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POLICY CODE:	AFCS1
DIRECTORATE:	Finance & Corporate Services
BUSINESS UNIT:	Human Resources
SERVICE UNIT:	Learning & Development
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Learning & Development Co-ordinator
FILE NO.:	182/001
DATE FIRST ADOPTED:	15 April 1997
DATE LAST REVIEWED:	8 December 2016
ATTACHMENTS:	N/A
DELEGATED AUTHORITY REF.:	AFCS1
VERSION NO.	7

Dates of Amendments / Reviews:		
DAPPS Meeting:	24 May 2012	27 November 2014
	23 May 2013	26 February 2015
	28 November 2013	24 November 2016
OCM:	11 February 2011	12 December 2013
	14 June 2012	11 December 2014
	13 June 2013	12 March 2015

BACKGROUND:

The City of Cockburn (“the City’s”) is committed to building the capability of its workforce by encouraging its employees to undertake external development to maintain, improve and enhance their knowledge and skill levels in the workplace.

PURPOSE:

The City recognises the importance of having a skilled workforce that is competent and capable of responding to the needs of the community. The City will endeavour to always appoint to its positions, those persons who are best qualified and/or experienced to carry out the duties expected of the position and acknowledges that employees require ongoing training to meet these expectations.

POLICY:

- (1) The City of Cockburn will fund an annual training budget so as to provide regular opportunities for employees to upgrade and enhance their skills. In most cases such training needs will be recognised through the City’s performance management systems but all employees are themselves encouraged to seek out developmental opportunities that are directly relevant to their employment with the City.

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- (2) This Policy applies to all employees engaged on a permanent full time or part time basis and have successfully completed their probation review.
- (3) Employee development support is not available to the following unless approved by the Service Unit Manager and the Manager, Human Resources:
- a. Casual employees;
 - b. Employees on a temporary contract;
 - c. Permanent employees on leave without pay.
- (4) Attendance at conferences is not covered by this policy.
- (5) For ease of use this policy has been divided into five (5) streams of employee development:
- a. Apprenticeships and Traineeships
 - b. Undergraduates
 - c. University level development
 - d. TAFE / VET level development
 - e. Short course development
- (6) General Conditions
- a. Employee development support is for both time spent in development and for the enrolment costs associated with development.
 - b. For the purposes of this policy, 'Study Leave' is defined as paid leave for the purposes of completing an approved development activity (other than short courses).

Employees will make every effort to enrol into units of study which minimise impact on their service units (eg. Evening units).

Support is based on the Service Unit Manager's recommendation but final approval is from the Manager Human Resources or Learning and Development Coordinator.
 - c. The need for an employee to repeat a unit or course of study shall be deemed to be unsatisfactory performance and that unit will not qualify for any assistance under this Policy.
 - d. Support is not given retrospectively. Employees seeking support from the City will need to apply and have their request approved in writing prior to commencing the development activity.
 - e. Any employee who is granted any assistance under this Policy may not be the beneficiary of any other sponsored training provided by the City.

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(7) Apprenticeship and Traineeship Development

a. The City will provide support for an employee engaged in an apprenticeship or traineeship position.

(i) Time

Apprentices and trainees will be paid for all time required to attend classes where the classes fall during their normal working hours.

(ii) Block Leave

Apprentices and trainees will be paid for all time required to attend block leave classes where the classes fall during their normal working hours.

(iii) Fees

Apprentices and trainees will have all training costs under such schemes met by the City other than parking, campus fines, memberships, guild fees and travel costs associated with the course of study.

(8) Undergraduate Development

a. The City will provide support for an employee engaged in an undergraduate position who has successfully completed the first year of a University Degree.

(i) Time (Study Leave)

Undergraduates are employed on a part-time basis and are therefore required to attend classes on the days they are not scheduled to work for the City.

(ii) Fees

1. The City will provide financial support to the employee to an amount of 25% of the employee's enrolment fee liability for each full unit of study undertaken while employed in an Undergraduate position with the City.
2. Financial support will be paid directly into the employees HECS / FEE HELP account on the successful completion of each unit of study for that semester.
3. After 12 months continuous service post completion of the degree, the City will make a further 25% financial contribution toward the units of study completed during

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employment. As per (8)(a)(ii)(2) financial support will be paid directly into the employees HECS / FEE HELP account.

(9) University Level Development

a. The City will provide support for an employee to undertake nationally recognised tertiary studies for their professional development where the qualification is directly related to their role at the City.

(i) Time (Study Leave)

1. The City will provide a full time employee with time off with pay up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week. Study leave is calculated on the contact time required for each unit.
2. Part time employees will receive pro-rata study leave up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week.
3. If an employee is studying online, study leave will be granted equivalent to that of (9)(a)(i)(1) as if the employee was attending campus.
4. Approved study leave is to be taken within the employee's usual hours of work and is not to be claimed over and above.
5. Study leave is not to be accrued from week to week. Therefore, if not used during the week due it is forfeited.
6. Any travel time will be in the employees own time.

(ii) Block Leave

1. Unit's requiring block participation instead of weekly attendance will receive an amount of leave based on a maximum of five (5) hours of study leave per week (as per (9)(a)(i)(1) for the semester/trimester. Part time employee entitlements will be calculated on a pro-rate basis.
2. If the block participation period exceeds the amount of study leave approved, employees will be required to take some other type of leave to make up the total absence.

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(iii) Examinations

Leave shall be granted to enable the employee to attend examinations relating to the unit being undertaken but will be no greater than 5 hours per week (pro-rata for part time employees).

(iv) Fees

1. The City will provide financial support to the employee to an amount of 50% of the employees enrolment fee liability for each full unit of study calculated on a per semester/trimester basis.
2. An employee has three options to claim financial support from the City:
 - (a) Enter into a *Training Agreement* with the City whereby the City pays 100% of the enrolment fees upfront and the employee repays the City 50% of these fees through their fortnightly pay for a maximum of eight (8) fortnights.
 - (b) Pay for their enrolment fees upfront themselves and on successful completion of each unit of study provide a copy of the paid receipt and record of results to the Learning and Development Coordinator for 50% reimbursement into their nominated bank account.
 - (c) Defer their enrolment fees to HECS / FEE HELP and on successful completion of each unit of study provide a copy of the HECS / FEE HELP Liability Statement and a record of results to the Learning and Development Coordinator for 50% reimbursement into their HECS / FEE HELP or nominated bank account.

(v) Application and Approval Process

1. Employees are required to complete the *Application for University Study Support* and submit to the Learning and Development Coordinator for approval.
2. Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of studies in order for the employee to access support under this policy.

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3. Please refer to procedure *LD1.2 How to apply for university study support under the EDP* for more information.

(10) TAFE / VET Level Development

- a. The City will provide support for an employee to undertake nationally recognised post-secondary/vocational studies for their professional development where the qualification is directly related to their role at the City.

(i) Time (Study Leave)

1. The City will provide a full time employee with time off with pay up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week. Study leave is calculated on the contact time required for each unit.
2. Part time employees will receive pro-rata study leave up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week.
3. Approved study leave is to be taken within the employee's usual hours of work and is not to be claimed over and above.
4. Study leave is not to be accrued from week to week. Therefore, if not used during the week due it is forfeited.
5. Any travel time will be in the employees own time.

(ii) Fees

1. The City will provide financial support to the employee to an amount of 50% of the employee's enrolment fee liability for each full unit of study.
2. An employee has two options to claim financial support from the City:
 - (a) Pay for their enrolment fees upfront themselves and on successful completion of each unit of study provide a copy of the paid receipt and record of results to the Learning and Development Coordinator for 50% reimbursement into their nominated bank account.
 - (b) Defer their enrolment fees to VET FEE HELP and on successful completion of each unit of study provide a copy of the VET FEE HELP Liability

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Statement and a record of results to the Learning and Development Coordinator for 50% reimbursement into their VET FEE HELP or nominated bank account.

(ii) Application and Approval Process

1. Employees are required to complete the *Application for TAFE / VET Study Support* and submit to the Learning and Development Coordinator for approval.
2. Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of studies in order for the employee to access support under this policy.
3. Please refer to procedure *LD1.3 How to apply for TAFE/VET study support under the EDP* for more information.

(11) Short Course Development

- a. The City will provide support for an employee to undertake a short course for their professional development where the course is directly related to their role and the need has been identified through the City's annual performance review system.

(i) Time

1. Employees will be paid for all time required to attend short courses.
2. If attendance is required on a day when an employee would normally be taking their "Flexible Day Off" (FDO) then the employee will accrue the time and may elect to have this time paid out at normal rates.

(ii) Fees

1. Employees approved to undertake a short course under this policy will have all costs covered by the City. These costs include enrolment fees, parking fees and travel expenses.
2. The following fees will not be covered under this policy:
 - (a) Parking or campus fines
 - (b) Memberships

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(iii) Application and Approval Process

1. Employees are required to complete the *Application for Short Course Study Support* and submit to the Learning and Development Coordinator for approval.
2. Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the course in order for the employee to access support under this policy.
3. Please refer to procedure *LD1.4 How to apply for short course study support under the EDP* for more information.
4. Managers have the ability to fund an employee's attendance at a short course from their own budget and do not require approval from Human Resources. Should this occur, the Learning and Development Coordinator must be notified of the employee's attendance and provided with a copy of their certificate for the purposes of accurate record keeping.

(iv) Unique Student Identifier

In accordance with the Student Identifiers Act 2014, effective as of 1 January 2015 all employees attending a nationally recognised course of study (excluding university level degrees) will be required to apply for a Unique Student Identifier (USI). Please refer to the *Application for Short Course Study Support* for more information on how to apply for this number.

(12) Service Commitment and repayment of financial support

- a. Should an employee voluntarily terminate employment with the City prior to twelve (12) months service following the completion of each unit of study, the employee will be required to repay the City 50% of the financial contribution made towards these units. This amount will be deducted from the employee's final pay. In the event that the employee does not have enough entitlements to cover the repayment, a debtor invoice will be created and the employee will be required to pay the invoice through arrangements with the City's Rates and Revenue team.
- b. Should an employee fail to pass or withdraw from the approved unit of study whilst still employed at the City, they will be required to repay the full amount (100%) of the total financial support they received towards this development.

This support can be repaid through the employee's fortnightly pay over a maximum of eight (8) pay cycles until the City has been repaid in full.

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The Learning and Development Coordinator and the Manager of Human Resources can approve alternative arrangements at the employee's request.