

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council is committed to encouraging the development of its employees. The Council will give financial assistance to those who undertake approved qualification training. **All applications will be subject to availability of budget and therefore the Human Resources Manager may need to prioritise applications.**
- 1.2 In line with the Council's adopted Equalities and Diversity Employment Policy Statement, unless legislation requires otherwise, no employee should be treated less favourably on any of the following grounds: disability, gender (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, trade union membership or activity and spent offences. Neither should an employee be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

2 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 This scheme sets out the terms and conditions of assistance that may be offered in respect of all essential and non-essential qualification training.
- 2.2 The policy applies to staff employed by Cherwell District Council.
- 2.3 The policy applies to applications submitted from the 1st April 2013

3 POST ENTRY TRAINING

- 3.1 Post Entry Training is training that is essential or mandatory to fulfil the requirements of the specific role and results in a recognisable qualification.
- 3.2 This is also learning that is detailed on a person specification for the employee's job, training relating to a career graded post or training that has become essential due to changes in the employees job and has been confirmed via a written appraisal form (with an amendment to the person specification).

4 REPAYMENT OF EXPENSES

- 4.1 Any employee who is given approval for Post Entry Training must give an undertaking to remain in the employment of the Council, for at least two years from the date on which the qualification is notified to the employee. This applies provided that there is a post available for the employee which requires the qualification that he/she has obtained.

- 4.2 Repayment of the financial assistance received will be required from an employee who either:
- a) Fails, without good reason, to complete the course whether by choice or direction (for example being expelled from the course) and includes leaving employment with the council during the period of a course. This does not include deferring completion, providing the course is completed within two years. In this case repayment would be 100%
 - b) Fails, without good reason, to sit expected examinations or other course completion requirements such as dissertations or project work. In this case repayment would be 100%
 - c) Leaves the Councils' employment within two years of the date the qualification was obtained. This includes moving to another local government post. In this case recovery will be based on one twenty-fourth of the total cost of the course and books, where the amount is reduced by one twenty fourth for each month of completed service (up to twenty four months) after the qualification was obtained and notified to the employee.
- 4.3 For any 100% recovery the council will include any costs of books, materials or mileage claims but not salary for study time or absence. Funding will not be reclaimed if:
- a) An employee dies in service or leaves on ill health grounds
 - b) An employee is subject of redundancy

5 REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES TO EMPLOYEES

- 5.1 Mileage rates or cost of public transport will be reimbursed in line with Cherwell's current agreed rates. The rates can be found on CherwellNet. Receipts must be provided for any claim. Claims must be submitted within two months of the expenses being incurred and should be received in payroll by the 10th of each month. Claims will be paid for from the Post Entry Training budget and must be signed by the HR Manager.
- 5.2 Reimbursement for the cost of books and for equipment incurred up to the maximum as agreed in the Post Entry Training agreement will be subject to prior approval from the appropriate Head of Service and the Human Resources Manager and the production of receipts. All claims to be forwarded to the Human Resources Manager.
- Should the cost exceed that requested in the original Post Entry Training agreement, the extra money should be found from departmental budgets, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 5.3 Reimbursement for the cost of accommodation will be subject to prior approval from the appropriate Head of Service and Line Manager. Claims must be paid from the employee's departmental budget. The production of receipts is required. Accommodation costs must always be avoided where possible. Accommodation should not be used if the cost of travel is less. If accommodation is booked when travel costs would be less a valid reason must be given.

6 LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Time-Off to Attend Learning

Where support for day release has been approved, paid time-off will be given to attend college. However, where college tuition is for half a day, employees must attend work for the other half of the day. Any paid time-off must be detailed on the training application form. Flexi records will be refunded at 7 hours 24 minutes for a full day and 3 hours 42 minutes for a half day.

6.2 Annual Leave/Flexi Leave

Employees will not normally be given approval to take annual/flexi leave at times when they are committed to attend college. Line Managers may approve leave in exceptional circumstances.

6.3 Study Leave

Study leave should be requested as part of the original Post Entry Training agreement. Additional days will be approved in exceptional circumstances. Line managers need to give consideration to:

- a) The length of the course.
- b) If study leave has already been provided and if so when and for how long.
- c) Whether the member of staff is full time or part-time.

7 Application Procedure

- 7.1 Complete application form "Application for Post Entry Training" see Appendix 1. The form can also be found on the intranet at the following location:

<http://cherwelllive.cherwell.domain/people/learningdevelopment/Pages/Default.aspx>

- 7.2 The form must be signed by you, your Line Manager, Service Head and Human Resources Manager.
- 7.3 Submit your signed form to the Human Resources Team and please allow at least 5 working days for the application to be processed.
- 7.4 Once your application and been approved and processed a purchase order will be sent to you for your course booking.
- 7.5 Please forward any invoices relating to your booking to Human Resources.