



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

# **ELECTRONIC RECORDS**

**NB: These documents have been obtained from an electronic record. An original hard-copy version of this record does not exist.**

#### 1.4.2 Protocols of rehabilitation under the MRCA

Last amended

4 April 2023

##### Rehabilitation screening

1. Where a person seeks a payment for impairment or incapacity for work a delegate will consider whether that person should undertake an assessment of capacity to undertake rehabilitation.
2. Where it is considered that such an assessment should be undertaken, a written determination must be made.
3. A person may request an assessment of their capacity for rehabilitation at any time.

##### Rehabilitation assessment

4. Persons who have requested an assessment, or where it has been determined that such an assessment is required, will be referred to a rehabilitation provider for a professional and comprehensive assessment.
5. The rehabilitation assessment is a comprehensive investigation undertaken by a suitably qualified or experienced professional in the field of medical management, psychological and vocational rehabilitation to measure the capacity and needs of the person.
6. The suitably qualified or experienced professional who will perform the rehabilitation assessment is determined by the rehabilitation authority from a list of approved providers.
7. In the event that a dispute arises between a person and the approved provider performing the rehabilitation assessment, the Department will endeavour to resolve the issues. If the issues cannot be resolved, the Department undertakes to use its best endeavours to assign another approved provider to conduct the rehabilitation assessment.
8. Subsection 41(1) of the [MRCA](#) defines that: "***vocational assessment and rehabilitation consists of or includes any one or more of the following:***
  - *assessment of transferable skills;*
  - *functional capacity assessment;*
  - *workplace assessment;*
  - *vocational counselling and training;*
  - *review of medical factors;*
  - *training in resume preparation, job-seeker skills and job placement; and*
  - *the provision of workplace aids and equipment.*"

A vocational assessment will also include an assessment of employability taking into account age, capability, tertiary and other qualifications, and labour market conditions.

9. Vocational training and education is generally provided to return a person to the workforce to at least the level of the person's former employment. If, in order to regain employment, the rehabilitation assessment determines that education or training to a higher level, including tertiary studies, is required to achieve reasonable likelihood of a return to the workforce, and such assistance is considered to be appropriate and cost effective, training or education to that level will be considered.

10. Matters that must be considered when determining the cost effectiveness of further education include:

- the person's rehabilitation goals and the primary focus of their current rehabilitation plan;

- the person's current medical status, previous educational qualifications, employment history, training undertaken through their defence role, and current job opportunities available to them;
- the cost of the training or education, including where applicable HECS - HELP;
- the type of course and the fee structure that applies to that course;
- access to suitable training institutions/courses or opportunities in the person's local area;
- local, regional and state labour market factors and employment opportunities which may impact on the client's future employability;
- the potential to assist the client towards a sustainable return to work and therefore financial self sufficiency and to help reduce future Commonwealth liability for ongoing payment of compensation;
- the client's ability to cope with the pressures and demands of study and the likelihood of them successfully meeting the course requirements;
- the client's commitment to self-manage their study, and if required seek assistance from the university support systems and their rehabilitation provider when needed; and
- the potential to assist the client to achieve the health benefits of being actively engaged in meaningful employment.

Further education will only be supported when the client is undertaking a vocational rehabilitation plan and working towards a return to work goal.

Further information about retraining and further education can be found in [section 9.8](#) [22] of this Guide.

## 6.9 Psychosocial rehabilitation and further education

### **Date published**

Thursday, November 3, 2016

### **Last amended**

19 September 2018

### **Background**

Acquiring new skills or knowledge can be used as a mechanism to assist clients to achieve their psychosocial rehabilitation goals. This can be achieved through a range of education approaches. Often, the link between education and achieving a psychosocial goal is indirect, and as such, identifying an appropriate education activity can be challenging.

The following are examples of when education may be an appropriate activity to include within a client's psychosocial rehabilitation:

- Where the goal revolves around finding an activity to meaningfully occupy the client while they are recovering from a physical injury and/or mental health issues. In this instance, a reasonable and cost effective activity may be to undertake a time limited short course such as art, photography, music or woodwork. Alternatively, it may include a short education or training course in a content area that interests the client, and/or serves to help the client better engage with their community.
- Where undertaking and completing further education is used as a 'first step' achievement in long term recovery. For example, a client who has capacity to participate in further education, but has struggled with re-establishing their identity or self-worth, may benefit from participation in and achievement of a further education qualification. The long term goal may, or may not, include return to work.

### **Further education / training and non-return to work rehabilitation**

Where a person is participating in a non-return to work rehabilitation program, there is scope to consider education and training as a psychosocial activity, where:

- the education/training course is being undertaken for the purposes of achieving a psychosocial goal;
- this goal is consistent with intent of DVA's psychosocial rehabilitation approach, as outlined in [section 6.2](#) <sup>[237]</sup> of this library; and
- where the course meets reasonableness criteria outlined in [section 6.6](#) <sup>[150]</sup> of this library. [Section 9.8](#) <sup>[22]</sup> of this library contains further information about the types of education and training that can be considered through rehabilitation. While Section 9.8 discusses education and training in a vocational context, the general information about training and education options still apply.

### **Key points for rehabilitation coordinators to consider**

- Formal study approved for funding under a psychosocial rehabilitation program will generally be limited to at most Level 5 on the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) <sup>[271]</sup> -

that is, a Diploma level course. Where you believe there is a case for study to be considered beyond this level, contact [rehabilitation@dva.gov.au](mailto:rehabilitation@dva.gov.au) <sup>[37]</sup> for policy advice.

- It is not intended that university level qualifications are funded through rehabilitation to achieve psychosocial goals. This is with acknowledgment that psychosocial interventions are intended to be short term in nature, and that reasonable and cost effective alternatives to university study are likely to exist to achieve a psychosocial goal. See [section 9.8](#) <sup>[22]</sup> of this library for information about alternative education and training options.
- In all circumstances, making a decision about the reasonableness of further education courses to meet the psychosocial goals of individual clients, means careful consideration of all of the 10 criteria listed in [section 6.6](#) <sup>[150]</sup>.

### **Study and non-accepted conditions**

DVA will not fund further education or re-training required due to non-accepted conditions (that is, conditions which DVA does not recognise as being related to the client's ADF service). However, a short course, such as a short TAFE course, adult education or health self-management course could be considered as a psychosocial activity under a whole-of-person rehabilitation plan to help the person to manage the impact of non-accepted conditions and to facilitate their achievement of their rehabilitation goals for their accepted conditions. For more information about psychosocial activities to address non-accepted conditions please refer to [section 6.3](#) <sup>[272]</sup> of this library.

## **9.4 Managing vocational rehabilitation plans**

### **Date published**

Friday, July 8, 2016

### **Last amended**

18 August 2023

### **Rehabilitation plan length**

A client's vocational rehabilitation plan should remain open for as long as DVA is providing support to assist the client to reach their rehabilitation goals. The plan should therefore remain open until:

- all rehabilitation goals have been achieved;
- a return to an optimum level of functioning has been achieved and the client does not require any further support or services; and
- a sustainable return to work has been achieved, and the client has been able to maintain optimum hours/duties for a period of at least 3 months;

Where a client is undertaking tertiary study or retraining courses, their vocational rehabilitation plan should remain open for the whole period of the study. This ensures that the client has access to support from their rehabilitation provider whenever they need it. However, it is important that the Rehabilitation Coordinator and the provider have discussed and agreed:

- how often the provider will make contact with the client;
- how often the provider will supply progress reports; and/or
- the level of funding that will be allocated for case management activities.

It is important that a flexible approach is applied, and that these arrangements can be varied if the client's needs change.



## 9.8 Retraining and further education

- [Log in](#) <sup>[1]</sup> to post comments

**Last amended**

12 April 2023

**Overview**

A key component of the vocational aspect of a rehabilitation plan is to provide appropriate assistance to enable the client to secure suitable and sustainable employment in a civilian setting. More information regarding **suitable work** can be found in [section 9.2](#) <sup>[2]</sup> of this library. For injured workers, upskilling or re-training through formal education and training can be important for securing meaningful employment at a reasonable level of income and job security. For more information about what constitutes 'good' work, visit the [Health Benefits of Good Work](#) <sup>[3]</sup> webpage.

Where a comprehensive **vocational assessment** determines that further training and/or education is needed for a client to be able to return to the workforce in suitable and sustainable employment, then this must be considered. This approach applies equally to all DVA clients, regardless of the rank achieved during their employment in the ADF or the length of time which has passed since they have served in the ADF. For more information about what should be included in a vocational assessment, please see [section 9.5](#) <sup>[4]</sup> of this library.

### **Further education and training options:**

There are many further education and training options which can assist with improving a person's employment prospects, including:

- on-the-job training;
  - For instance, work based, on-the-job training may be gained through participating in [work trials](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, or gaining employment through the [Employer Incentive Scheme](#) <sup>[6]</sup>.
- short courses;
  - For instance, forklift training, Workplace Health and Safety training, first aid, or training in software applications such as MYOB. This may or may not be a course that falls within scope of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

- a combination of on-the-job training and short-term courses, which could include apprenticeships;
  - secondary education, where the course of study is either an accredited secondary or a preparatory course. This is considered ‘study’ for the purpose of this policy;
  - tertiary education\* courses within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
    - Training within the AQF includes Certificate level (Certificate I-IV), Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas/Associate Degrees, Bachelor-level degrees, Graduate Certificates/Diplomas, and other post graduate qualifications. This is considered ‘study’ for the purpose of this policy;
    - Institutions offering these courses include:
      - Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges;
      - Higher education institutions (eg, university); and
      - Accredited Registered Training Organisations (RTO).
- \* More information about tertiary education can be found in [Section 9.8.1](#) [7] of this library.

### **Positive impacts of vocational training and education\*:**

- *Harness existing motivation:* Where clients are highly motivated to undertake vocational training, research indicates that they are more likely to make a successful return to work once they undertake their desired course of training\*\*.
- *Transferable skills:* A course of vocational education or training can equip a client with transferrable skills and empower rehabilitation clients, giving them the confidence to pursue a new career without reliance on DVA for longer term ongoing support.
- *Job security:* Nationally recognised qualifications can provide a person with job security within the labour market generally. Even if they choose to cease employment with one employer, their qualifications and experience can be transferrable to other employers.
- *Time to adjust to new circumstances:* A period of retraining also provides rehabilitation clients with time to adjust to and learn to manage new circumstances, prior to commencing ongoing employment. For example, participating in retraining may help a person to identify triggers that make them feel anxious or angry. This can inform activities as part of rehabilitation plan designed to help a client to address and manage these triggers more effectively.
- *Psychosocial benefits:* DVA recognises the positive benefits that can be gained through participating long-term training like vocational training and education. These may include for example, building social connections, positive work habits and confidence. In some cases, it may be appropriate, given a client’s unique circumstances, to consider participation in study where a person is not participating in a rehabilitation plan with the explicit goal of returning to employment in the short term. Further information about study as part of a psychosocial rehabilitation activity can be found in [section 6.9](#) [8] of this library.

\* DVA acknowledges the positive impacts of vocational training and education, but notes the funding of such activities under a DVA rehabilitation program is subject to meeting other

eligibility requirements.

*\*\* Situations may arise where education is requested for DVA funding that is outside the scope of what DVA will support. In these circumstances, Rehabilitation Providers are expected to manage the client's expectations by understanding and communicating what can reasonably be considered for funding through DVA.*

## 9.8.1 Tertiary education

### Date published

Friday, July 8, 2016

- [Log in](#) [9] to post comments

### Last amended

12 April 2023

### Overview

The intent behind supporting tertiary education is that a client will be provided with appropriate assistance to help them to achieve suitable and sustainable employment within their local labour market. To achieve this, it may be appropriate and necessary for DVA to support a client to undertake tertiary education. DVA has a responsibility to consider the cost-effectiveness of the wide range of educational options that are available to individual clients.

- Tertiary education within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) includes;
- Certificate level courses (Certificate I-IV);
- Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas/Associate Degrees;
- Bachelor-level degrees, Graduate Certificates/ Diplomas, and other post graduate qualifications.

Institutions offering these courses include Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, Universities, and accredited Registered Training Organisation's (RTOs). [My Skills](#) [10] is a government training directory that can assist you to identify accredited training providers.

*Note:* The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. For further information about AQF, please visit their [website](#) [11].

### What is tertiary education?

Tertiary education includes the following qualifications from the Australian Quality Framework (AQF):

AQF Level and equivalent qualification	Category of qualification	Considered for funding by DVA?*
Level 1 – Certificate I	Registered Training Organisations	Yes
Level 2 – Certificate II	Registered Training Organisations	Yes

<b>AQF Level and equivalent qualification</b>	<b>Category of qualification</b>	<b>Considered for funding by DVA?*</b>
Level 3 – Certificate III	Registered Training Organisations	Yes
Level 4 – Certificate IV	Registered Training Organisations	Yes
Level 5 – Diploma*	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Yes
Level 6 – Advanced Diploma*, Associate Degree	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Yes
Level 7 – Bachelor Degree	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Yes
Level 8 – Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate*, Graduate Diploma*	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Not typically considered
Level 9 – Masters Degree	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Not typically considered
Level 10 – Doctoral Degree	Higher Education/ University Qualification	Not typically considered

\*NOTE: These qualifications can also be obtained through Registered Training Organisations

As the AQF levels increase from 1-10, so does the complexity associated with the qualification. There are distinct differences in the expected learning outcomes and requirements of subsequent levels. Given the range of further education options at lower levels, higher level qualifications should attract a greater degree of scrutiny from Rehabilitation Coordinators.

Generally, DVA will only fund a university qualification up to the Bachelor Degree level. In this instance, funding would be considered where:

- it is the first Bachelor degree a person has undertaken; and
  - it will be undertaken as a Commonwealth Supported place at an Australian University.
- Qualifications listed in level 8 – 10 of the AQF are not typically in scope of what can funded by DVA, as a client with an existing education at Bachelor Degree level is considered to be competitive within the civilian employment sector. Refer to Section 9.8.1.1 of this library for frequently asked questions about tertiary education.

All decisions about tertiary education must be based on, but not limited to, evidence from a comprehensive vocational assessment. Where a client is receiving incapacity payments from DVA and is fully participating in an education and/or training course approved under their rehabilitation program, then they will continue to receive these payments. However, if a

client fails to meet their rehabilitation obligations, then the usual processes for considering [suspension of compensation payments](#) [12] must be used.

### **Can a client appeal study related decisions made by DVA?**

Yes. If having considered all relevant evidence and having made a determination regarding the rehabilitation program that study is not an appropriate activity to fund, the client may seek this determination to be reviewed.

Where a rehabilitation delegate requires advice about the appropriateness of a request, they should discuss this with their team leader, who can contact [Rehabilitation@dva.gov.au](mailto:Rehabilitation@dva.gov.au) [13] where further guidance is required.

### **Key Considerations for rehabilitation coordinators**

- Tertiary education funded under a rehabilitation program should be informed by a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation assessment, to ensure the course of study is appropriate for the client, and is likely to lead to a suitable and sustainable employment outcome. See [section 9.5](#) [4] of this library for further information on vocational assessments.
- Funding for a university level qualification should only be considered where a person has already demonstrated an ability to successfully manage study. This can be demonstrated through successfully undertaking formal study at a lower level.
- Generally, DVA will only fund a university qualification up to the Bachelor Degree level. In this instance consideration will be granted where it is the first Bachelor degree a person has undertaken **and** it will be undertaken as a Commonwealth Supported place at an Australian University. Where you have identified a case that sits outside of these criterion and warrants further consideration, please contact [rehabilitation@dva.gov.au](mailto:rehabilitation@dva.gov.au) [14]
- DVA Rehabilitation Coordinators must also use the tertiary education policy guidelines to guide their decision making and approval process - See [section 9.8.3](#) [15] of this library for further information.

## **9.8.2 Additional considerations where tertiary education has been approved by the ADF**

- [Log in](#) [16] to post comments

**Last amended**

30 August 2018

This section provides information relevant only to those who have had tertiary education assistance approved for funding by the ADF, and where the course of study has continued after separating from the ADF. The intent of this information is to outline *additional* considerations for this specific cohort of veterans, further to those outlined in [section 9.8.1](#) [7] of this library.

Like all other tertiary education requests for DVA clients, decisions for separating or recently separating members must be underpinned by evidence. In addition to the eligibility criteria

outlined in Section 9.8.1 of this library, below are further sources of evidence that should be taken into consideration when determining eligibility for tertiary education funding for this cohort:

- **Tertiary education as a component of ADF training**

Where an ADF member was enrolled to complete full time undergraduate tertiary studies or tertiary equivalent courses as part of their ADF training, it can be taken as given that a judgement had already been made that the person had the capacity to undertake the course, and that it was an appropriate option for them, given their skills, interests, experience and educational background.

In this scenario, if the client's expected career path is interrupted by a service related injury or illness, which leads to their medical separation from the ADF, then support with funding for tertiary studies must be considered for approval. This applies regardless of whether the client had actually commenced their tertiary studies prior to their discharge from the ADF, or is requesting support to continue with studies that they had already started. If a Rehabilitation Coordinator has concerns about the client's ability to successfully complete their studies because of medical restrictions as a result of their service injury or illness, then they must discuss this with the client's treating health professional and if appropriate, their ADFRP Rehabilitation Consultant, and use this information to inform their determination.

- **Tertiary education as a component of an Australian Defence Force Rehabilitation Program**

In some instances, ADF members may have received support for tertiary studies as part of an extended transition process, or vocational rehabilitation activities delivered through the ADFRP or the Rehabilitation for Reservists Program. It is important that ADF members understand that in this instance, support for tertiary studies is not automatic once DVA becomes the person's rehabilitation authority. This applies even if the person had already started their course prior to their separation from the ADF. This is because DVA's usual process for considering tertiary study includes the need for a comprehensive vocational assessment to be undertaken. This vocational assessment is always used to guide decision making about whether tertiary education is likely to lead to suitable and sustainable employment outcomes in a civilian setting.

This approach is particularly relevant, where a person has existing qualifications which are highly transferrable to a civilian setting, and would enable them to earn at a similar salary level to their ADF role, but requests assistance with upgrading these qualifications. The key issue that must be considered is whether the further study will enable the person to find and sustain ongoing meaningful employment. An example would be a recently separated member who has nursing qualifications, but wishes to undertake further study to enable them to work as a paramedic. In this case, a labour market analysis will be essential to guide decision making. If this analysis shows that there will be better opportunities for the person to be able to find secure and sustainable employment as a paramedic in their local or neighbouring labour market, then it may be considered reasonable to approve this additional study. Before a determination is made to approve this study, it will also be essential to gain medical evidence that the person will be able to meet the ongoing physical and emotional demands of

ongoing employment as a paramedic.

- **Other documentary information collected by the ADF**

It is important that any information collected while the client was still a serving ADF member, to inform decisions about tertiary education, is requested by the DVA Rehabilitation Coordinator and considered when making a decision about the appropriateness of continuing to fund tertiary education.

If a Rehabilitation Coordinator is not satisfied that a detailed vocational rehabilitation assessment, including a labour market analysis, was completed prior to the member's separation from the ADF, they must consider the points in step one, outlined in [section 9.8.3](#) <sup>[15]</sup> of this chapter, to inform their decision about whether to continue funding the client's chosen course.

If a client has already commenced their study, they must also submit a copy of their academic record to the Rehabilitation Coordinator help inform the determination process. This will assist the Rehabilitation Coordinator to be satisfied as to whether the client has successfully met all of their course requirements.

All clients must provide a statement outlining their reasons for requesting assistance with tertiary education and sign the tertiary education assistance agreement before funding for their course can be released. This applies regardless of whether the client has already commenced their course. Please refer to steps two and three in [section 9.8.3](#) <sup>[15]</sup> of this chapter, for further information.

Any information received that is relevant to the client's tertiary studies request, must be uploaded as an attachment to the client's ISH case. Rehabilitation Coordinators are encouraged to contact [rehabilitation@dva.gov.au](mailto:rehabilitation@dva.gov.au) <sup>[14]</sup> for policy advice if they have any concerns about continuing to support study programs already being undertaken by separating ADF members. Any policy advice received must be uploaded as an attachment to the client's R&C ISH case.

## 9.8.3 Steps for approving tertiary education

### **Date published**

Monday, January 16, 2017

### **Last amended**

Monday, October 23, 2023

### **Overview**

To ensure all relevant information is captured and considered when approving funding for tertiary education under a vocational rehabilitation program, the following steps need to be followed. Note, tertiary education is defined in [section 9.8](#) <sup>[17]</sup> of this library.

Step 1: Vocational assessment

Step 2: Supplementary evidence and client statement submitted

Step 3: Consider the evidence and approve where appropriate

Step 4: All parties sign the D9303 Vocational Education and Training Application Form

Step 5: Ongoing management of a client of undertaking tertiary study

Further detail is provided below and is intended as a resource for both DVA rehabilitation coordinators and rehabilitation providers.

### **Step 1: Vocational assessment**

A comprehensive vocational assessment should provide the evidence to determine whether tertiary education is reasonably required for the client to find suitable and sustainable work. The vocational assessment must take into account all of the considerations outlined in [section 9.5](#) <sup>[4]</sup> of this library. Even where a client expresses a strong preference to pursue a specific education pathway, it is expected that the vocational assessment will provide objective recommendations for achieving suitable and sustainable employment.

### **Step 2: Supplementary evidence and client statement submitted**

Where tertiary education has been recommended through a comprehensive vocational assessment, and approval for the course of study is being pursued under a vocational rehabilitation program, the following should be made available to the rehabilitation coordinator to assist with their decision making:

#### **Supplementary evidence**

- evidence to demonstrate the course of study is a reasonable option to enable a client to achieve suitable and sustainable work. Where a higher education course is being recommended, there should be specific and justifiable reasons why this qualification is required, over alternative options noted in [section 9.8.2](#) <sup>[18]</sup> of this library;
- medical advice that tertiary study is an appropriate option for the client, and that they have the medical capacity to undertake work, for which the course is preparing them, at the conclusion of studying. In most cases, it is expected that medical evidence is sourced from the client's treating health practitioner or specialist. In some cases however, particularly where conflicting evidence exists, advice of an Occupational Physician can be helpful;
- evidence that the client's capacity for study has been duly considered. This includes:
  - the client's aptitude for, and ability to commit to, the proposed course of study;
  - the client's capacity to manage both the contact and expected non-contact hours required to successfully complete units;
  - the client's capacity to manage any required training or placements related to the proposed course with consideration of their other life commitments; and
  - the mode of study that is most appropriate for the client (i.e. face-to-face, or distance education delivered online);
- Other considerations that may be indicative of a person's capacity for study includes:
  - the level or number of hours of study that is recommended due to the client's health conditions;
  - if there is a discrepancy between capacity for work and capacity for study, a detailed explanation and justification of this discrepancy is required; and
  - any suggestions that the practitioner believes may assist the client in being successful in undertaking study.

Where a client has had tertiary education approved by the ADF, and this course of study will continue post separation from the ADF there are further considerations that must be taken into account before this study will be supported through DVA. Please see [section 9.8.4](#) <sup>[19]</sup> of this library for further information.

If a rehabilitation coordinator is not satisfied with, or queries the medical evidence provided, the appropriate course of action depends on the circumstances of the case. However, some options for rehabilitation coordinators include:

- seeking advice from a relevant Departmental Medical Advisor;
- requesting a supplementary report from the treating practitioner;
- participating in a case conference with the rehabilitation provider and treating practitioner and/or other parties as required.

For cases which commenced after 29 May 2017, vocational assessments and medical evidence should be uploaded as an attachment to the client's R&C ISH case. For cases that commenced prior to this date, this evidence should be saved to the client's TRIM folder.

### **Client Statement**

A client statement in support of their application for tertiary education is required and must demonstrate the client's:

- understanding of the requirements of the course (including the number of contact hours, additional study hours to complete course requirements, work placements etc)
- awareness of and expectations of their ability to meet the course requirements within the context of managing competing demands on their time (such as regular appointments or child care commitments;
- anticipated plan to balance competing demands while meeting the requirements of the course (NB: The rehabilitation provider can assist clients to investigate options for managing their time/competing demands identified in the client statement).

### **Step 3: Consider the evidence and approve where appropriate**

After considering the evidence provided through the Vocational Assessment (step 1) and the supplementary evidence/ client statement (step 2) the rehabilitation coordinator should have enough information to make a decision about whether further education can be approved as an activity funded through the clients vocational rehabilitation plan.

- Rehabilitation coordinators should complete the *D9303 Vocational Education and Training Application Form*, which is available on the [DVA forms portal](#) [20]. This application form ensures all relevant policy requirements have been considered. Where further education has been approved as part of a rehabilitation program, the completed D9303 form should be uploaded to R&C ISH.

Where further education is not approved, the reason why it was not considered an appropriate activity to fund through DVA rehabilitation should be communicated to the rehabilitation provider and documented. Where appropriate, alternative options should also be communicated.

### **Step 4: All parties sign the D9303 Vocational Education and Training Application Form**

This step becomes applicable once further education has been approved as an activity on a client's rehabilitation program.

- A D9303 Vocational Education and Training Application Form must be signed by the client, the rehabilitation provider, and the rehabilitation coordinator. This form is available on the [DVA forms portal](#) [21].

The purpose of this form is to:

- outline the specifics of the course the client will be undertaking; and
- explain the roles and responsibilities of the client, rehabilitation provider and rehabilitation coordinator for the duration of study.

It is important that all parties are familiar with, understand, and as evidence of this understanding, can explain their obligations as outlined in the document. By signing and submitting this form each party acknowledges that they have agreed to meet these expectations throughout the course of study.

For new cases after 29 May 2017 once the agreement is signed, the agreement must be uploaded as an attachment to the client's R&C ISH case. For existing cases, the agreement must be saved to the client's TRIM folder.

### **Step 5: Ongoing management of a client undertaking study**

All clients undertaking further education as an approved activity under a return to work rehabilitation plan should have an open rehabilitation plan throughout the study period, identifying a clear return to work goal. This is necessary as the plan provides the administrative mechanism for the education fees to be paid.

The plan must be managed by an approved rehabilitation provider, with the skills and experience to provide support and assist the client in a proactive way throughout the course of study. The rehabilitation plan must remain open for the duration of the course, and for any additional period required for job seeking at the conclusion of the plan.

It is important that the rehabilitation provider works with the client throughout the course of study to identify, explore and address barriers that may prevent the client from successfully completing their studies. Where appropriate, psychosocial rehabilitation activities may be put in place to help address these barriers. For example, it may be appropriate to include psychosocial activities, such as [pain management or adjustment to disability counselling](#) [22] in the client's rehabilitation plan if these issues are creating barriers to the client achieving their study goals. A pro-active approach must be taken to assist the client and respond to their current needs and circumstances. Rehabilitation providers are expected to keep in touch with the client's DVA rehabilitation coordinator about the client's progress in their course.

Further information about the payment of education and training fees can be found in [section 9.8.4](#) [19] of this library.

### **Tags**

- [tertiary study](#) [23]

## 9.8.4 Payment of tertiary education and training course fees

- [Log in](#) [24] to post comments

### Last amended

7 February 2022

### Background

It is preferred that education and training approved as part of a DVA rehabilitation program are undertaken through an institution which enables access to Commonwealth assistance for the course of study.

Commonwealth assistance is provided through the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). HELP is an Australian Government loan program to help eligible students pay their student contributions (HECS-HELP); tuition fees (FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans); and/or student services and amenities fees (SA-HELP). These loans are repaid through the Australian tax system. If the request for tertiary education is approved by DVA, the student contribution, tuition fee, and/or student services and amenities fee will be the amount DVA contributes.

### How is education and training funded by DVA?

There are two methods in which an amount owed by DVA for a client's approved education and/or training can be paid. In both circumstances, the costs of the course fees needs to be included as a third party cost to a rehabilitation plan in ISH.

<b>Option 1:</b> Payment made <i>up front</i> for the study period	Payment for each unit of study is made " <i>up front</i> " before the client has completed the relevant unit/s of study.  Where DVA has already paid for a unit of study which the client has subsequently failed, or withdrawn from, by the census date, DVA has the discretion to not pay for further units the client enrolls in.
<b>Option 2:</b> Payment made at <i>completion</i> of study period	Payment for a unit of study is made once the client successfully <i>completes</i> each unit of study. This option allows Commonwealth assistance to be accessed so the client is not out of pocket for course fees.

Regardless of the option pursued, the following steps should be followed:

- Clients need to provide their academic transcript to their rehabilitation provider for forwarding to DVA as soon as it is received at the end of each study period (eg: semester or trimester). Note: a client's ability to maintain a pass standard for their units of study may affect whether DVA will continue to fund their studies.
- Rehabilitation providers should upload the transcript to R&C ISH through the Provider Upload Portal. DVA's rehabilitation delegates can provide rehabilitation providers with information about how to upload to R&C ISH and the Transaction Reference Number (TRN) to be used for the individual client.
- When a client's study is approved, the determination (together with detailed case notes) must be recorded in the client's R&C ISH case. Any relevant documentation about the decision should be uploaded as an attachment in R&C ISH.

## **Under what circumstances will DVA pay for course fees?**

Where DVA is funding study for a client, it is expected that clients will successfully complete the course requirements and achieve a pass grade or above for each subject, in each study period they are undertaking.

DVA will not fund failed, incomplete, deferred, withdrawn or repeated units without considering evidence which justifies why funding should continue. More information on this can be found in the section below titled 'Managing failed or repeated units of study'.

## **Can DVA fund study that a person is already undertaking?**

If a client has commenced a course prior to approval, being sought or given as part of a rehabilitation program, retrospective payment of the course fees cannot be considered.

If seeking funding support for the remaining elements of their study, the client is required to complete an application for support of their study, as per other DVA rehabilitation clients. Steps outlined in [section 9.8.3](#) [15] of this library must be considered as part of the process of ensuring this study is an appropriate option for the client. Course fees can only be considered for funding once this process has taken place.

For more information about a client and rehabilitation providers obligations when participating in study funded through DVA, please see the *D9303 Tertiary Education Assistance Agreement Form* signed by and agreed to by the client prior to commencing their course of study. This form is available on the [DVA forms portal](#) [21].

## **Managing failed or repeated units of study**

Where clients are experiencing difficulties with their studies, they are expected to:

- Take full advantage of support services offered through their study institution. This may include, though is not necessarily limited to:
  - Academic support services – services such as tutoring, extensions on assignments, re-sitting exams etc.
  - Administrative support – assistance to enrol in units, withdrawing from units before the census date, appealing failed units etc.
  - Disability support services - providing services like disability parking stickers and organising a scribe for an exam.
  - Child support services – some institutions offer child care for students and these options should be investigated where the client has child care responsibilities.
- Notify their rehabilitation provider as soon as possible of any circumstances which may impact their ability to successfully complete their studies.

Clients are expected to take a proactive approach in managing any challenges that arise which may impact their ability to meet the requirements of their course of study. For example seeking extensions for assessment due dates, withdrawal prior to the university census date, or other alternatives in order to avoid failing a unit could be pursued by the client.

Where a client is showing signs that they are struggling to successfully complete their course requirements, it is expected that the rehabilitation provider will also be proactive in assisting the client to put strategies in place to address these issues. Rehabilitation providers have a

responsibility to be aware of the student support services offered by the university at which the client is studying and ensure the client is accessing these as required.

If a client fails a unit, does not complete a unit, needs to defer a unit, or withdraws after the census date, this does not mean that DVA will immediately cease supporting the client's study. DVA will consider any unexpected or extenuating circumstances that may have impacted on a person's ability to successfully meet course requirements, as well as the efforts made to seek support or negotiate options through student support services offered by the education institutions, and the client's rehabilitation provider.

If a client fails or withdraws from a unit, they will be expected to:

- research their institution's appeal policy to explore the possibility of re-sitting an exam, completing a supplementary assessment or having the fail grade amended to a withdrawal (if they failed);
- liaise with their institution to understand the academic implications of the fail or withdrawal on their ability to continue with their course; and
- explore the university support services available for use in the future.

If no unexpected situations have arisen and the client has not shown a clear commitment to meeting the course requirements or seeking additional support, the rehabilitation coordinator has the discretion to decide that DVA will no longer provide funding for the course of study. It is the role of the DVA rehabilitation coordinator, and not the rehabilitation provider, to inform the client of any decisions regarding cessation of support for their studies.

As a general rule, DVA will only accept two failed subjects before ceasing to support a client's ongoing study. If a client fails or withdraws from a second unit after the census date in any subsequent study period, DVA will consider evidence from the client's rehabilitation provider before making a determination. It is important to note that DVA is under no obligation to continue to support the client's education however, the circumstances of each case are different and this must be managed on a case-by-case basis.

## 9.8.5 Tertiary education resources

### Last amended

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

The following resources may be useful to assist clients, rehabilitation providers and DVA Rehabilitation Delegates with the consideration of tertiary studies within vocational rehabilitation.

## Education

The **Higher Education** topic on the Study Australia website provides you with relevant links to other government information.

[Universities and Higher Education \(studyaustralia.gov.au\)](https://studyaustralia.gov.au) [25]

The **Higher Education** topic on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website provides you with information about study for students, providers and professionals.

<https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education> [26]

**Course Seeker** is a joint initiative between the Australian Government and the Tertiary Admission Centres. This website enables you to search and compare courses from different institutions across Australia. Information filters include: admission criteria, course duration, location, study mode, qualification levels, study and institution types.  
<https://courseseeker.edu.au/> [27]

**My Skills** is a national directory of vocational education and training (VET) organisations and courses. It is an Australian Government initiative to enable you to search for, and compare, VET courses and training providers.  
<https://www.myskills.gov.au/> [10]

## Jobs – skills and qualifications required

The **Prime Minister’s Veterans’ Employment Program** links employers and veterans to resources and advice, through attendance at transition seminars, the Program website and social media. Resources, including a list of organisations that have signed the Veterans’ Employment Commitment, a toolkit for transitioning members seeking employment and links to programs providing employment support are provided.  
<https://www.veteransemployment.gov.au/> [28]

**Job Outlook** is an Australian Government website that provides you with careers and labour market research information.  
<https://joboutlook.gov.au/> [29]

The **Jobs Hub** topic on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website provides you with tools to explore available job opportunities by location and can also help you identify the required skills for different jobs.  
<https://www.dese.gov.au/jobs-hub> [30]

The **Your Career** website provides you with tools, including a quiz to find study, training or job options that support your career needs or goals.  
<https://yourcareer.gov.au/> [31]

### Tags

- [vocational rehabilitation](#) [32]
- [tertiary education](#) [33]

## 9.8.6 Entitlements during retraining/further education

- [Log in](#) [34] to post comments

**Last amended**

29 August 2023

**Incapacity Payments**

During a period of retraining which is approved under a rehabilitation plan, and provided the client is fully participating in their retraining, their incapacity entitlements should continue to be calculated on the same basis as if they were not working.

From 1 November 2018 to 30 June 2023, a client undertaking approved full-time study as part of their rehabilitation program may have been eligible to receive incapacity payments at a rate of 100% of their normal earnings. Historical information about the pilot can be found in [chapter 16](#) <sup>[35]</sup> of this library.

### **Payment of mandatory course fees**

Where a client has met their obligations as part of their approved study, DVA will fund all fees required as part of that approved course of study. This includes for example, student contribution or tuition fees (where Commonwealth assistance is being accessed), student services or amenities fees, apprenticeship course fees, and other fees such as administration or examination fees.

Please note, this does not include non-mandatory or penalty fees. Examples of these include:

- fees for joining a professional body that is associated with the course of study, though not a mandatory requirement;
- penalty fees associated with late library returns, or replacing lost or damaged equipment;
- funding permits to enable the client to park their vehicle at the educational institution.

Where a further education course was approved after 29 May 2017, course fees need to be included as a third party costs to a rehabilitation plan in R&C ISH. Refer to [section 9.8.4 of this chapter](#) <sup>[19]</sup> for specific information about paying education course fees.

### **Necessary aids and appliances**

Aids and appliances may be provided where these items are reasonably required (as a result of a service related injury/ies) to assist a client to safely undertake an approved course of study. The policy guidelines on the provision of aids and appliances can be found in [chapter 10 of the Rehabilitation Policy Library](#) <sup>[36]</sup>.

### **Incidentals allowance**

Clients undertaking study approved as part of their rehabilitation can access an incidentals allowance, to assist with funding the cost of incidentals that may be required as part of their study. Provision of receipts is not required for the incidentals allowance to be paid but payment of the allowance needs to be added as a case note to the client's R&C ISH case.

An incidentals allowance at the following rate is payable to clients:

- \$500 per annum for clients undertaking a course of part time study recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); or
- \$1000 per annum for clients undertaking a course of full time study recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); or
- For clients undertaking secondary education, where the course of study is either an accredited senior secondary certificate of education (or equivalent) or a preparatory course

for the purpose of enrolling in a related award course, incidentals allowance is payable at the following rate:

- \$500 per annum for relevant study undertaken part time
- \$1000 per annum for relevant study undertaken full time

The incidentals allowance must be paid in equal instalments at the commencement of each study period. The client's status as either a full-time or part-time student shall be determined by reference to the definitions of full-time and part-time used by the institution at which they are enrolled. The table below provides more information about how the amount of incidentals allowance can be calculated for eligible clients:

Qualification Type	AQF Level	Calculating the incidentals allowance payable
Accredited senior secondary certificate of education (or equivalent)  Relevant preparatory course  Certificate I* Certificate II* Certificate III* Certificate IV* Diploma* Advanced Diploma* Associate Degree* Bachelor Degree*  <i>*not undertaken as part of an apprenticeship</i>	Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 ≥Level 5	<b><u>FULL TIME STUDY LOAD</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where <b>two semesters</b> will be undertaken in a calendar year:  <math>\\$1000 / 2 \text{ semesters} = \\$500 \text{ per semester}</math></li> <li>Where <b>three semesters</b> are undertaken in a calendar year:  <math>\\$1000 / 3 \text{ semesters} = \\$333 \text{ per semester}</math></li> <li>Where the course is undertaken over a discrete <b>number of weeks</b>  <math>\\$1000 / 52 \text{ weeks p.a.} \times \text{number of weeks} = \text{allowance payable}</math></li> <li>Where the course is undertaken over a discrete <b>number of days</b>  <math>\\$1000 / 365 \text{ days p.a.} \times \text{number of days} = \text{allowance payable}</math></li> </ul>
Accredited senior secondary certificate of education (or equivalent)  Relevant preparatory course  Certificate I* Certificate II* Certificate III* Certificate IV* Diploma* Advanced Diploma* Associate Degree* Bachelor Degree*  <i>*not undertaken as part of an apprenticeship</i>	Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 ≥Level 5	<b><u>PART TIME STUDY LOAD</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where <b>two semesters</b> will be undertaken in a calendar year:  <math>\\$500 / 2 \text{ semesters} = \\$250 \text{ per semester}</math></li> <li>Where <b>three semesters</b> are undertaken in a calendar year:  <math>\\$500 / 3 \text{ semesters} = \\$167 \text{ per semester}</math></li> <li>Where the course is undertaken over a discrete <b>number of weeks</b>  <math>\\$500 / 52 \text{ weeks p.a.} \times \text{number of weeks} = \text{allowance payable}</math></li> <li>Where the course is undertaken over a discrete <b>number of days</b>  <math>\\$500 / 365 \text{ days p.a.} \times \text{number of days} = \text{allowance payable}</math></li> </ul>
Certificate II* Certificate III* Certificate IV* Diploma* Advanced Diploma*	Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Level 5 Level 6	<b><u>APPRENTICESHIP</u></b>  Where a person is undertaking study as part of an apprenticeship, they can access \$1000 per annum of incidentals allowance. This allowance is intended to go towards the cost of any tools or equipment required as part of their apprenticeship.

Qualification Type	AQF Level	Calculating the incidentals allowance payable
<i>* undertaken as part of an apprenticeship</i>		

## 9.8.7 Special Rate Disability Pension and further education

- [Log in](#) <sup>[37]</sup> to post comments

### **Last amended**

16 January 2017

Please refer to [section 2.6 of the Rehabilitation Policy Library](#) <sup>[38]</sup> for detailed information about eligibility for Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP).

There may be instances where a person who is eligible for SRDP requests assistance with undertaking tertiary studies and provides medical evidence from their treating health professional supporting their request, on the basis that the study will promote their wellbeing. However, as a general rule, funding for tertiary studies should not be provided under a psychosocial rehabilitation plan. This is because generally, study is regarded as an activity which will assist a person to pursue a vocational rehabilitation goal of securing suitable and sustainable employment. Implicit in this is that a person seeking assistance under a vocational rehabilitation plan has the capacity to undertake remunerative work of more than 10 hours per week, or is likely to develop that capacity over time.

Therefore, if the treating health professional of a person who is receiving SRDP recommends that they pursue tertiary studies, but states that they remain totally incapacitated for work, then the person will not receive any financial assistance towards their studies and will need to meet all of these costs themselves. In this scenario the person would remain SRDP eligible, based on evidence from the treating health professional.

The desire to undertake tertiary study does not necessarily indicate that a person who is SRDP eligible has the ability to undertake remunerative work. However, if the person has been assessed by a Rehabilitation Provider as having the ability to undertake tertiary studies, then this may be indicative of an ability to undertake remunerative work. The person's ability to undertake remunerative work of more than 10 hours per week should therefore be assessed by the Rehabilitation Provider as well, in order to confirm whether the person continues to be eligible for SRDP.

## 9.8.8 Vocational Rehabilitation Case Studies

### **Date published**

Monday, January 16, 2017

- [Log in](#) <sup>[39]</sup> to post comments

### **Case study 1**

A Leading Aircraftman Supplier with six year service in the Supplier mustering has transferrable skills in stores work. The former member's ability to utilise those skills is limited by a chronic knee injury suffered while playing inter-service rugby. The former member then undertook a Certificate IV in Warehousing and Logistics. With some recognition of prior learning this course took six months to complete. At the end of the course the former member obtained employment as the Assistant Manager of a warehouse for a major food retailer.

## **Case study 2**

A former SAS soldier, with an accepted back injury, had transferrable skills that would enable him to pursue a range of employment options in the Security industry. However the former soldier also had the aptitude and interest to work in the Information Technology (IT) industry. Prior to joining the SAS he had worked as an IT Project Manager. He was very keen to pursue a 4-year undergraduate degree. A comprehensive labour market analysis was undertaken by the rehabilitation service provider in consultation with the client. It was agreed that given the nature of the client's back injury, his employment and earning capacity was suited to pursuing employment in the IT industry.

The labour market analysis included a comprehensive investigation of available training options, and it was subsequently agreed that the client should undertake a Diploma in Information Technology. The course was available on a self-paced learning basis as soon as the client was ready to commence. An alternative 2-year Diploma course at a local TAFE college was also considered. The choice of university course was considered justified because of the level of qualifications, field work and job placement service the educational facility provided for their graduates.

## **Case study 3**

A former Air Force (registered) Nurse was medically discharged due to a back injury that prevented her from continuing to work as a Nurse and undertaking her military duties. Upon discharge, a Graduate Diploma in Community and Health Development was approved as part of her overall rehabilitation. At the end of the year she was able to obtain employment as a Nurse Communicator, with an ability to earn very close to the former military salary.

## **Case study 4**

A former Flight Lieutenant was medically discharged due to a generalised anxiety disorder which impacted on his ability to continue his military career. His rehabilitation goal was to undertake a law degree, to enable him to secure full time employment in the legal system. As part of the rehabilitation assessment, it was recognised that this qualification demonstrated that he had the necessary skills and capacity through his employment history and training to successfully complete the course.

The client's initiative and focus justified the support he received to undertake tertiary studies in law. He was able to receive recognition of prior learning for courses he had undertaken as part of his military training and successfully completed his studies and the graduate requirements of the course. Initially the client experienced some difficulties in securing employment, but with assistance in job seeking, and a self motivated and goal focused approach, the client was able to find full time employment as a Legal Associate. After 3 years his earning capacity was equivalent to that of his ADF salary.

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**Source URL (modified on 12/04/2023 - 10:22am):** <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education>

### Links

- [1] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/21211%23comment-form>
- [2] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/92-what-suitable-workemployment>
- [3] <https://www.racp.edu.au/advocacy/division-faculty-and-chapter-priorities/faculty-of-occupational-environmental-medicine/health-benefits-of-good-work>
- [4] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/95-vocational-assessments>
- [5] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/99-work-trials>
- [6] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/910-employer-incentives>
- [7] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education/981-tertiary-education>
- [8] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/6-psychosocial-rehabilitation/69-psychosocial-rehabilitation-and-further-education>
- [9] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/78850%23comment-form>
- [10] <https://www.myskills.gov.au/>
- [11] <https://www.aqf.edu.au/>
- [12] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/13-rights-and-obligations/133-what-non-compliance-rehabilitation-process/1332-making-decision-suspend-benefits>
- [13] <mailto:Rehabilitation@dva.gov.au>
- [14] <mailto:rehabilitation@dva.gov.au>
- [15] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education/983-steps-approving-tertiary-education>
- [16] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/78852%23comment-form>
- [17] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education>
- [18] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education/982-additional-considerations-where-tertiary-education-has-been-approved-adf>
- [19] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/9-vocational-rehabilitation/98-retraining-and-further-education/984-payment-tertiary-education-and-training-course-fees>
- [20] <https://www.dva.gov.au/get-support/find-forms>
- [21] <https://www.dva.gov.au/about-dva/dva-forms>
- [22] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/6-psychosocial-rehabilitation/65-psychosocial-activities-dva-clients-and-families>
- [23] <http://auth-клик.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/tags/tertiary-study>
- [24]

[clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/21228%23comment-form](http://clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/21228%23comment-form)  
[25] <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/english/study/universities-and-higher-education>  
[26] <https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education>  
[27] <https://coursesseeker.edu.au/>  
[28] <https://www.veteranemployment.gov.au/>  
[29] <https://joboutlook.gov.au/>  
[30] <https://www.dese.gov.au/jobs-hub>  
[31] <https://yourcareer.gov.au/>  
[32] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/tags/vocational-rehabilitation>  
[33] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/tags/tertiary-education>  
[34] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/21216%23comment-form>  
[35] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/16-maintaining-incapacity-payments-veterans-studying-pilot>  
[36] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/10-alterations-modifications-aids-appliances-and-motor-vehicle-assistance>  
[37] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/78843%23comment-form>  
[38] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/rehabilitation-policy-library/2-legislative-provisions/26-special-rate-disability-pension-srdp>  
[39] <http://auth-clik.dvastaff.dva.gov.au/user/login?destination=comment/reply/78844%23comment-form>

## 16 Maintaining Incapacity Payments for Veterans Studying Pilot

### Date published

Wednesday, September 19, 2018

### Last amended

Thursday, August 3, 2023

***This Chapter is retained for information purposes only, as the Pilot ceased on 30 June 2023.***

### Policy Statement

Veterans engaged in approved full-time study under a DVA-funded rehabilitation program and receiving incapacity payments were supported by a pilot program, which **ceased on 30 June 2023**.

### Authority

Legislative authority for this measure is contained in the following Acts and Instruments:

- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 \(MRCA\)](#) [158] subsection 131 (3)
- [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Defence-related Claims\) Act 1988 \(DRCA\)](#) [5] subsection 19(3AA)
- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Full-time Study\) Instrument 2018](#) [703]
- [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Defence-related Claims\) \(Full-time Study\) Instrument 2018](#) [704]
- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation and Other Legislation Amendment \(Incapacity Payments\) Act 2022](#) [705]

### Intent

This pilot provided an eligible former member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) with incapacity payments based on 100% of their normal pre-injury earnings, where that member was engaged in a DVA rehabilitation program and, as part of that program, was undertaking full-time study to assist them in securing ongoing meaningful employment after their ADF service.

### Background

Incapacity payments are economic loss compensation payments for a loss of earnings as a result of a service-related condition. Typically incapacity payments “step down” to 75% ([or a higher percentage depending on hours worked](#) [706] of pre-injury earnings after a period of 45 weeks in payment.

*Step-up to Incapacity Payments for Veterans Studying* was a 2018-19 Budget measure funded as a pilot program from 1 November 2018 until 30 June 2022.

A continuation of the Pilot, renamed *Maintaining Incapacity Payments for Veterans Studying Pilot*, was announced as part of the March 2022-23 Federal Budget. The pilot was extended until 30 June 2023. All eligibility criteria and requirements remained unchanged.

The pilot was applicable under both the DRCA and MRCA.

### Eligibility

**The Pilot ceased on 30 June 2023.** Prior to that date a person was eligible if they:

- were a former ADF member;
- were participating in DVA’s rehabilitation program; and
- had **full-time study** approved as part of their rehabilitation plan; and
- were eligible to receive incapacity payments.

Clients were expected to maintain compliance with their rehabilitation program, including studying full-time, to remain eligible for the pilot. Clients needed to continue to meet required benchmarks for study units and complete the course of study within a pre-agreed timeframe.

Approval of full-time study was determined according to DVA’s [tertiary education policy framework](#) [22].

## Requirements

### What education and training courses were considered as 'study' for the Pilot?

The following types of education and training were considered to be study:

- secondary education, where the course of study is either an accredited senior secondary certificate of education (or equivalent) or a preparatory course for the purpose of enrolling in a related award course; and
- tertiary education courses within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) at the following levels: Certificate level (Certificate I-IV), Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas/Associate Degrees, Bachelor-level degrees, and Graduate Certificates/ Diplomas.

Institutions offering these courses included:

- Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges;
- Higher education institutions (e.g. university); and
- Accredited Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

### What was meant by 'full-time'?

If an eligible person was undertaking study, they were considered to be full-time if over the study period (for example, a semester) they were enrolled in at least three-quarters of the normal amount of full-time study that would be expected for the course in that study period.

The normal amount of full-time study for a course over each study period was defined by the institution or body conducting the course. This was the study load that a full-time student would typically undertake in respect of the course.

If a definition of full-time study was not available through the institution or body, then the normal amount of full-time study was the average amount of full-time study that a person would have to undertake for the duration of the course, in order to complete it in the minimum amount of time.

## Related Policies, Legislation and Information

### Policy

- CLIK MRCA Incapacity Policy Manual [7.7 Person has been incapacitated for a cumulative period exceeding 45 weeks](#) [706]
- CLIK Rehabilitation Policy Library [9.8 Retraining and further education](#) [22]
- CLIK Rehabilitation Policy Library [6.9 Psychosocial rehabilitation and further education](#) [393]

### Legislation

- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 \(MRCA\)](#) [158] subsection 131 (3)
- [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Defence-related Claims\) Act 1988 \(DRCA\)](#) [5] subsection 19(3AA)
- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Full-time Study\) Instrument 2018](#) [703]
- [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Defence-related Claims\) \(Full-time Study\) Instrument 2018](#) [704]
- [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation and Other Legislation Amendment \(Incapacity Payments\) Act 2022](#) [705]

### External Website

- [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) [707]
-



## INFO50 – DVA REHAB AND STUDY

### Overview

The DVA Rehabilitation Plan aims to maximise the potential for an ex-ADF member (the veteran) to achieve their pre-ADF injury or illness status. A tailored rehabilitation plan is designed to coordinate the services and supports needed to address the veteran's overall wellbeing. One component of the plan may be to help the veteran be ready for work and if required, incorporate retraining activities.

### Process for consideration of study in a veteran's Rehabilitation Plan

Study is not automatically approved if a veteran is seeking DVA to support their degree. Like any activity undertaken in a rehabilitation plan, the activity must be supported by a range of factors including assessments undertaken by suitably qualified professionals.

It should be recognised that study is one element of a suite of tools used by rehabilitation consultants when identifying reasonable and appropriate vocational options for veterans. Where a veteran is not medically approved to participate in a Return to Work plan, short-term courses may be considered to allow the veteran to engage with like-minded peers and deepen social connections. These activities would need to relate to the veteran's social engagement (psychosocial) goals.

Prior to consideration of longer-term study as an activity towards a veteran's agreed vocational goal, a veteran's career options need to be comprehensively researched.

Consideration will be given to the veteran's:

- medical capacity;
- local labour market;
- motivations and views towards vocational goals;
- transferrable skills;
- existing skills (past employment, training and skills); and
- previous vocational experience.

As part of this process, the rehabilitation consultant maps the veteran's existing transferable skills, undertakes vocational counselling and assessments, and investigates work trials and labour market analysis reports. If the rehabilitation consultant identifies medically suitable career paths that don't require any additional study, this path will first be considered. If however, there is a skill-gap in the career path, study can be considered based on the specific veteran circumstances.

This thorough, veteran tailored process ensures the veteran is set-up for success in their vocational pursuit while responsibly ensuring Department resources are not committed to substantially increasing the veteran's skills over and above a level that is needed to secure employment, as described in CLIK Rehabilitation Policy Library.

### Veterans not currently participating in a DVA Rehabilitation Plan

If the veteran is motivated to study prior to participation in a DVA rehabilitation plan, we suggest independent study be considered. When reviewing the range of universities, veterans may choose to select a university that recognises military training as part of their admissions process, or those that have specific veteran focussed scholarships available.

### Further information

[CLIK policy section, 9.8 Retraining and further education](#)



## INFO45 – VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

This Infosheet is intended to assist members of the Rehabilitation Services Team to understand **when** a vocational assessment is required, the professionals **who** can perform the assessment, **what** information is required within a vocational assessment, and **how** the assessment is used when reviewing vocational activities.

What must I consider prior to approving a Vocational Assessment on a rehabilitation plan?

An effective vocational assessment will start from a narrowed scope of vocational options. To narrow down options, it is important for potential employment fields of interest to be identified. If a client is uncertain about their future employment goals, **vocational counselling** should first be undertaken prior to a vocational assessment.

If a client leaving the Defence Force has a specific job direction in mind, and that job role is likely to be both suitable and sustainable, vocational counselling is not required.

Delegates are encouraged to share available Specialists Reports (particularly if a client has had further liabilities accepted since the initial rehabilitation assessment) with the rehabilitation consultant to assist with vocational counselling.

When must a Vocational Assessment be undertaken?

DVA clients on an approved [return to work](#) plan with an [active](#) vocational goal may need to undertake a vocational assessment. If the initial rehabilitation assessment or subsequent advice from the assigned rehabilitation consultant recommends a vocational assessment, delegates must consider the below questions:

- Has the client undergone a Vocational Assessment recently (e.g within the last 2 years)?
- Does the client have a clear vocational direction that either:
  - Is consistent with skills acquired prior to enlisting or the role performed in the ADF prior to their injury and/or illness? Or
  - Draws upon the client's existing skills, provides sufficient job opportunities and is likely to result in employment that is suitable and sustainable for the client?

If responses to the above questions are 'no,' delegates will approve the vocational assessment as part of the rehabilitation plan. If the answers to the above are 'yes' a vocational assessment is not required.

The vocational assessment will explore vocational options for a client, and, where relevant, identify training and education recommendations to support the client's identified job roles.

A vocational assessment report is required by rehabilitation delegates to assist with determining the reasonableness of proposed vocational activities such as pursuing study, self-employment, or provide recommendations to DVA where there is uncertainty about the suitability of a client's vocational direction.

Who can undertake the Vocational Assessment with the client?

It is recommended that the vocational assessment be completed by a consultant who is not the client's primary case manager. This enables an independent and objective view of the client situation, and ensures that a strong relationship between the client and their primary case manager can be maintained.

Rehabilitation Providers and their consultants have been directed to identify an appropriate breadth of suitable options even if the client has a singular vocational or training/education focus. Vocational

assessments, including the assessments that occur within a vocational assessment such as psychometric testing, must be completed by:

- A DVA registered consultant whose professional scope of practice includes vocational counselling (i.e. rehabilitation counsellor); or
- A third party person, engaged by the provider, who holds the appropriate qualification and skills (i.e. a qualified psychologist or rehabilitation counsellor); or
- A combination of both. For example, if a rehabilitation counsellor is performing the vocational assessment, it may be necessary for a psychologist to oversee psychometric or aptitude testing.

What information is required within a Vocational Assessment?

The vocational assessment report will summarise the client's personal, medical and vocational circumstances encompassing the below components:

**1. Executive Summary:**

- a. Recommended vocational options.
- b. Key recommendations and rationale.
- c. Brief overview of relevant personal, medical and vocational circumstances including current and future job prospects and an objective statement of work capacity as determined by the professional undertaking the assessment.

**2. Purpose and Method of Assessment:**

Details relevant to the circumstances which led to the assessment and reference documents.

**3. Medical Circumstances**

An ability to work certificate with GP support for full or part-time study is required. Clients with significant physical injuries seeking DVA supported study for a job role with high physical demands, will require additional commentary from their GP or specialist detailing how the relevant medical conditions affect current and future employment prospects.

A detailed medical history is not required to be submitted within the Vocational Assessment.

**4. Personal Circumstances**

Relevant circumstances which may impact on vocational options or direction that are not captured in the client's initial rehabilitation assessment or progress reports may be listed in the Vocational Assessment.

**5. Transferable Skills Analysis:**

- a. Preinjury Role (ADF) – employer, position, rank, salary, duration, tasks.
- b. Education & Qualifications – course, level, RTO, dates, [skills learned (if relevant)], tickets / licences and certificates.
- c. Transferable Skills - identified skills, aptitude, interests including computer skills.
- d. Vocational and psychometric assessments and occupational inventory (Optional dependent on individual circumstances and needs).
  - i. Assessments of personality, work aspect preferences, motivation.
  - ii. Aptitude, educational or skills assessments (as relevant to support vocational or training recommendations).
  - iii. Psychological inventories (as relevant).
  - iv. Statement of attainment (as relevant)- to support retraining recommendations including educational attainment, recent STAT test or university admission (sited), RPL review, retraining potential.
- e. Labour market analysis (summary here with details included in an attachment)
  - i. At least 3 identified employment options.

Job title, ANZSCO codes, duties, training, job prospects, labour market, vacancies, sample advertisements and/or employer contact, functional requirements.

6. **Recommended Suitable Employment Options and retraining recommendations:**
  - a. Description of the role and typical job duties. A hyperlink to the role as described on job outlook can be provided instead of copy and pasting information into the template.
  - b. Retraining required for either the position or to enter the field.
  - c. Salary range.
  - d. Functional information.
  - e. Industry liaison and employer contacts.
  - f. Labour market analysis relative to the client's location and employment field (i.e. Software development roles will have a greater scope to work remotely than a Site Surveyor).
  - g. Suitability of the role relative the individual circumstances of the client.
7. **Attachments to the vocational assessment report will include the client's:**
  - a. Resume with recent work history
  - b. Labour market analysis for the recommended job roles or fields
  - c. Ability to work certificate.

### How will the Vocational Assessment be used?

When reviewing the vocational assessment, the key components to consider in order to make a decision about funding vocational activities are:

- The vocational assessment is supportive of the job role (e.g. Nurse) or job field (e.g. Health profession).
- The vocational assessment has commented on the preferences of the client and whether the client is likely to obtain job satisfaction.
- There is a reasonable availability of jobs/roles within a commutable distance from the client's residence, or if none, whether the client has indicated their openness to relocating for work.
- Vocational activities are related to roles which employ the client's aptitude, skills and previous experience.
- If retraining is required, the client's Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) has been assessed, and relevant qualifications used towards the retraining .
- The client can sustain long term employment taking into account any existing health restrictions.

Vocational activities on the client's rehabilitation plan should not proceed if in doing so, advice contained within the vocational assessment would be contradicted.

### What if the Vocational Assessment Report contains inaccurate or conflicting information?

Delegates with concerns about the information related to the vocational assessment report, or who identify conflicting information in comparison with other client-specific information are encouraged to first raise these inconsistencies with the rehabilitation consultant. If those concerns are not sufficiently addressed, speak with your team leader who may provide a resolution, or recommend:

- the matter may be raised with the Stakeholder Engagement Manager; or
- sending ET03 Escalated Advice Request and send to the Rehab Support Team.



## INFO27 — Long Term Study Workflow

The document provides [rehabilitation delegates with a checklist \(in blue\)](#) of instructions to complete prior to transfer of the long term study case to the holding bay. Senior Admin Officers (SAOs) and the Admin delegate are provided guidance with actioning tasks and related work items that arise in cases assigned to the long-term study holding bay.

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# SOP04 REHABILITATION SERVICES STUDY PROCEDURES

## 1 Version Control

Date of Change	Version Number	Summary of changes	Reason	Approved by
18/12/18	1.0	New document	Creation of document	Director
9/1/19	1.1	Updated	Updated terminology to match new additions to form D9303	Assistant Director
02/08/19	1.2	Payment of approved study preference		Director
30/08/2019	1.2	Advise Incapacity Delegate of Medical certificates		Fiona <b>s 47F</b> Director Rehabilitation Services
23/11/2020	1.3	LET58 University Sponsorship and Financial Guarantee. Home ergonomic assessments Changing study loads	Review of Study SOP	Fiona <b>s 47F</b> Director Rehabilitation Services
03/03/2022	2.0	Update to SOP for - Eight step decision making guide - payment upon receipt of HELP statement - Consideration of Honours - R&C ISH Further Education tab details to be recorded	Consistent decision making; Preferred payment option; Data and Reporting purposes	Fiona <b>s 47F</b> Director Rehabilitation Services

# SOP04 REHABILITATION SERVICES

## STUDY PROCEDURES

### 2 Overview

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the guidelines to ensure fair and consistent decision-making when determining whether to support study activities for rehabilitation clients.

Vocational retraining and further education, or study can be important in filling the skills-gap needed for clients to be job ready for suitable and sustainable employment. A thorough process in approving study ensures the client is set up for success in their vocational pursuit while responsibly ensuring Department resources are not being committed to substantially increasing the client's skills over and above what is needed to secure employment, as described in Policy.

Directions outlined within this SOP aim to empower rehabilitation delegates in their decision-making and describe best practices. It is also acknowledged that there will be clients with exceptional circumstances who need to be considered outside of these guidelines with input from an APS6 Team Leader or the Rehabilitation Support Team (RST).

### 3 Governance

The Rehab Support Team Manager is responsible for the maintenance of SOP04. This SOP will be updated as needed through continuous improvement processes. Lessons learned as a result of continuing management efforts will be captured during day-to-day service delivery and will be referenced to improve delivery standards.

Per the Quality Management Framework, this SOP will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure currency.

### 4 Glossary of Terms

Expanded Title	Acronym/Term
Australian Qualifications Framework	AQF
Australian Taxation Office	ATO
Career Transition Assistance Scheme	CTAS
Department of Defence	Defence
Department of Veterans' Affairs	DVA
DVA Rehabilitation Delegates	delegates
Higher Education Contribution Scheme	HECS
Higher Education Loan Program	HELP
Initial Needs Assessment	INA
Labour Market Analysis	LMA
Payment Reference Number	PRN
Recognition for Prior Learning	RPL
Registered Training Organisation	RTO
Standard Operating Procedure	SOP

# SOP04 REHABILITATION SERVICES

## STUDY PROCEDURES

### 5 Responsibilities

DVA Rehabilitation Delegates (delegates) are responsible:

- For informing clients who wish to submit a study application of the required documents;
- For accurate record keeping related to study requests;
- To assess study requests in a timely manner (KPI 9), against the criteria and considerations listed within this SOP;
- For escalating matters, where insufficient evidence exists, to make a determination either in support of, or not in support of, the study request;
- For recording approved activities, costs and course data accurately in R&C ISH; and
- For communicating the outcome to clients using the approved study determination letters.

This SOP assumes the delegate has a high level of understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the spending of Commonwealth monies, they have delegations to make decisions and understand DVA's requirements for record keeping as per the APS Code of Conduct.

When significant changes to a client's medical status and ability to participate in a rehabilitation plan are encountered, delegates are responsible for communicating and sharing documents (e.g. medical certificates) with affected business areas within DVA such as the Incapacity delegate.

9.	Study Applications received in totality.  Action within <b>s 47E</b> following the date of receipt	ISH case notes and data against study module	<b>s 47E</b>	Compliance monitored by QA program
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### 6 When can DVA Rehabilitation support study?

Study in the context of a DVA Rehabilitation Plan is defined as an educational course or series of courses through which successful completion will lead to achievement of the following types of qualification:

- Senior Secondary Certificate of Education;
- Certificate I, II, III or IV;
- Diploma, advanced diploma or associate degree;
- Bachelor degree;
- Bachelor honours degree, graduate certificate or graduate diploma; or
- A bridging or preparatory course needed to meet the requirements for entry into a course of study or instruction leading to the award of the qualification types mentioned above.

Study can only be considered where a client with MRCA, DRCA or VEA conditions has undergone an initial rehabilitation assessment, and is participating in a rehabilitation plan. The study being requested must be an identified activity that will assist the client to achieve an approved rehabilitation goal (i.e. completion of a degree purely for academic achievement is not a sufficient reason for DVA to consider funding study). The length of the study and remaining years until the age at which the client intends to retire should also be considered.

Due to the scope of support intended to address their immediate needs, clients receiving Veterans Payment and without liability accepted must not be approved to participate in study. Consideration of study may be revisited at the time of liability being accepted.

# SOP04 REHABILITATION SERVICES

## STUDY PROCEDURES

### 6.1 A vocational assessment must take place

As part of the rehabilitation plan, a vocational assessment must occur, and the recommendations made within the vocational assessment suggest that completing the proposed study will result in meaningful employment, and that the field of employment is suited to the client.

### 6.2 What if the client does not have capacity for Vocational Rehabilitation?

In cases where a client does not have medical capacity for vocational rehabilitation, delegates are able to approve short term (three months or less) study to provide meaningful engagement for a client to achieve their *psychosocial* goal without the need for a vocational assessment, however caution must be taken where the study is a precursor to a longer qualification.

If study to achieve a psychosocial goal is proposed, and the length of the study is more than three months, but less than 12 months, it is strongly recommended that a vocational assessment, D9303 form and client statement be obtained in order for rehabilitation delegate's to make an informed decision. Again, caution must be taken where the study is a precursor to a longer qualification.

In instances where study over a period of 12 months or greater is requested to achieve a psychosocial goal, these **must** be escalated to the Rehab Support Team for consideration and a vocational assessment including labour market analysis will be necessary.

## 7 Study application must be received in full

A request for study is not considered to be received in full unless the following documents have been received by DVA:

1. Vocational assessment report.
2. D9303 Vocational education and training application form with course summary and academic calendar attached.
3. Client statement.
4. An ability to work medical certificate confirming the client has the capacity to participate in rehabilitation.

### 7.1 Vocational assessment report with attachments received

The vocational assessment report submitted with attachments including the client's resume, labour market analysis and sufficient medical evidence to suggest that the client is able to study and likely to be able to work in the job role or field proposed **must be supportive of the study requested.**

In addition to job prospects, if the client has not previously successfully completed lower level study, the vocational assessment must comment on the client's aptitude for successful independent study with recommendations to scaffold learning if necessary.

Other factors related to the client's personal circumstances that impact the client's ability to successfully complete study should be highlighted in the report, such as the client's ability to travel

BE IMPARTIAL  
WHILE  
CONSIDERING  
REASONABLE  
ALTERNATIVES

A 36 year old veteran requests support to complete a Bachelor of Urban Design and Town Planning part-time. The veteran shares their plan for self-funded retirement at age 50.

Studying part-time will take the veteran 8 years, meaning they will be 44 years of age at graduation.

Based on their plan to retire at age 50, it is not practical to approve the Bachelor of Urban Design and Town Planning. A qualification shorter in length, such as a Diploma of Town Planning can put the veteran on track for a career in town planning with potential to work across a range of areas.

to and from campus if attendance is required, as well as any placements or practical elements required.

Refer to INFO45 Vocational Assessments for more detail.

### 7.2 D9303 Vocational Education and Training Application Form and attachments

A client signed (electronic signature is acceptable) [D9303 form](#) with attached course summary must be uploaded and completed correctly. If a course summary has not been attached, the provider may provide a hyperlink, which must be used to cross-check the details listed on the form.

### 7.3 Client statement

The client statement is generally a paragraph or two in length outlining the client's own motivations, demonstrates the client's understanding of and commitment to study and awareness of their obligation to notify DVA of any changes to their circumstances. While not a compulsory inclusion, clients with family obligations may also articulate how they intend to balance their health needs, family obligations and study demands.

If not addressed within the statement, delegates must confirm the client's intentions to return to the workforce. Caution must be taken for clients wanting to pursue niche passion subjects with little application in the labour market. If the client statement reveals their intent to apply their qualification in a context external to the recommended job options, inform the rehabilitation consultant and suggest additional vocational counselling.

### 7.4 Study decisions in 8 steps

To approve study, the eight questions below must be explored. The first four primary questions must be answered 'yes' to approve study.

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Consideration for a client's second degree will not typically be considered



The course must meet the eligibility requirements for Commonwealth Supported Places



Only Australian Universities will be considered



Level 9-10 (Masters and Doctoral) are not able to be considered



In the absence of previous study, a comment about the clients aptitude for independent study and their ability to successfully complete study is required in the Vocational Assessment.

## 8 Other considerations impacting a decision to approve study

### 8.1 CTAS or other organisation funding client's study

Consideration to include a client's study as part of the approved DVA rehab plan when an organisation other than DVA have funded it, is identical to if DVA were funding it. The study must be appropriate in relation to the client's future ability to perform in the job role or field, with demonstrable job vacancies. This study is to be entered into R&C ISH, with nil costs entered, and incidentals payments, as well as any tutoring support if required, funded under the vocational goal.

If the CTAS or other organisation funding the client's study (i.e. a Scholarship) is a passion project or niche topic unlikely to result in suitable or sustainable employment, do not enter the study into R&C ISH, do not make reference to the independent study in the rehabilitation plan, goals or activities or any plan amendments. Do not cover the cost of incidentals nor any other entitlements that would otherwise be available for approved study.

### 8.2 Clients funding their own study

Where a client has been self-funding study prior to commencing their DVA rehabilitation plan, the client will not be eligible for any retrospective payment for fees already paid.

Clients choosing to self-fund their own study (whether they pay upfront or are granted a HELP loan), including clients who choose to self-fund a program of study that DVA declined to support, must not have their study entered into R&C ISH.

No references to independent study should be contained within the client's Rehabilitation Plan, goals, activities or any plan amendments.

DVA will not cover the cost of incidentals and other entitlements that otherwise would be available for approved study.

If a client is choosing to continue or commence self-funded study, delegates are advised to enquire with the rehabilitation consultant about whether there are outstanding rehabilitation goals, and where there are none, closure proceedings should commence, particularly in circumstances where the client is not in receipt of incapacity payments, or whose incapacity payments are not reliant on participating in a rehabilitation plan.

Delegates must remind client's whose incapacity payments *are* reliant on participating in a rehabilitation plan, that they are obligated to remain engaged with their rehabilitation plan, which may mean looking for vocational opportunities that fit around their independent study.

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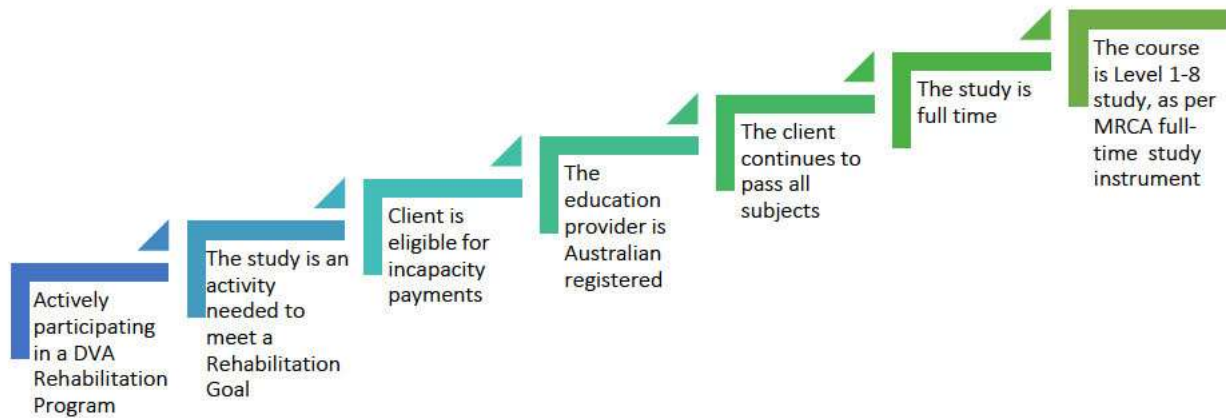
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**9 Outcome of study consideration – approved**

# SOP04 REHABILITATION SERVICES

## STUDY PROCEDURES



### 9.1 Full-time study and breaks between semesters

For DVA rehabilitation purposes, full-time study is where a client is undertaking a minimum of 75% of a full-time study load. The full-time study load is **determined by the educational institution**.

If a client is undertaking full-time study, then semester and other breaks between sequential periods of DVA approved study programs are considered full-time. This includes when a client completes sequential approved educational courses. Deferring a semester is not considered as full-time.

*For example*, a veteran was approved to study a Diploma of Information Technology from 31 January 2021 – 1 December 2021. In late November 2021, a new study application was submitted, and approved for the veteran to study a Bachelor of Information Technology commencing 28 February 2022 – 1 November 2023. The delegate is able to consider the period 2 December 2021 – 27 February 2022 between the Diploma and Bachelor as “full-time”.

When approving study, a plan amendment is required, to cover either:

- the first semester/trimester of study; or
- if the study is less than 12 months, the entire length of the study.

Follow steps **a – n** to record the decision in R&C ISH and send the approval letter to the client.

- Enter the new plan end date** per the plan amendment from the consultant to cover either the first year of study, or if the duration of approved study is less than 12 months, the length of the study (taking into account breaks between semesters).
- Open the Further education screen**

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Clients are required to advise their rehabilitation consultant of any periods of absence (generally longer than two weeks) and when they withdraw from any course or subject.

When a client is postponing the start date of study, the commencement date of either the course or study period (whichever is relevant), must be updated in R&C ISH.

When a client withdraws from study, either the whole course or a subject/study period, delegates must enquire with the consultant the circumstances leading to the withdrawal, and whether additional support is needed.

In instances where a client opts to withdraw from study prior to the census date and DVA has paid the educational institution upfront, seek assistance from the Rehab Support team so we may liaise with the institution to recover funds.

Where rehabilitation delegates are satisfied that the client has made no effort to:

- successfully complete study;
- access assistance e.g apply for an extension; or
- explain why they withdrew;

Delegates must advise the client that their study is no longer approved and cease funding any of their course that is not yet paid.

### 10 Outcome of study consideration - declined

A request to study can be declined for a number of reasons. As a guide, reasons for declining study as an activity on a DVA rehabilitation plan can include:

- The vocational assessment report does not support the study requested; or the labour market does not indicate sufficient vacancies exist in order for the veteran to achieve employment;
- The client already has the skills required to be job ready for the area of employment identified within the vocational assessment report;
- The client has a degree or trade qualification that could be supplemented by RPL and become job ready for the area of employment identified within the vocational assessment report;
- The client's pre-injury salary is significantly above or below the average wage of the proposed job role in the vocational assessment report;
- The client's statement indicates that upon completion of the degree, the client will use the knowledge gained through study for a purpose that is not consistent with the recommended job roles;
- The D9303 Vocational Training and Education form identifies that the higher education provider is not suitably accredited;
- The D9303 attached Course Structure indicates the study being requested is different to the course recommended within the vocational assessment report;
- The medical evidence submitted contradicts that already held by DVA. For example, the client is SRDP eligible and unable to work for greater than 10 hours per week. Approving study would require the rehabilitation provider to reassess the client's ability to work, noting this reassessment may have a flow-on impact to the client's SRDP status.

Once the decision is made to decline study,

#### 1. **Notify the rehabilitation consultant and client**

The delegate should advise the consultant of their decision and reasons for declining, and send either LET04 or LET05 to the client taking care to amend the body of the letter to explain how the

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