatory Notes (Ed Staff use only):	

RN	Regional Service Resettlement Advisors Unit Education Officers (UEOs) Education and Resettlement Officers (EROs) Learning and Development (Operations) Officers (LDO Ops)
Army	Army Education Centre ETS Officers/Individual Education and Resettlement Officers (IEROs)
RAF	Personal Learning Adviser (PLA)

ELC Scheme Process for SP and LP

= Key LP Activities

Note can be found on next page



Notes for Scheme Process for SP and LP

1. All claims must meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in the current JSP and on the ELC website.

2. All ELC applications are to be submitted on the online ELCAS platform.

3. All claims should be received by Ed Staff/sSR, 15 clear working days prior to course start date.

4. The Claim Authorisation Note (CAN form) confirms that the SP will receive ELC support to fund their chosen course with the identified LP. LPs should not accept confirmed bookings from SP unless they have received the original CAN and 20% personal contribution from the SP. LP should not accept a booking for a course, other than that detailed on the CAN.

5. Invoices should be addressed to the MOD and must include:

- The Invoice Number
- The LP Number
- The unique number (Claim Number) shown on the CAN
- The SP Service Number
- The LP own course code
- Confirmation that the SP has paid the minimum of 20% of the course fee.

6. Invoices must be received by ELCAS on or after the course start date and within nine months of the course start. date.

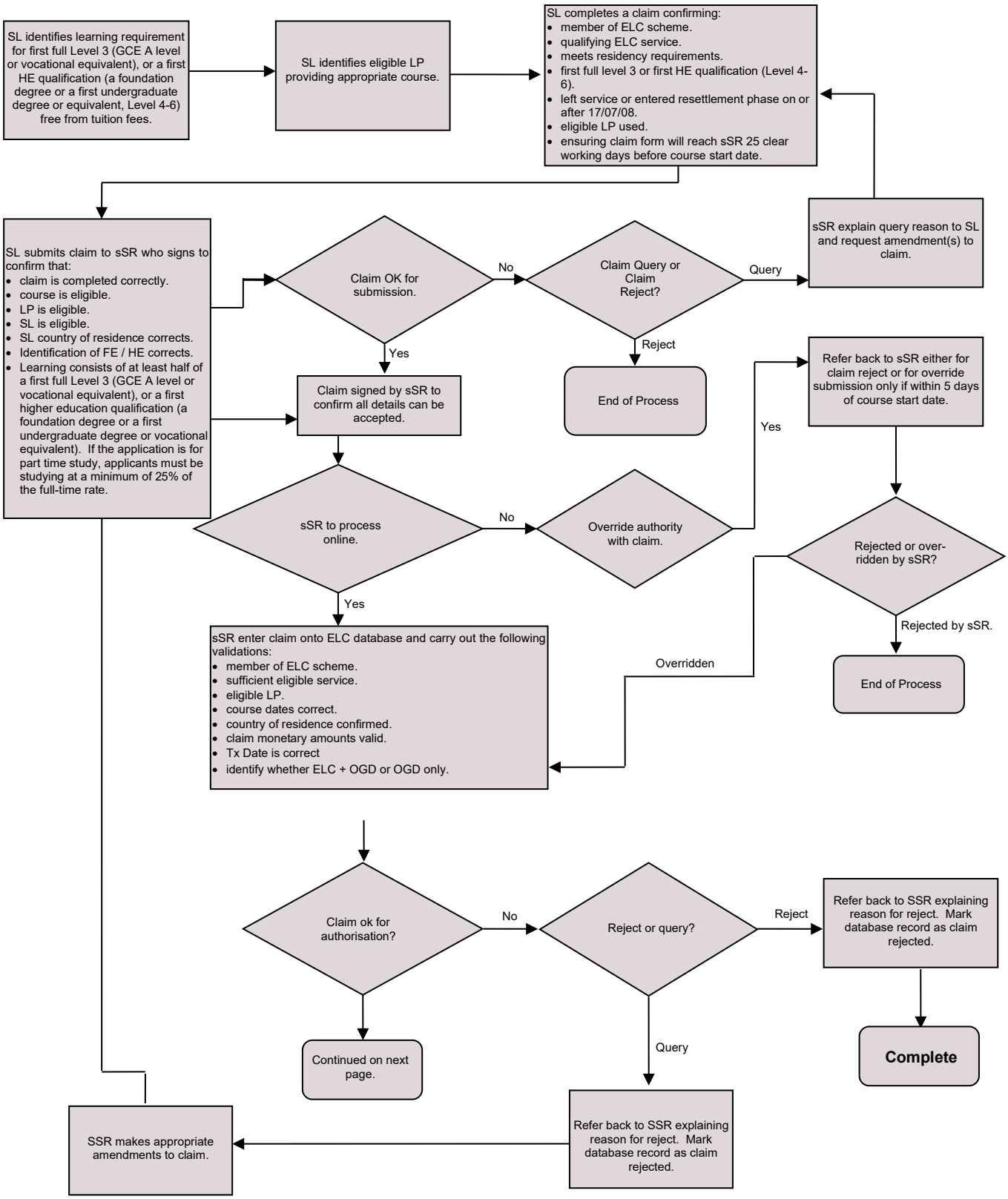
   An example invoice is available from the ELC website.

7. The amount claimed should include VAT or indicate that VAT is not applicable, and should not exceed the value of the CAN.

8. The LP invoice number will be quoted as the bill reference on the remittance sent by MOD.

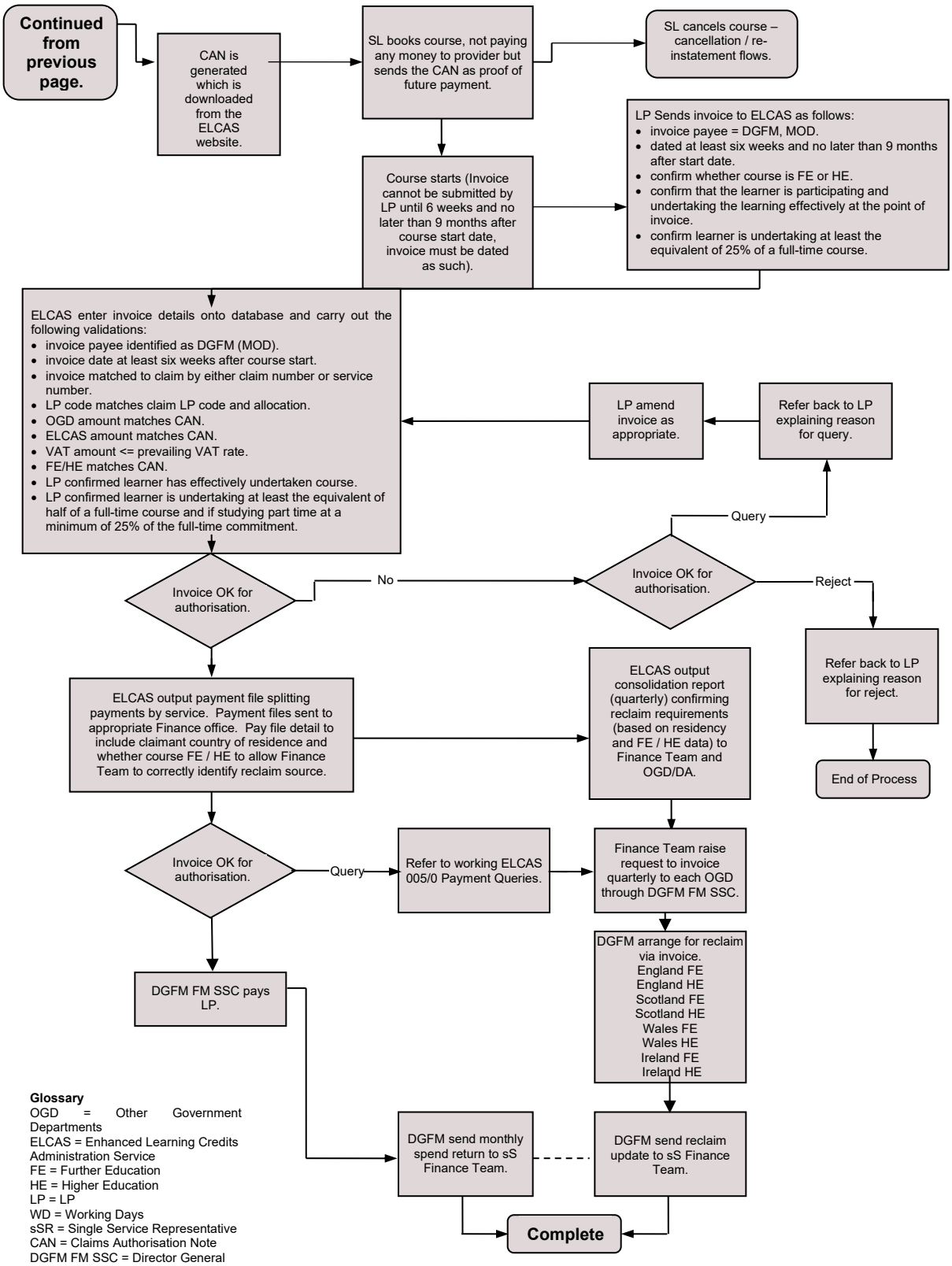
9. Where a SP withdraws from the course before a payment file has been generated to the LP, by ELCAS, then the cancellation process should be followed. Where a SP withdraws from a course after a payment file has been generated to the LP, by ELCAS, the reinstatements process should be followed. Both of these processes are outlined on the ELC website.

PF FE/He Support Scheme Process for SL and LP



Chapter 8: Elective Education

Chapter version 4.0 (NOV 25)



Glossary

OGD = Other Government Departments
ELCAS = Enhanced Learning Credits Administration Service
FE = Further Education
HE = Higher Education
LP = LP
WD = Working Days
sSR = Single Service Representative
CAN = Claims Authorisation Note
DGFM FM SSC = Director General Financial Management Financial Management Shared Service Centre
SL = Service Leaver

6 Document Information

6.1 Document Coverage

This Policy supersedes all previous MOD Policy on Elective Education within Defence.

6.2 Document Information

Filename:	Elective Education Policy
Document ID:	JSP 822, Chapter 8
Owning Function / Team:	Talent, Skills, Learning and Development (TSLD)
Service Owner (1*):	People-TSLD-Hd OF6
Approving Authority:	1* TSLD Training and Education Steering Group (TSLD TESG)

7 Applicability

The policy contained in this Chapter applies to the Whole Force which encompasses Regular and Reserve personnel[64].

The policy in this document does not apply to training deemed 'Informal' or 'On-the-Job.'

Organisational Learning is captured under the Defence Organisational Learning Strategy (DOLS) Framework owned by Joint Warfare in CSOC and is not within the scope of JSP 822.

8 Glossary

The Glossary of Definitions, Terms and Acronyms can be found in JSP822 V8.1 Preface

64 This includes UTCs, and military personnel (Regular & FTRS) that instruct Cadets and CFAVs. This does not include non-military personnel that instruct Cadets and CFAVs.