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Headquarters Marine Corps
Academic Degree Program (ADP)
Handbook
(revised Feb 2023)

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Director, Marine Corps Staff
Administration and Resource Management Division
Human Resources and Organizational Management (HROM)
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HQMC ADP Handbook

Academic Degree Program Overview

The Academic Degree Program (ADP) provides limited financial assistance for employees seeking an academic degree or professional license or certification. This program is part of the Civilian Career and Leadership Development (CCLD) Program. The guidelines in this handbook comply with the requirements of MARADMIN 433/10 and established HQMC fiscal procedures.

Participant Eligibility Requirements

All civilian employees at HQMC, HQBN Henderson Hall, Marine Barracks and Marine Corps Institute are eligible to participate in the HQMC ADP except:

• Employees occupying a position that is accepted from competitive service because of its confidential policy-determining, policy making, or policy-advocating character.

• Non-appropriated fund employees

• Employees not enrolled and actively participating in the Civilian Leadership Development (CLD) Program

ADP participants must be enrolled and remain active in the HQMC CLD Program, which includes; 1) taking a leadership skills assessment; 2) selecting a mentor; 3) working with the mentor and supervisor to develop an Individual Leadership Development Plan (ILDP) based on the skills assessment; 4) complete all activities per the ILDP; and 5) update the assessment and ILDP as needed. See your HQMC CCLD Administrator for more information or to apply for the CLD Program.

Academic Degree, Certification and License Program Requirements

• The academic degree training funded through the ADP must be part of a degree-seeking program that supports organizational objectives and leads to improvements in organizational or individual performance.

• The professional license or certification training and/or examination funded through the ADP must support one or more of the following criteria:

      o Enhance productivity

      o Improve performance

      o Maximize recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions

      o Increase retention, especially for "high turnover" career fields

   o Broaden and develop the skill base for a quality workforce to accomplish the Marine Corps' mission and ensure readiness

   o Support civilian leadership development initiatives and career path improvements to meet future requirements

• All training funded through the ADP must be conducted by an institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized body to provide a curriculum of post-secondary education. Additionally, the institution must not discriminate on the basis of political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition.

• Applicants are required to sign a Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) authorizing the United States Marine Corps access to their records. Failure to allow the United States Marine Corps access to their College/University records will result in the Civilian Marine not being allowed to participate in the ADP Program. A hard copy of this agreement is to be kept in the ADP Program files, and must be submitted electronically with each and every SF182 transaction when requesting additional Tuition. If it is found out at any time that the Civilian Marine has revoked the FERPA authorization, the Civilian Marine will be dis-enrolled from the ADP Program, and will have to reimburse the United States Marine Corps for any courses the United States Marine Corps has not received grade reports for.

• Applicant must agree to and sign a Continued Service/Repayment Agreement that equals three times the length of time spent in ADP-funded training, to commence following the completion of the last class in the program or when the participant withdraws. Unless otherwise specified by the institution, time spent in training will be calculated using the following formula: total number of credit hours x 15 = total training hours. The Repayment portion of the agreement covers if the participant should fail to complete their training, or take the training that has been prepaid, that they have agreed to reimburse to reimburse the DoD the cost of their training.

• ADP cannot be used in conjunction with any other tuition reimbursement program funded by another federal source with no payback requirement (i.e. Montgomery GI Bill, Pell Grants). ADP participants may still use these sources for tuition assistance, but not for the same courses funded through ADP. Engaging in this activity constitutes fraud and is punishable by law.

• HQMC ADP participants will be given a copy of their approved SF-182 form. All approved ADP courses will be prepaid utilizing the Government-wide Commercial Purchase Card (GCPC).

• ADP tuition assistance is subject to availability of funds and is not guaranteed for every course required to complete a degree, license, or certification program.

• ADP tuition assistance will only be provided for the current semester/quarter. Additional funding for future semesters/quarters will not be provided until the grade report for the previous semester/quarter has been provided. It does not matter if the semester/quarter overlaps the previous semester/quarter or if the Civilian Marine hasn't been able to obtain their grade report. No grade report provided from the previous semester/quarter = no additional funding.

• ADP participants must follow all procedures for requesting tuition assistance, registering for classes, canceling or substituting classes, verifying successful completion, and all other program requirements. Failure to do so may result in personal liability for any balance due to the DoD, as well as possible termination from the CLD and ADP programs.

The Difference between Certification and Certificate Programs

The following information is excerpted from the OPM Certification Program Fact Sheet. It describes the different between certification and certificate programs. Certificate programs cannot be funded through the ADP.

A certification program involves a process in which individuals attain and demonstrate the level of knowledge and skill required to perform in the profession, occupation, or role (for example, Certified Public Accountant (CPA)). Individuals are assessed against pre-determined standards for knowledge/skills/competencies and granted a time-limited credential. To renew the credential, they must be re-assessed.

A certificate program is a training program established or purchased to provide structured training courses to employees to meet an identified performance and developmental need. Individuals receive certificates after the course of study has been completed, without any requirement for previous work experience or exhibited skill level. There is no requirement for an end-of-program assessment for obtaining a certificate.

ADP Process and Procedures

The ADP application, funding requests, and payment process and procedures are outlined below. For more information or to apply, please contact the HQMC CCLD Administrator at (703) 614-9088 or email to: smb_hqmc_arhb_trng@usmc.mil

Step 1: Application: To enroll, complete the following and submit to the CCLD Administrator:

• CLD Application

• ADP Application

• Copy of the required college/university curriculum

• CCLD Individual Leadership Development Plan (ILDP)

• Results of the MPC provided Self Assessment

• HQMC ADP Participant Acknowledgement

• Copy of the FERPA form from the College or University the applicant plans to attend

Step 2: Training Requests (SF-182)

Once the application is approved, complete and submit training requests using the SF-182 form and instructions provided by the CCLD Administrator. Keep in mind the following:

• A separate SF-182 must be submitted for each course and be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the start date of the course.

• Ensure the required documentation on tuition and other costs are submitted with your SF-182 to avoid unnecessary delays in processing your request. This includes the course description and documentation from your school on tuition cost.

Step 3: Submitting the SF-182 for tuition payment

• It is your responsibility to ensure your school will accept third party payment prior to starting your course.

• The SF-182 MUST be approved prior to the start date of your course. Submitting an unapproved SF-182 to your college/university as a promise to pay constitutes an unauthorized commitment for which the Government is not obligated to pay. An approved SF-182 will contain the following:

> 1) Block 4, Section C (Doc Number and initials of Fiscal Officer)
>
> 2) Block 1d, Section D (Applicant's Supervisor Signature)
>
> 3) Block 3d, Section D (Training Officer/CCLD Administrator) signature
>
> 4) Block 1d, Section E (Signature of Authorizing Official)

• If our fiscal office receives an invoice from your college or university and there is no approved SF-182 for the courses listed on the invoice, the invoice will not be paid and you will be responsible for all of the costs.

Step 4: Payment to your College/University/Learning Institution

• Prepayment to your College/University/Learning Institution for your course/training will not occur more than 45 days in advance unless absolutely necessary in a situation that can not be avoided.

Step 5: Purchasing books and resources materials

• Due to limited funding, textbooks, and class material will not be funded; it is the responsibility of the participant to purchase textbooks and resource materials for classes/training.

Step 6: Course Cancellations and Substitutions

• Cancellations and substitutions should be restricted only to reasons outside your control, such as prerequisites you were not informed of before the class started.

• If you drop out of a course after the drop-add date, you will be responsible to reimburse the DoD any amount of funding that the GCPC cardholder is unable to recoup from your college/university.

• To cancel a course prior to the college/university drop-add date, contact the CCLD Administrator immediately to cancel the SF-182. If payment has been conducted already, you may be responsible for any monies that the GCPC cardholder is unable to recoup due to your college/university's drop policy.

• To substitute another course prior to the drop-add date, contact the CCLD Administrator immediately to cancel the SF-182, and submit a new SF-182 tor approval. Normally, the turn-around time for approving the substitute SF-182 is within 72 hours. No substitutions will be made for course(s) that are already in progress.

• Cancelling a pre-approved course without a concurrent replacement SF-182 does not preserve ADP funding for later use.

Step 7: Notifying CCLD Administrator of course completion

• As soon as possible, but no later than 30 days following the completion of the course, forward a copy of your official grade report to your CCLD Administrator. The grade report must be received prior to the ADP participant requesting additional monies for the next semester/quarter.

• If you failed to finish the course or did not receive a satisfactory grade, you will be responsible to reimburse the DoD. For satisfactory grade purposes, it is required for the ADP participant to receive a "C" or above for undergraduate study, and "B" or above for graduate work.