
Headquarters Marine Corps Academic Degree Program (ADP) Handbook

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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 taking a leadership skills assessment, selecting a mentor, working with the mentor and supervisor to develop an Individual Leadership Development Plan (ILDP) based on the skills assessment, complete all activities per the ILDP, and 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:
 - Enhance productivity
 - Improve performance
 - Maximize recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions
 - Increase retention, especially for "high turnover" career fields
 - Broaden and develop the skill base for a quality workforce to accomplish the Marine Corps' mission and ensure readiness
 - 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.
- Applicant must agree to and sign a continued service 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

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- 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 their approved SF-182 form to present to their school in lieu of payment. Payment will not be made until the participant receives a passing grade and provides a copy of that grade to the CCLD Administrator. If an institution does not accept third party billing, the student must pay the tuition when registering, and then request credit or reimbursement from their school once the Government pays for the course.
- 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 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 college or university, 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 difference 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) 604-4637/2755 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 curriculum
- ADP Participant Acknowledgement
- ADP Continued Service Agreement

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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 billing after you complete the course, in lieu of payment when you register for each course. If your school requires payment at time of registration, you will need to pay for the course and then ask the school to reimburse you or credit your account when they receive the Government payment.
- The SF-182 MUST be approved before you present it to the school as promise of payment. Submitting an unapproved SF-182 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: 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 5: 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 for any payment due for that course.
- To cancel a course prior to the drop-add date, contact the CCLD Administrator immediately to cancel the SF-182.
- 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 for approval. Normally, the turn-around time for approving the substitute SF-182 is within 24 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.

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Step 6: Notifying CCLD Administrator of course completion to ensure payment

- 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.
- Payment will not be made until it is verified that a satisfactory grade was received for the course. For the purpose of payment, a satisfactory grade is “C” or above for undergraduate study, and “B” or above for graduate work.
- If you failed to finish the course or did not receive a satisfactory grade, you will be responsible for payment.
- The Government payment should occur within 30 days after we receive your official grade report. Ask your CCLD Administrator to follow up if your academic institution has not received payment within this 30-day timeframe.