



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM

DIRECTORATE GENERAL HR, BUDGET & ORGANISATION
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ECB-UNRESTRICTED
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GUIDELINES FOR SECONDARY TRAINING

1. Scope

Beyond essential training (i.e., short and focused essential job-related training),¹ support should also be given to other types of training related to the ECB's business, which are beneficial but not essential to ensure adequate performance in the current job, and which support staff in acquiring additional knowledge and skills that will increase their professional competence and/or provide a better understanding of their work environment (hereafter referred to as secondary training).²

Secondary training is important to maintain the human capital and employability of the ECB staff in general. In the context of wider staff development, it is a means to stimulate, support and acknowledge the staff members' own responsibility to pursue their careers actively. Secondary training will therefore affect the organisation's culture, aspirations and achievements positively.

2. Eligibility for secondary training

Permanent staff members (i.e., holding an indefinite contract) who have been ECB staff members³ for at least three years may request benefits under the secondary training category.

¹ In contrast to secondary training, primary training is understood as "essential" training, which normally consists of short and focused training measures closely related to the current job that is required to carry out the assigned role or to support any future developments therein. Primary (i.e., essential) training excludes more general training not directly related to the job as well as university degree or certificate/diploma courses leading to a formal degree or a professional certification at a higher than the current level enabling a promotion or a change of career or the formal admission into a profession. Primary training measures should be handled according to the Guiding Principles for Decentralised Professional Training (available on the HR Intranet site under Around my job / Staff Development/ Training / Specific job related / Request Specific Training (external) / Professional Training). In line with the Guidelines for Decentralised Professional Training, primary (i.e., essential) training is to be funded by the ECB fully (out of the divisional budgets for professional training) and is treated as working time (i.e. no application for training leave is necessary).

² Secondary training includes more general training often stretching over a longer period of time and may include also degree or certificate training, university study, specific training provided by NCB's for their seconded staff members including examinations, etc.

³ I.e., who have been employed for three years on a short-term, fixed-term or permanent contract.

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3. Requirements of secondary training measures

- The envisaged training initiative should be related to the ECB's business;
- Tuition must be available to be undertaken by staff members on their own time, and without interference with the performance of their job responsibilities (e.g., long distance study, or by requesting unpaid leave or part-time work arrangements, which may be granted if feasible in light of the business requirements);⁴
- A similar course/seminar is not available at the ECB.

4. Benefits under the secondary training category

Eligible staff members may be granted the following benefits for training measures that fulfil the above mentioned requirements, upon successful completion of the measure:

- i) Financial support up to 5000 EUR in total per year, consisting of:
 - a. reimbursement up to 50% of the tuition cost and required learning materials;
 - b. reimbursement up to 50% of necessary travel at economy class and of up to 50% of the related necessary single-occupancy accommodation;
- ii) Special leave up to three days per calendar year for the purpose of approved secondary training;⁵

5. Pay back clause

Staff members are requested to sign a "pay back clause",⁶ which implies that, if they leave the ECB during the training measure or within six months from the date of completion, 100% of the ECB's benefits granted until then would have to be reimbursed. If they leave the ECB within twelve months from the date of completion, 75% of the benefits would have to be paid back to the ECB. Finally, should they leave within twenty-four months, 25% would be due. The training benefits include the financial support as well as working days taken for the training. In addition, from the date of resignation, the ECB's commitment to support the training measure will be withdrawn.

⁴ Support for secondary training will not be granted during Parental Leave.

⁵ This provision supersedes the practice established by DG-H that staff members on secondment from their National Central Bank will be granted special leave on account of examinations in their bank up to half of the examination time.

⁶ The Pay-back clause will not be applied if the leaving of the staff member is beyond his or her control.

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Procedure

- i. The line manager of the staff member applying for secondary training will be requested to support it according to the criteria mentioned in Articles 1 to 3. Local management should endeavour to put training in a structured context by identifying individual and group training needs for the upcoming year under consideration of organisational developments, against the relevant business plan and through the annual appraisal interview.
- ii. Managers are recommended to involve their Human Resources Business Partner contact, who is able to support the manager in the assessment of the request, and in view of the broader divisional training and development plans.
- iii. DG-H will be responsible to conduct the final assessment and to approve or reject the request. The costs stemming from the approved training will be paid out of the centralised budget of DG-H.
- iv. The secondary training measure must be approved prior to the period for which support will be requested and should generally be paid upon successful completion of the course/programme on the basis of documentary evidence of the successful completion as well as of the cost incurred (advances may be agreed with DG-H in line with the successful completion of individual formal parts of the study, e.g. intermediate semester/term or modules,⁷ but are, however, to be reimbursed if the training measure is not successfully completed). Benefits shall be claimed within six months from the date of completion of the measure (or of the completed formal part of the study).
- v. Staff members should request secondary training via ISIS. Their request will be sent to their line management, who will confirm the training measure, the general time plan, as well as a description of the relevancy to the general business of the ECB to DG-H by approving the request. On this basis, DG-H will process the pay back clause according to Article 6 which will be sent to the staff member for signature also via ISIS.
- vi. Payments will be started in line with Article 6 iv) upon successful completion of the measure or after the staff member has signed the pay back clause, whichever comes later. Payment shall be requested by sending a Request for Reimbursement memorandum to DG-H attaching all relevant information. The claim shall include the full documentation. Where the claim is not complete upon submission, the claim shall be completed within three months from submission. If still not complete after three months, the claim shall be rejected as incomplete unless documents cannot be provided on time for reasons beyond the control of the member of staff.

⁷ If the training is not completed due to reasons beyond the control of the individual staff member, financial support may nevertheless be granted for the relevant costs according to these guidelines.

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- vii. Special leave shall be requested via ISIS. The entitlement of three days may be pro-rated.⁸
- viii. The Guidelines for Secondary Training are effective since 1 June 2004.

⁸ For example in case the staff member fulfils the eligibility criteria only during a calendar year, in case of part-time work arrangements or parental, etc.