

**THE REGISTRATION OF REIMBURSABLE COURSES  
FOR THE CONTINUING EDUCATION FUND UNDER  
THE SECTOR – INTERPERSONAL & INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS  
FOR THE WORKPLACE**

---

**-- Guide to Registering a Reimbursable Course --**

**I. Background**

In the 2001 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Government would set aside \$5 billion to subsidise those with learning aspirations to pursue continuing education and training programmes. The aim is to help people pursue continuous learning, thereby preparing us for the knowledge-based economy. To ensure that funds are put to the best use, the subsidy will only be available for courses in specified categories (tourism; logistics; financial services; China business; design; language; interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace) that have been assessed to meet the required competencies.

**II. Scope of the Continuing Education Fund**

Under the Continuing Education Fund, set up subsequent to the Chief Executive's announcement, course providers who offer self-financing courses (i.e. the operating expenses of the courses are not supported by any subsidy from the Government) in specified subject disciplines may apply for registration of their courses, with the effect that course participants on registered courses may apply for a fee reimbursement of up to HK\$10,000.

The following principles govern the operation of the Fund:

- Applicants must be Hong Kong residents, aged 18 to 60 at the time of application and claim of reimbursement;
- Eligible courses must be approved by the Government;
- Courses must contribute to the economic development of Hong Kong;
- Applicants may not enjoy double subsidy;
- Participants must contribute a minimum of 20% of the total course fee;
- Participants must complete the full course or module(s) forming part of the course and pass all assessment requirements to qualify for reimbursement;

- Course providers must keep attendance records and assessment records; and
- Applicants should have paid for the tuition fees and submit their applications before the commencement of the courses.

### **III. Role of Assessment Panel**

1. The assessment of the “registrability” of courses under the sector “Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace” will be carried out by an Assessment Panel (Panel). The Panel provides an independent assessment of individual courses to ensure that they are properly structured to deliver the specified competencies as set out at Annex 1. The Panel will also ensure that relevant teaching and learning activities, assessment requirements and quality assurance procedures are in place so that the course is delivered in an appropriate manner.
2. The Panel will make recommendations on the registrability of the proposed courses to the Secretary for Education and Manpower.
3. The Panel will also monitor the quality of the registered reimbursable courses by conducting quality audits and/or on-site inspections, if required.

### **IV. Registration Criteria**

#### Content

- (i) The overall objective of the proposed course should be the development of the stipulated competencies to enable participants to contribute to the economic development of Hong Kong.
- (ii) The proposed course should be designed to cover all three main components of the competencies for this sector, as shown in Annex 1 to this Guide.
- (iii) The minimum acceptable duration for a reimbursable course is 40 hours including at least two blocs of 16 hours with overnight stay.
- (iv) Course providers are required to provide clear descriptions and publicity material to ensure that potential trainees understand what is involved in the course. Appropriate selection procedures should be in place to ensure that participants attend appropriate courses.

- (v) The age, education levels, work experience and training experience of participants should be clearly specified for each course as appropriate.
- (vi) Training providers are encouraged to form alliances in order to deliver a complete and integrated programme. There must however be one “lead partner” who is for the purpose of registration of a reimbursable course under the sector “Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace” the training provider and takes overall responsibility for successful delivery of the course.

### Course Delivery

- (i) Reimbursable courses must be conducted **in HONG KONG**.
- (ii) Reimbursable courses must incorporate face-to-face elements.
- (iii) Course providers may offer a variety of modes of attendance, such as activities conducted on evenings, weekends, day-release, and/or holidays to cater for the different needs of participants.
- (iv) Courses should have an attendance requirement. Course providers should keep attendance registers and particulars of each of the participants. The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), the Panel and the Office of the Continuing Education Fund (OCEF) may need to inspect the registers.
- (v) Participants should be provided with adequate access to learning support facilities as appropriate to the level of the course and requirements of the course, such as computers, libraries and/or self-study materials.
- (vi) Courses should be conducted in an appropriate venue and with a class size appropriate to the nature of the course/activity. The course providers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the premises used for delivering registered courses are safe from the aspects of both fire and structural safety.
- (vii) Courses duration and frequency of learning activities should be appropriate to the nature of the course.

### Course Provider

- (i) The following areas will be assessed:
  - Training facilities
  - Track record
  - Quality and maintenance standards of equipment
  - Skills, knowledge and experience of staff
  - Administrative backup
  - Safety audit, procedures and backup
  - Insurance, liability, director profile
  - Business registration, accounts and other areas related to the proper establishment of the provider
  
- (ii) The provision of courses under this sector is confined to local providers as lead partner. A local provider is defined as institution or body with registration and operation in Hong Kong. However, local providers are allowed to enter into alliances with overseas partners.

### Admission

- (i) Where there are admission requirements these should be appropriate to the level and requirements of the course. Admission should be conducted according to the stipulated requirements. Participants are to be adequately informed about what will be involved in the course. There must be adequate selection procedures.

### Assessment

- (i) The reimbursable course must comprise appropriate learning and assessment activities to facilitate the participants acquiring the stated competencies to be delivered by the course. The assessment may take the form of examination(s) or continuous assessment or both. If both, the weightings should be indicated.
  
- (ii) Course providers should keep record of the following, which may be inspected by the Panel, EMB and the OCEF where necessary:
  - Assessment questions;
  - Assessment results of each participant; and
  - Samples of marked participants' assessment work

- (iii) Participants should be given graduation certificates and/or transcripts showing their assessment results, and dates of course completion.

Instructors/Presenters

- (i) Course providers should recruit an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced instructors or presenters.
- (ii) The instructors or presenters must possess the relevant academic and/or professional qualifications, relevant teaching and/or working experience. In this connection, course providers should provide detailed information, including the names of the instructors/presenters, their academic qualifications and awarding institutions, professional qualifications and awarding institutions, and relevant experience.
- (iii) There should be a Course Director who is responsible for the overall management and quality of the course. The Course Director should possess relevant experience in course management.

Quality Assurance

- (i) Course providers should have in place a comprehensive mechanism for assuring and monitoring the quality of the course.
- (ii) The processes for quality assurance should be well documented and clearly understood by all personnel involved.
- (iii) Should there be any material changes to the course (contact hours, content, instructors/presenters, assessment requirements, etc.) course providers are required to obtain the approval of the Panel in advance. The Panel reserves the right to re-assess the course. Upon re-assessment and where necessary, the Panel may recommend de-registration of the course.
- (iv) The providers will be required to allow members or representatives of the Panel and the Secretary for Education and Manpower or her representatives to attend any courses for assessment purpose, and after registration, for purposes of monitoring and quality assurance. The Panel, EMB and OCEF may also seek to obtain independent feedback from course participants.

Course Brochure/Publicity Material

- (i) The providers should provide a copy of the course brochure and other publicity material pertaining to the proposed course at the time of the application.

Generally all the above assessment items should be provided to the satisfaction of the Secretary for Education and Manpower on the advice of the Assessment Panel.

**V. Outcome of the Assessment**

- Approval - recommend for registration
- Non-approval

**VI. Monitoring of Reimbursable Course**

As deemed necessary by the Secretary for Education and Manpower after registration, an inspection may be conducted as appropriate during which the course providers will be required to provide updated information about the course. This exercise is to ascertain whether the programme continues to fulfil the registration criteria, and whether the imposed conditions, if any, have been fulfilled and whether the course should continue to be a reimbursable course.

**VII. Requirement from the Student Financial Assistance Agency**

1. The Office of the Continuing Education Fund (OCEF) under the Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) is responsible for processing applications for assistance and disbursement of payment to eligible applicants.
2. Course providers will be required to certify on the application form that the applicant has enrolled in the course as stated by the applicant and that the information in respect of the fees paid and commencement date of the course is correct. Course providers should also submit a specimen of their stamp chop to OCEF for verification purpose.
3. To facilitate OCEF's vetting during the reimbursement stage, course providers must also state on the tuition fee receipt the date of payment received and the commencement date of the course concerned. Course providers are further required to certify on the Reimbursement Claim

Form that the applicant concerned has successfully completed the course and the information in respect of the fees paid, course commencement date and completion date provided by the applicant are correct. On successful completion of the course, applicants should receive from the course providers concerned suitable documentary proof which may include a certificate of award, a letter or a transcript.

4. To verify correctness of information submitted by applicants in support of reimbursements made, OCEF will conduct inspections of registration, fee payment, attendance and completion of course records maintained by course providers. OCEF may also produce a template and ask the course providers concerned to verify the applicants' information on the template to ensure that the applicants have successfully completed the course(s)/modules and the applicants have not enjoyed double subsidy/financial assistance in respect of the same course(s) under other publicly-funded financial assistance schemes. Course providers must also abide by any other conditions set by OCEF from time to time for the purpose of efficient administration of the Fund.
5. Reimbursement of fees from the Fund will be made in Hong Kong currency. Course providers should collect tuition fees from the applicants in Hong Kong dollars or convert course fees collected in foreign currency to Hong Kong dollars on the tuition fee receipts.

### **VIII. De-registration**

1. Courses once registered may be liable for de-registration if:
  - (a) the application for registration contains false information;
  - (b) the Secretary for Education and Manpower on the advice of the Panel after an inspection has been conducted considers that the course fails to meet any of the requirements as specified in this Guide and in the Approval Letter; or
  - (c) such other circumstances as the Secretary for Education and Manpower may deem necessary in order to ensure that the purposes of the Fund are properly achieved and the welfare and safety of students are safeguarded.
2. In the case of de-registration, the Secretary for Education and Manpower will inform the course provider of the grounds for de-registration and will

allow the course provider reasonable opportunity to make representations as to why the course or courses should not be de-registered before a final decision is made.

Please call 2810 2264 for enquiries on the registrability of courses under this sector “Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace”.

\*\*\*\*\* *END* \*\*\*\*\*



**Continuing Education Fund**  
**Sector: Interpersonal & Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace**<sup>(Note 1)</sup>

<b><i>Sector-specific Competencies</i></b> <sup>(Note 2)</sup>		
<p><b>(1) Life skills</b></p> <p>Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Problem-solving</li> <li>◆ Creativity</li> <li>◆ Communication Skills</li> <li>◆ Analytical Skills</li> <li>◆ Learning to learn</li> <li>◆ Independent Thinking</li> <li>◆ Sense of purpose/goal setting</li> <li>◆ Management of Emotions</li> </ul>	<p><b>(2) Working with Others</b></p> <p>Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Team building</li> <li>◆ Leadership</li> <li>◆ Working in Partnership</li> <li>◆ Conflict Resolution</li> <li>◆ Sense of Accountability</li> <li>◆ Self-discipline</li> </ul>	<p><b>(3) Values and Attitudes</b></p> <p>Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Optimism<sup>(Note 3)</sup></li> <li>◆ Self-esteem<sup>(Note 4)</sup></li> <li>◆ Positive Outlook<sup>(Note 5)</sup></li> <li>◆ Sensitivity to change and willingness to change</li> </ul>

**Notes:**

- (1) To be successful in the workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one needs more than professional skills. Howard Gardner stresses the importance of “intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence”, among the nine intelligences he proposed. (《Intelligence reframed》, 《Good Work》). Other specialists emphasized the importance of “emotional intelligence”, and “adversity quotient”. (《Emotional Intelligence》, 《EQ at work》, Daniel Goleman; 《Adversity Quotient》, Paul Stoltz )
- (2) This conceptual framework is borrowed from the concept of “resilience”, which include three important components: life skills, sense of belonging and optimism. Resilience is a key concept in the midst of adversities and competitions that one has to face in the workplace of Hong Kong and the world. This conceptual frame embraces the essential intrapersonal and interpersonal skills that one would require to thrive in the working place. (“Understanding Adolescents Project”, sponsored by Education Department, and Education Department employed this conceptual framework to train the adolescents in high schools and primary schools.)
- (3) Martin Seligman’s important research help us to understand the damaging effect and the causes of “learned pessimism and “learned helplessness.” He proposed that “learned optimism” is important for one’s success in life. (《Learned Optimism》 )
- (4) One’s “self-esteem” includes one’s sense of confidence and competence, which is important for our performance at work. (《Six pillars of self-esteem》, Nathaniel Brandon)
- (5) Howard Gardner proposes the concept of “good work”, where morality and excellence meet. It is important to have positive values and positive attitude at work. (《Good work》 )