



Personnel Sub-Committee – 22 March 2011

Qualification Payments

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for a change to the policy on paying for qualifications.

Attachment: Amended policy and forms

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The HR team are currently reviewing all Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development (OD) policies, establishing which need changing, and how urgently.
- 1.2 The Development and Training policy will be reviewed as part of this overall project. However, in the current financial climate it was deemed necessary to provide further guidance to staff and managers on the approval of financial assistance for qualification courses.

2.0 Proposed changes

- 2.1 The first main proposed change to the scheme is that East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) will no longer automatically fully fund an approved qualification course. The Head of Service with the Executive Director will decide whether:
 1. The council will fully fund the course
 2. The council will make a contribution (either in time and/or money) towards the cost of the course
 3. The council will make no contribution
- 2.2 An interest free study loan may be made to help meet course fees if not fully funded.
- 2.3 The other proposed change is that if an employee leaves the council during, or within 2 years of completing a course, they will be required to repay either all or part of the course fees. From 1 April 2011 this will apply to employees taking up employment with another local authority.
- 2.4 These changes will only affect staff who have a qualification course approved after 1 April 2011 and will not be retrospective.
- 2.5 Staff have been consulted with regarding these changes.

3.0 Legal Challenges

- 3.1 No legal challenges are anticipated.

4.0 Risk management

- 4.1 There are no significant risks arising from this issue.

5.0 Financial Management

- 5.1 This change will potentially make savings for the council.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the Personnel Sub-Committee approves the policy.

(Reason - to save the council money whilst ensuring staff are supported in their development.)

Legal	Power: Local Government Act 1972 - section 111				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers:					
Person Originating Report: Tricia Orr, HR Advisor					
Date: 23 February 2011					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

Scheme of Financial Assistance (Qualification Courses)
To be read in conjunction with Development and Training Policy

- 1.1 All employees attending an approved qualification course will receive their normal salary. Where the course takes place outside of the employees normal working hours no additional salary or wage payments will be made neither will time off in lieu be given. For example if an employee undertakes a Masters degree which requires attendance two evenings a week at University, the employee will not be given any overtime payments, or time off in lieu for attendance at their course.
- 1.2 The Head of Service in consultation with the Executive Director will decide whether:
 1. The Council will fully fund the course
 2. The Council will make a contribution (either in time and/or money) towards the cost of the course
 3. The Council will make no contribution
- 1.3 When making this decision various factors will be taken into consideration including:
 1. The cost of the qualification course
 2. The operational requirement for the qualification
 3. The amount of funding previously made to the applicant
- 1.4 An interest free study loan may be made to help meet course fees if not fully funded.
- 1.5 The loan will be repayable by equal monthly instalments, deducted from the officer's salary and these shall commence in the first full month after the advance has been made (i.e. if an advance is made on the 2nd April, the first instalment will be due from May's salary).
- 1.6 If the value of the loan is in excess of £5000 per year it becomes a taxable benefit. The Payroll Officer will be able to provide further information
- 1.7 Employee's entitlement to their loan under the scheme shall terminate and any balance outstanding shall become immediately due;
 - a) if they fail to comply with any aspect of the scheme
 - b) on cessation of their employment with the Council
 - c) if they become bankrupt
 - d) if any instalment or part thereof remains unpaid for 14 days for more
 - e) if they discontinue with the course without valid reason
- 1.8 In the event of redundancy an individual agreement will be reached for repayment of the loan.

- 1.9 Applications for an interest free study loan should be made on the form at Appendix 3.
- 1.10 An employee leaving the council during, or within 2 years of completing a course, will be required to repay fees paid by the council in accordance with section 11 of the policy.



EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Application for Training - Qualification Courses

• YOUR DETAILS

Name: _____

Post No: _____ Post Title: _____

Service Area: _____

• COURSE DETAILS

Course Title: _____

Name and Address of College/Institute: *(in full ie no initials)* _____

Length of Course: _____ Academic Year: _____

- Day Release
 - Evening
 - Day/Evening
 - Other*
- *if "Other", please specify _____

• EXPENSES

Course Fees	£	Exam Fees	£	Travelling Expenses	£
Subsistence	£	Books etc	£	Student Membership*	£

* If student membership of a professional body is a pre-requisite to taking the course.

Signature of Applicant : _____ Date: _____

Please attach a photocopy of supporting information to this form.
Please DO NOT attach booking form – it is your own responsibility to book the course.

• AUTHORISATION

Head of Service

I confirm that the above training has been identified on the employees personal development plan and is in line with corporate objectives.

The Council will fully fund, partially fund, not fund (delete as applicable) the course.
If partially funded please state the amount the Council will contribute

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Organisational Development

Signed: _____ Date: _____

**EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL
POST ENTRY TRAINING
Form of Undertaking for Financial Assistance**

Name: _____

Post No: _____ **Post Title:** _____

Examination: _____

Stage: _____

1. In consideration of East Northamptonshire Council granting to me financial assistance in respect of a course of study for the purpose of preparing for the above examination and in accordance with paragraph 5 of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical Services Scheme of Conditions of Service applying for the time being, I hereby undertake and agree that
 - (a) If I do at any time during the period of the said course and the period of two years immediately following the sitting of the said examination, leave the service of the Council, either voluntarily or by dismissal I will forthwith on demand, refund to the Council the total amount of financial assistance (including fees paid on my behalf direct to the educational institution) granted to me as aforesaid by the Council or such percentage thereof as may be specified.
 - (b) I authorise the Council to deduct the total amount of the said financial assistance from any salary which may be owing to me.

2. I further agree that, if at any time during the period of the course in respect of which I am granted financial assistance as aforesaid, I do not sit for an examination within a reasonable period, or fail to show satisfactory progress in my studies, or discontinue the course without valid reason, I will refund on demand to the Council the whole or part of the financial assistance granted as may be determined by the Council.

Signed: _____

In the presence of:

Witness: _____

Address: _____

_____ **Post Code:** _____

Occupation: _____



On completion of this form please forward this with the approved Application for Training to Human Resources

Study Loan Application

Name:

Post Number:

Job Title:

Particulars of qualification

Course Title

Name and Address of College/Institution

Length of Course

Cost of course

Details of Loan

Have you any existing loan with ENC (including car loan) Y/N

Amount of loan required: £

Period of repayment: months

I have read and I am willing to accept and abide by the conditions contained in the Scheme of Financial Assistance (Qualification Courses)

I authorise East Northamptonshire Council to make deductions from my salary as repayment of this loan. In the event that my employment with the Council ends before the loan is repaid, then I authorise the Council to deduct the balance from my final salary payment.

Signed: Date:

Approval of Head of Service

I confirm that this application is approved and that the details contained in their application are to the best of my knowledge correct.

Head of Service Signature:

Date: