



Australian Government

AFTRS

AFTRS

## AFTRS External Studies Assistance Policy

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director, Corporate Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Head of Human Resources
<b>Authorisation</b>	Chief Executive Officer through AFTRS Executive
<b>Effective Date</b>	Initial approval February 2003 Confirmed in AFTRS Enterprise Agreement 2011
<b>Associated Documents</b>	AFTRS Enterprise Agreement 2011 AFTRS Staff Training and Development Policy

### 1. Policy Name

The AFTRS External Studies Assistance Policy

### 2. Preamble – Background

Historically AFTRS has supported staff in external studies through a range of Studies Assistance processes similar to those that operated within the Australian Public Services, and formalised this support in the AFTRS Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2002. This policy was initially approved in 2003 and these provisions have been included in all Enterprise Agreement since that time.

### 3. Policy Scope

All AFTRS employees are covered by this policy.

### 4. Definitions

**Employees** means all people employed by AFTRS on an ongoing, fixed term, temporary or casual basis except those in Trainee positions.

### 5. Policy Statement

AFTRS recognises the benefits to both staff and the School in the continuing education and development of staff. A key component of maintaining currency and increasing skills is the undertaking of external studies. AFTRS also acknowledges the increasing diversity in methods of course delivery and the move towards shorter, competency based external studies which necessitates adopting a flexible approach.

External studies assistance is identified as an investment in the skills and knowledge necessary to extend individual competence and organisational effectiveness. Specifically this policy aims to:

- satisfy the need for skills and knowledge to increase the AFTRS' capacity to achieve its corporate goals, manage change and extend organisational competence;
- link closely to the AFTRS performance management program;
- provide trained staff for specific current and future work requirements;
- enhance the personal development of staff;
- assist in the maintenance of industry currency;
- assist with career development, adaptability and mobility particularly within AFTRS, and
- improve current and future work performance.

## **6. Implementation**

### ***Eligibility and Approval***

Applications for external studies assistance from short term employees who are engaged for specific tasks or projects of less than 12 months are less likely to be approved, although they could be approved under some circumstances.

Part time employees are eligible to apply for external studies assistance. Study leave and studybank will accrue and be graded on a pro-rata basis. The principles of non-discrimination will be observed and all staff will have equal access to apply for assistance.

The approval of an application for external studies assistance is discretionary and will have regard to the availability of resources, operational priorities and efficiency, and equity across the School.

### ***Courses of Study***

A scheme of study may be a course of program of study, a single subject, research, instruction or training. It may require attendance at the institution or be undertaken through distance methods. It should result in an additional qualification, award or certificate of completion.

Generally the course would be offered through an Australian university or institute of technical and further education, or their overseas equivalent. Courses offered by reputable private companies may also be acceptable, especially in the case of technology. Courses offered by other institutions may also be acceptable at the Delegate's discretion.

Short, non-award courses would not normally be covered by these provisions. They would more appropriately be dealt with under the AFTRS Training and Development Policy or through an application for Professional Development Leave.

Priority for approval will be as follows.

- a) Courses of study directly benefiting the staff member in the duties of their current position.

- b) Courses of study giving the staff member skills and/or knowledge which will more generally benefit AFTRS.
- c) Courses of study which will aid the staff member's development and have an indirect benefit to AFTRS.

### ***Approval as a Student***

Approval as a student must be for a specific course of study and will only be granted for a specific period. For a short course of study this would generally be for the entire period. For a longer course of study this would generally only be for a semester. Approved students will be covered by the Commonwealth compensation provisions whilst attending approved study.

Approval as a student will only be granted upon receipt of proof of enrolment. Approval as a student for a further period will generally only be granted upon successful completion of the already approved period. Exceptions to this may be made by the Delegate where exceptional circumstances apply e.g. illness, injury, bereavement, unexpected work pressures etc.

### ***Approval of Study Leave and Accrual of Studybank credits***

Approval of study leave and studybank will only be granted for approved students.

A maximum of 5 ½ hours per week for the period of the approved study may be accrued. The amount of time granted will be dependent on the time required to travel to and attend face to face instruction, any periods of required residential attendance, or an estimate by the institution of the time of study and participation required to complete the course successfully. This time may be used to travel to and attend face to face instruction during normal hours of duty (study leave) or accrued and used for course related requirements such as study, preparation of assignments, assessment work, workshops, residential training, or examination attendance (studybank).

All use of study leave of studybank credits requires the completion of a leave application and the approval of the supervisor with regard to operational requirements.

### ***Financial Assistance***

An approved student who has successfully completed a course of study may be entitled to reimbursement of course related costs to an amount determined by the Delegate on the original application form. Reimbursement will not be approved without proof of expenditure and proof of satisfactory completion of the approved course or approved stage of a course except in the case where a delegate determines there are exceptional circumstances.

### ***Appeals***

If staff are unhappy with the Delegate's decision they may refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer for review. If they are unhappy with the Chief Executive Officer's decision they may lodge a grievance under the AFTRS Grievance procedures.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### ***Delegate***

The Delegate will consider:

- the appropriateness of the proposed study and the institution to the needs of the applicant and AFTRS;
- the strategic and operational needs of AFTRS;
- the competencies required for the staff member's current position and any potential future roles;
- the career and personal development needs of the applicant;
- any special needs of the applicant;
- whether the course of study has been recommended in the staff member's performance agreement, and
- any other factor the delegate thinks is relevant.

***Supervisor/Manager*** will discuss the course of study and expected leave needs with the staff member, make a recommendation and forward the application to the Divisional Director.

***Human Resources*** will receive and process applications and arrange any approved financial assistance following receipt of documentation indicating the course of study has been successfully completed. Human Resources will retain the applications.

***Payroll*** will process all requests for approved study leave and study bank and maintain associated records.

## 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed as required by changes to legislation, policy, guidelines and AFTRS circumstances but at least at the negotiation of the AFTRS Enterprise Agreement.



## APPLICATION FOR EXTERNAL STUDIES ASSISTANCE

Please note that a separate application must be submitted for each period of study.

### PART A – GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_

EEO Group: It is not compulsory to provide this information, however it will assist the AFTRS to monitor the implementation of its EEO plan.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander  Woman

Non-English Speaking Background  Staff member with a disability

### PART B – PROPOSED STUDY

There are 3 possible stages in gaining external studies assistance.

1. Approval as a student.
2. Approval for study leave/studybank.
3. Financial assistance.

Highest level of study previously completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you previously applied for External Studies Assistance? Yes / No

If yes, please state year applied: \_\_\_\_\_

Full title of current/proposed course: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of course: \_\_\_\_\_ Full time / Part time

Period already completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of proposed study (please tick one)

Full time  Part time  Distance/external  Thesis

Period applying for: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ to \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

List the subjects to be completed in this period.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If your request involves special considerations please state. \_\_\_\_\_

**PART C – REQUEST FOR LEAVE**

You are entitled to a maximum of 5 ½ hour per week including travel time to attend lectures etc.

**Face to Face Coursework**

Day	Subject	Type*	Time (hours and minutes)		
			Travel	Session	Travel

\*S=Seminar L=Lecture T=Tutorial P=Practical F=Field trip O=Other

**External/ Correspondence**  (Tick if applicable)

Dates of Compulsory Residential segments.

	Travel	Residential	Travel	Residential
From				
To				
From				
To				

Please indicate the period of study required each week as provided by the Institution.

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**Estimated Costs**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$

Fees \_\_\_\_\_

Books/Materials \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_ Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how the course of study will benefit both you and the AFTRS.

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Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Please attach your proof of enrolment, hours of study and expenses (if applicable) to this page.

**PART D – SUPERVISOR’S ASSESSMENT**

*Please note all leave and financial assistance will need to be accommodated within the current cost centre budget.*

Can the requested leave be accommodated within present operational requirements?

Yes  No

Is the proposed course of study likely to be beneficial to the applicant’s career development?

Yes  No

If you have answered “No” to either of these questions please give your reasons.

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Is approval as a student recommended? Yes  No

If you have answered “no” please give your reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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Is study leave/studybank recommended? Yes  No

If you have answered “No” to the above, please give reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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Is financial assistance recommended? Yes  No

If you have answered “No” to the above, please give reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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If “Yes”, state amount & purpose.

Fees  
Books/materials  
Other  
TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ \$

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART E – DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR DECISION**

Approved as a student      Yes       No

If “no” provide reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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Study Leave/Studybank approved.    Yes       No

If “no” provide reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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Financial Assistance approved.      Yes       No

If “no” provide reasons. \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_      Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART F – HUMAN RESOURCES**

Details entered into Staff Training Record      \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Letters to Cost Centre Manager & Applicant sent      \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Details forwarded to Payroll      \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

***Result of Study for Approved Period***

Evidence of results provided      Yes       No

Passed       Failed       Withdrew       Excluded

If a qualification was gained give details \_\_\_\_\_

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Year gained \_\_\_\_\_

All necessary action has been completed      \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_