

Sponsorship Policy for Employees

Version 1.3

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Policy Approver	Administration Board	Effective Date	01/07/2020		

1 Policy

- 1.1** The Sponsorship policy aims to provide a framework to support the Institute for Education (IfE) full time staff in their professional development to gain an Academic Education qualification.

2 Purpose

- 2.1** This policy sets out how IfE will manage internal sponsorship in a consistent and fair manner. IfE believes everyone's professional development is critical in building and maintaining a high performing academic organisation.

3 Definitions

- 3.1** Higher education Sponsorship is the award of a Sponsorship for an employee to further develop academic/professional advancement.

3.2 Spouses & Partners under Maltese Law

A partner under the Maltese Citizenship include married spouses as well as a partner in a stable and durable relationship with the main applicant. Evidence of the durability and stability of the relationship needs to be provided.

3.3 Dependents/Children under Maltese Law

Dependents/Children under 18 years of age as well as children under 27 who are unmarried and who are financial dependent on the main applicant and the spouse. This is also open to natural, adoptive and stepchildren of both main applicant and their spouse/partner.

4 Responsibilities

- 4.1** Human Resources Department will administer this policy and will make sure that the procedure is adhered to, and all documentation is properly saved.
- 4.2** The employee/beneficiary must complete the required forms and submit the application in time. When the sponsorship is approved, the beneficiary is responsible to follow the IfE course regulations and to complete the course of study successfully. Also, the beneficiary must keep their superior updated with the progress in the course of studies.

5 Procedure

- 5.1** Should the sponsorship be approved, the employee will be required to sign a letter of undertaking with IfE Appendix 2, 3 or 4. For procedure flow please refer to Appendix 1.

5.2 Conditions for Sponsorship

5.2.1 The employee must be:

- an employee with IfE for more than one year for the Sponsorship to be granted;
- enrolling in a part-time/distance learning qualification with the IfE.
- the employee should have successfully completed their probationary period with the IfE and has had their probation review before applying for a sponsorship;
- the training being sought by the individual should result in added value to the IfE's overall skills profile. It should clearly be of value to both the individual and the IfE;
- the academic programme being requested should be in line with the individual's professional development plan discussed during appraisal meetings;
- funds must be available in the budget to cover such expenses.

5.2.2 Consideration will also be given to the employee's past performance and other signs of loyalty towards IfE.

5.3 Application

5.3.1 A prospective candidate should make a formal request in writing to HR stating full details such as the subject, time schedule and costs, and the following documents:

- letter of acceptance by the IfE,
- a letter describing the reasons why the applicant would be a worthy recipient of a sponsorship. Details should include the applicant's contribution to IfE, related activities, academic achievements, most important accomplishments and future goals;
- two letters of reference from two individuals named in the application;
- an up-to-date official prospectus of the course;
- copies of any relevant material such as brochures, adverts, fees, etc.

5.4 Study Period

5.4.1 During the study period, the employee must keep their superior / HR Manager up to date with the progress every year throughout the course of studies. Therefore an annual report must be submitted and supported by documents/information from the relative course/tutor.

5.5 Termination of Employment or abandoning the course

5.5.1 Should an employee decide to terminate their employment, the employee will pay back IfE on a pro-rata basis the amount due in accordance with the letter of undertaking. Alternatively, the employee may opt to work out the binding period (plus the notice period which will be calculated at the time) as signed in the letter of undertaking.

5.5.2 Also, should an employee decide to stop or abandon the course, the full fee of the course must be refunded to IfE according to the binding letter signed by both parties.

5.6 Areas/Courses Covered

5.6.1 Any qualification (Level 5, 6, 7 or 8) relating to education/learning which forms part of the curriculum published by IfE.

5.6.2 All considerations will be examined on their own merit by the Academic Board.

5.7 Waiver of course fee for spouse/partner/direct dependant

5.7.1 Qualification course fees are waived for the spouse/partner/direct dependent of a full time employee of the IfE, including the conditions for sponsorship indicated above. Fees can be waived for courses as listed in Appendix A/B of the Fees Policy: [Tuition Fees Policy](#), the employee would need to apply through the following [Tuition Fee Waiver Form - Employee applying for Spouse/Partner/Dependant](#) and consequently sign the following forms: [Sponsorship forms](#)

6 Award of Sponsorship

6.1 The Academic Board is set up to adjudicate and decide and approve the **Sponsorship**. All decisions taken by the Academic Board will be notified through the Manager of Human Resources on behalf of the Board.

6.2 Upon award of a Sponsorship, the respective employee:

- should ensure that the commitment required by and duration of the course should only have a minimal impact on their work and/or assigned projects;
- must remain an employee of the IfE for the duration of the course, adding the binding period.
- has to sign a letter of undertaking with IfE.

6.3 It is important to note the following:

- **The Academic Board will use whatever manner it chooses to make its selection(s), no later than the 60 days following the receipt of an application.**
- **The Academic Board is under no obligation to award any Sponsorship if it feels that none of the applicants qualify.**
- **The decision of the Academic Board is final and not subject to appeal.**

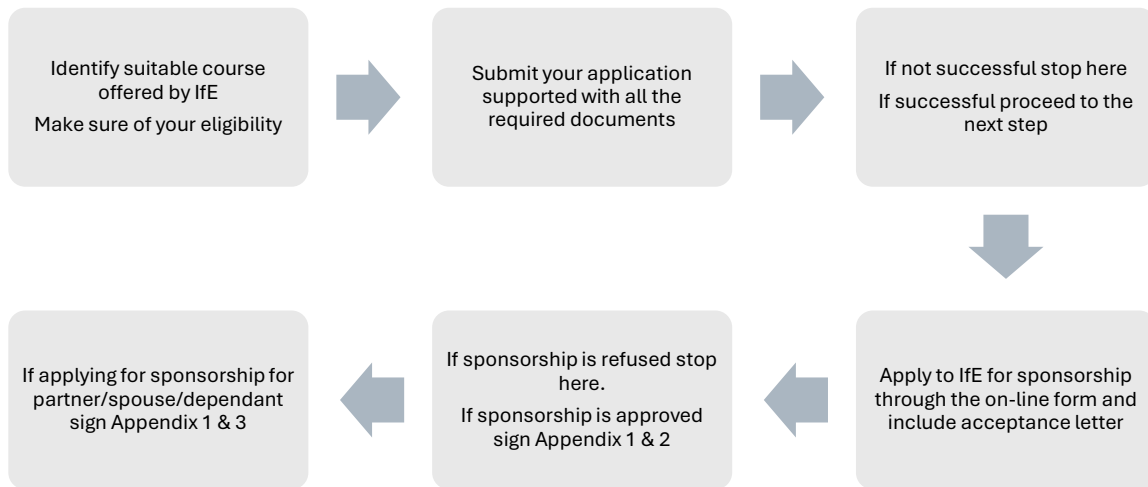
7 References and related documents

- Probation Clause in Contract of Employment. Employees who are under probation period do not qualify for sponsorship.
- [Sponsorship and study leave manual published by IPS \(2018\)](#)
- [Tuition Fees Policy](#)
- Contract of Employment
- [Collective Agreement for Employees in the Public Service \(effective 1st January 2017\).](#)

8 Version history

Originator	Version	Date	Changes Done
HR Department	1.0	1/07/2020	Initial Release
HR Department	1.1	5/11/2020	Removal of Study Leave option and transferred to Leave policy
QA Department	1.2	3/05/2024	Updated all links
HR Department	1.3	03/02/2025	Updated in line with rebranding guidelines

Appendix 1-Sponsorship policy process flow



Appendix 2–Rules Governing the Award of Sponsorships

1. The sponsorship will cover the course fee as indicated in the [Tuition Fees Policy](#) and in the form of undertaking (see Appendix II), waived to the beneficiary.

2. The beneficiary will be required:

(a) to sign this Appendix 2 as a sign of agreeing with the rules set in this appendix a to indicated from the table below the applicable fee range.

(b) to devote their whole time to follow the course of instruction for which the sponsorship is awarded, unless permission to undertake other work or to change their course is granted by the Academic Board and unless the course of study is undertaken after office hours or through distance learning;

(c) to satisfy IfE as to attendance, conduct and progress by reports from the head of Programmes under whom the course of training is being undertaken.

3. Before starting or proceeding on a course, the sponsorship holder will be required to sign an undertaking binding them to serve the IfE for a given period, as stated hereunder, from the date of termination of their studies.

Duration of Sponsorship or Course Expenses as per para 3.1 below	Period for which the beneficiary will be bound to serve	Sign the appropriate selection
Up to 1 week duration or up to €700 expenses	6 Months	
Above 1 week and up to 1 month or up to €1300 expenses	9 Months	
Above 1 month and up to 3 months or up to €1900 expenses	1 Year	
Above 3 and up to 6 months or up to €3000 expenses	2 Years	
Above 6 and up to 9 months or up to €4100 expenses	3 Years	
Above 9 and up to 12 months or up to €6000 expenses	4 Years	

3.1 Calculation of the period for which the sponsorship holder will be bound to serve is made after successfully complete the course will be based on the course fee as published on the Fees Policy.

4. A sponsorship may be suspended or terminated if:-

(a) reports on the beneficiary’s work or conduct are unsatisfactory;

(b) the beneficiary, without reasonable excuse, fails to pass a prescribed examination within the time fixed by the authorities of the institution which they are attending;

(c) the beneficiary engages in any occupation which is detrimental to their progress in the course of studies prescribed for them or accepts any paid employment without the permission of IfE;

(d) the beneficiary becomes unfit to complete their studies owing to illness or is absent from their studies for owing to illness.

5. The beneficiary must notify IfE of the date of termination of their course. This declaration is to be supported by documentary evidence from the IfE.

6. The beneficiary may also be required to refund all or any part of the expenses incurred by IfE on their behalf and in connection with their sponsorship

(a) if they fail to successfully complete the course due to negligence on their part; or

(b) if they fail to serve IfE as stated in paragraph 3 above.

7. Any qualification allowance resulting from an IfE sponsorship is regulated by article 22.1 of the Collective Agreement for Employees in the Public Service (effective 1st January 2017).

8. Every candidate who is undertaking a sponsored course of studies from IfE, and who has to abandon their course as a result of physical or mental illness is to bring a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner indicating why they are unable to continue with their studies.

9.* When a candidate undertaking a sponsored course of study at IfE is unable to go on with their studies because of any physical or mental illness they are to be referred for examination to the Academic Board, who will report on the employees' state of health. The candidate may be required to refund all or part of the costs incurred by the sponsoring organisation as a result of the sponsorship unless it is officially certified in this manner that the candidate's state of health precluded them from completing the course.

10. * When a candidate undertaking a sponsored course applies for paid leave, the allowances will be deducted when the candidate is on un/paid leave on grounds of public policy. The qualification allowance should continue to be paid when officers are on paid leave on grounds of public policy. However, it should be withheld when the candidate, on paid leave on grounds of public policy, are absent beyond the limits set in the preceding paragraph. Allowances are not deducted during duty leave.

Allowances are to be deducted, as indicated in the formula below, foreach day of absence.

Annual Allowance ÷ 365 or Annual Allowance ÷ 366 (for a leap year)

.....
(Name and signature of beneficiary) ID Number Date

.....
(Name and signature of CEO of IfE/ representative) ID Number

Articles 9* & 10* of this appendix do not apply in case the application is being submitted on behalf of Spouse/Dependent.

The information shown on this form will be used by the IfE for record-keeping purposes and for any action that may be required relating to this Undertaking.

Appendix 3 – Form of Undertaking for Sponsorship by IfE employee

I acknowledge that in accepting this sponsorship awarded by the IfE, in order to follow a course in (*course title/subject.....*) organised by the IfE, during the period

I hereby bind myself to be available to serve IfE, for a period of (*number of years of obligation according to the criteria shown in Appendix I.....*) years from my completion of the course of study.

I acknowledge further that the above-mentioned sponsorship is being granted to me under the conditions set out in the rules governing the award of sponsorships insofar as they are applicable to this particular sponsorship and I hereby bind myself to abide by the rules set in this policy.

I also bind myself to pay IfE the penalty of (*penalty in case I decide to leave the course/terminate my job at IfE*), the full prorated cost paid for the course €..... for failure to comply fully with my obligations according to this undertaking.

.....
(Name and signature of beneficiary)

.....
ID Number

.....
(Name and signature of CEO of IfE/representative)

.....
ID Number

.....
(Date)

The information shown on this form will be used by the IfE for record-keeping purposes and for any action that may be required relating to this Undertaking.

Appendix 4 – Form of Undertaking for Sponsorship of Spouse/Partner/Dependant of an IfE full time Employee

I acknowledge that in accepting this sponsorship awarded to my spouse/partner/dependant by the IfE, in order to follow a course in (*course title/subject.....*) organised by the IfE, during the period

I hereby bind myself to be available to serve IfE, for a period of (*number of years of obligation according to the criteria shown in Appendix I.....*) years from the completion of the course of study being followed by my spouse/partner/dependant

I acknowledge further that the above-mentioned sponsorship is being granted to my spouse/partner/dependant under the conditions set out in the rules governing the award of sponsorships insofar as they are applicable to this particular sponsorship and I hereby bind myself to abide by the rules set in this policy.

I also bind myself to pay IfE the penalty of (*penalty in case my spouse/partner/dependant decides to leave the course or terminate my job at IfE*), the full prorated cost paid for the course €..... for failure to comply fully with my obligations according to this undertaking.

(Name and signature of spouse/partner/dependant)

ID Number

(Name and signature of the employee of the IfE)

ID Number

(Name and signature of CEO of the IfE)

ID Number

Date

The information shown on this form will be used by the IfE for record-keeping purposes and for any action that may be required relating to this Undertaking.