

Veterans' and Families' Strategy 2025-2027

*From service to success: empowering veterans
and families through education*



A veteran is anyone who has served, or is serving, as a member of the permanent or reserve elements of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Background

UNSW Canberra has a longstanding partnership with the Australian Defence Force and a proud history of educating defence and civilian leaders. Each year, around 6,000 ADF personnel transition to civilian life, with education recognised as a critical enabler of successful transition and long-term wellbeing. For veterans and their families, access to education creates opportunities to reskill, upskill, and secure sustainable employment.

UNSW Canberra has a range of existing initiatives to support veterans in their pursuit of higher education, but tailored support is fragmented – and for families non-existent. There is an opportunity for UNSW Canberra to adopt a more coordinated and targeted approach by providing a dedicated veterans' and families' program, tailoring services, strengthening pathways, expanding support, and embedding recognition of veterans' unique experiences.

The *UNSW Canberra Veterans' and Families' Strategy (2025–2027)* affirms our commitment to addressing this opportunity and reinforces our strong connections with the Defence and veteran community. Cascading from the *UNSW Strategy: Progress for All*, the Strategy sets out a framework to recognise veterans and their families as a valued part of the UNSW community and ensure their needs are reflected in education, research, and engagement activities.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people (UNSW Canberra – ADFA and City campuses), the Bedegal people (Kensington Campus) and the Gadigal people (Sydney CBD and Art & Design Campuses) as the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW campuses are located. We acknowledge the First Nations Peoples as the First Educators on these lands and pay our respects to their elders, past and present.



Goals

The goals of the *UNSW Canberra Veterans' and Families' Strategy* are:

1. Recognise the contribution of veterans and their families and foster a community where they can thrive.
2. Provide veterans and their families clear and supported pathways into higher education.
3. Support veterans and families throughout their studies with tailored academic, wellbeing, and employability services.
4. Strengthen partnerships to expand opportunities for veterans and their families.
5. Embed evidence-informed practice to ensure measurable outcomes.

Strategic Alignment

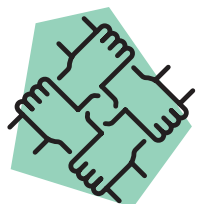
The *UNSW Canberra Veterans' and Families' Strategy* reinforces UNSW's mission to deliver societal impact through inclusion and innovation, as outlined in the UNSW Strategy: *Progress for All*. By recognising veterans and their families as a distinct and valued community, UNSW affirms its commitment to supporting those who serve and those who support them.

The Strategy promotes engagement with lifelong learning by improving access, visibility and tailored support for veterans and their families throughout their lives and careers. In doing so, it strengthens UNSW's role within the veteran transition ecosystem, where education is identified as a critical enabler of successful transition and long-term wellbeing.

Aligned with national priorities for veterans and their families, and guided by its Key Commitments, the Strategy positions UNSW as a leader in an area of increasing national importance and trusted partner in advancing positive outcomes for this community.

Key Commitments

Through the *Veterans' and Families' Strategy*, UNSW Canberra commits to:



Veterans & Families Focus

Ensure programs, policies, and institutional practices reflect the unique needs and strengths of veterans and their families.



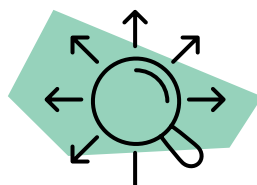
Clear Education Pathways

Deliver tailored admission pathways and recognition of learning and experience.



Comprehensive Student Support

Provide academic support, career counselling, scholarships, and flexible study opportunities.



Evidence-Informed Practice

Embed data and research to guide decision-making, ensuring programs and initiatives deliver measurable impact.



Champion Inclusion & Recognition

Promote an inclusive culture by recognising the excellence and experiences of veterans and their families, increasing their visibility across UNSW and developing staff capability.

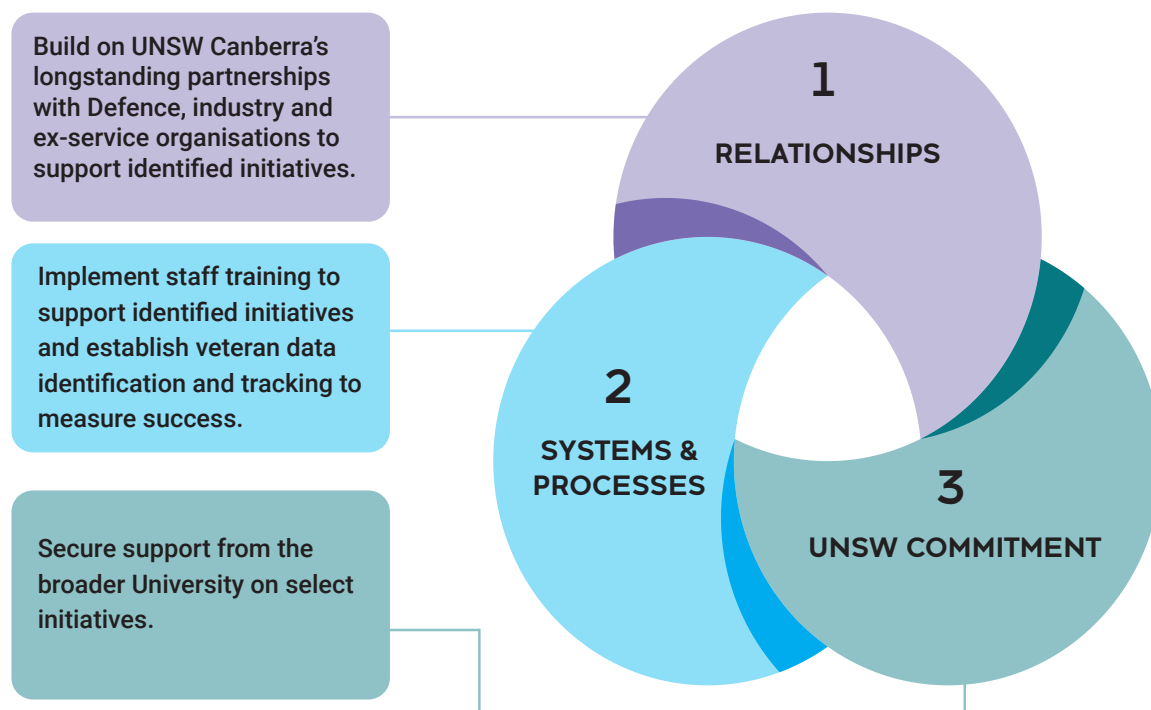


Strengthen Partnerships

Collaborate with Defence, government, ex-service organisations, and industry to increase veteran and family opportunities.

Enablers

Delivery of the *Veterans' and Families' Strategy* depends on three enablers:



Flagship Initiatives

A series of initiatives has been developed for implementation, consistent with the Strategy Goals and Key Commitments outlined above. The *UNSW Canberra Veterans' and Families' Strategy* will be underpinned by these initiatives, to be delivered progressively over the life of the Strategy. The following have been identified as flagship initiatives:

1. UNSW Veterans' and Families' Program

An umbrella initiative that provides veterans and families with visibility and streamlined access to all elements of the Strategy, including pathways, scholarships and academic support, throughout their education journey.

2. UNSW Veterans' Hub

A physical and virtual space for support, connection and community.

3. Veterans in Higher Education

A suite of initiatives contributing to national discourse on the barriers and enablers for veterans in higher education, including roundtable discussions and a national *Veterans in Higher Education Conference*.



If you would like to learn more about the Strategy or explore how you can get involved, please contact us at veterans@unsw.edu.au