

Qualification Training Policy

Title	Qualification Training Policy
Reference	HRP051
Version	2.0
Date	January 2008
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Approved by	HRC
Classification	UNCLASSIFIED
Revision Date	January 2009

Version	Date	Description
0.1	Aug 06	Policy inherited, significant amendments made
0.2	16/05/07	Policy presented to Management Board minor amendments required
0.3	17/05/07	Policy presented to Works Council minor amends required
1.0	11/10/07	Policy presented to HRC
2.0	Jan 08	Policy updated with style guide, OD, IS control table and equality impact assessment

Qualifications

HEFCW may support employees to pursue their career development through further and higher education. Employees wishing to be considered for support for a course of study should discuss their request with their line manager as part of the development discussion during the MoPD review. The line manager will discuss the request with the Head of Team and HR prior to consent being given to the employee. The line manager, Head of Team and HR will assess the relevance of the required qualification to the post held by the employee and also the level of funding. The application for qualification training form and MoPD form will need to be completed and signed and passed to HR to arrange the necessary course of study.

The line manager must also consider the operational needs of the team, and the interests of colleagues who would be required to cover for employees absent on study leave or attendance at their place of study.

What support is there?

HEFCW will support courses that provide skills and professional training which specifically equip employees to carry out their duties more effectively.

The following support may be offered where the course is specifically and vocationally relevant to the employee's role:

- payment of annual fees (tuition, examination, registration and exemption fees) in full;
- the payment of annual fees for student membership of a professional body where such membership is an essential requirement of the examination regulations;
- paid leave of absence for revision purposes may be taken, at the discretion of the line manager, with a maximum of one day of revision leave allowed for each examination paper;
- assistance with the purchase of books;
 - 50% of cost of books up to a maximum of £100 per academic year and the books to be kept by the individual. A purchase of books form (available on the intranet) must be completed and sent to HR for authorisation prior to making the purchase;
- assistance with work based projects, assignments etc;
- the amount of paid leave allowed for study is at the discretion of the line manager, taking into account the effective operation of services, but should not normally exceed one day per week during term time. Flexible working patterns may be agreed, where appropriate, to allow the employee to attend a course but still work their full contracted hours.

Please note that no travel and subsistence costs will be paid.

Partly relevant courses

HEFCW will support courses that provide skills and professional training which is not specifically relevant, but which may be regarded as partly relevant to the work of the employee. The decision will be guided by the level of relevance of the course and the career plans of the employee. HEFCW recognises that as a small organisation they can only offer limited career opportunities to employees and the need for employees to prepare for career development outside HEFCW will be taken into consideration. Support for these type of courses will be agreed on an individual basis, but could include some of the following, as appropriate:

- payment of 50% of the annual fees (tuition, examination, registration and exemption fees);
- the payment of 50% of annual fees for student membership of a professional institute where such membership is an essential requirement of the examination regulations;
- agreed flexible working patterns, utilising the flexible working hours scheme where appropriate;
- paid leave of absence for revision purposes may be taken, at the discretion of line manager, with a maximum of half a day of revision leave allowed for each examination paper;
- assistance with the purchase of books, with 50% of the cost of books being reimbursed, up to a total contribution of £50 per academic year;
- assistance with work based projects, assignments etc.

How does an employee request support?

Requests for support for qualification training should be discussed with the line manager and an application for qualification training form (available on the intranet) must be completed and forwarded to HR.

Where employees are already pursuing a course of study when they join HEFCW, the level of support to be offered will be discussed on appointment.

To ensure that the maximum number of employees are given some support within the resources available, employees will normally be given support for one course only. In the event of an examination failure, the same level of support will be given for revision and examinations for one re-sit attempt.

Commitments made to employees for support for courses will be reviewed each year and is based on satisfactory progress made within the course and the employee's work for HEFCW does not suffer.

Where full financial support is given, the Institution will be asked to invoice HEFCW directly. Where partial support is given, the employee should pay the fees and claim reimbursement for the appropriate proportion from HEFCW.

What if an employee wishes to withdraw from a course?

As a first step, the employee must talk to their line manager discuss any problems that have occurred and any options or further support required to enable them to continue with their studies.

If the situation cannot be resolved and an employee feels that withdrawing is the only option, the employee should write to their line manager, with a copy to HR, highlighting their reasons for withdrawal.

What if an employee leaves HEFCW before the start of a course?

Course fees will be recovered from the employee if they resign from or are dismissed by HEFCW prior to commencing a course.

What if an employee leaves HEFCW before the end of a course or within two years of completing the course?

HEFCW reserves the right to recover full or partial course fees where an employee leaves during a course or within two years of completing their course.