

## Sponsored Study Policy

### 1. Policy Aim

To promote the development of employees in line with Business needs through the attendance of identified registered study courses leading to the attainment of a formal qualification.

### 2. Scope

All Colart employees who have successfully completed their probationary period and have at least 6 months service with the Company.

### 3. Policy Principle

Colart is committed to ensuring the continuous educational development of key employees with the aim of providing ongoing value to the Company. Training Needs Analysis will identify the need for further education and the study courses chosen will be based on their relevance to the employee's role. In addition, the company's training support will support the aims of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

### 4. Operation of the Policy

#### 4.1 Assessment of Need

Through the completion of the Performance Development Review or the Training Needs Analysis, the need for external study will be assessed. Both the employee and Line Manager will base this need on an identified gap in the employee's skills as agreed and discussed.

#### 4.2 Identification of Study

Having agreed upon the recognised skill gap the professional, vocational or academic study may be identified. Questions that need to be asked by the Line Manager include:-

- a) How long does the course last and for which year of study is funding being requested?
- b) Is the course a continuation of a programme already being sponsored?
- c) What is the overall cost of the course?
- d) On what basis is the employee to study i.e. distance learning, day release or evenings? NB Day release will depend on whether the proposed method of study is likely to affect either the employee's job performance of the department as a whole during the employee's absence.
- e) In the case of new employees, has their probationary period been successfully completed?
- f) Has the employee been sponsored before?
- g) Is it possible to assess the outcome and measure the impact of such a course or qualification?
- h) Is there a job need or long term career goal that is linked to the study need?
- i) Does the study link to the job need?

#### 4.3 Approving the Study

Before the study in the proposed format may be formalised, the Line Manager with the UK Personnel Manager must discuss the answers to the above questions. As appropriate, authorisation may then be given.

#### 4.4 Scope of the Funding

Approved professional, vocational or academic subjects are fully funded. This includes course fees, exam costs and 50% towards the cost of purchasing essential textbooks up to a maximum level (set by the company) providing every effort has been made to use the Educational library facility. All costs must be evidenced by the appropriate paperwork and authorised by the UK Personnel Manager before they may be incurred.

#### 4.5 Study Leave

The employee will be eligible to the following study leave.

- a) Exams will be classed as paid time off.
- b) Revision will be classed as paid time off for a maximum of five working days for each study year or exam providing each revision day is matched by a day from the employee's holiday entitlement, eg. if the employee needs four revision days, two days will be paid leave and two days will be holiday.

Whilst recognising the above points, the authorisation for time off given will depend on whether the employee can be spared at the particular point in time. Authorisation will not be unreasonably withheld.

#### 4.6 Professional Bodies

The employee is responsible for financing fees associated with the membership of a professional body.

## 5. Responsibility

#### 5.1 Employee

All those persons referred to within the scope of this policy are required to adhere to its terms and conditions. Before the employee commences the sponsored study, the standard letter (Appendix 1), confirming acceptance of the terms, must be signed and returned to HR.

Clearly failure to commit to the requirements of the study by non attendance at classes or failure in examinations may result in the Company requesting a full refund of the costs incurred.

#### 5.2 Management

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied within their own area. Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy must be discussed with the HR Department prior to any action being taken.

The Line Manager must stress the required link to business needs and the importance of the learning outcomes. In addition, the Line Manager must check the employee's progress once they have started a course to ensure the skill

gaps identified in the PD reviews/TNAs are being addressed. The main output focus is to achieve a change in the employee's knowledge base after the course such that the learning can be applied effectively to the work situation.

### 5.3 HR Department

The HR department has the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy in addition to the acceptance of the Sponsored Study terms by the employee. Revisions, amendments or alterations to the policy can only be implemented once consideration and approval by the UK Personnel Manager has been gained.

**Colart reserves the right to amend this (as with any other aspect of its policies) at any time.**