



Banc Ceannais na hÉireann
Central Bank of Ireland

Eurosystem

Academic and Professional Training Support Scheme (APTS) Policy

January 2023

Version Control

Title of Document	Academic and Professional Training Support Scheme		
Version No.	4.0		
Document Owner	L&D Manager		
Division Responsible for Document Maintenance	Talent & Organisation Development (OD)		
Date of Next Review	Annual		
	Name	Role	Date
Prepared by	Camilla Waters	L&D Partner	August 2022
Reviewed by	Aisling Fitzgerald-Bowles	L&D Manager	August 2022
	Annette Byrne	HoF Talent Acquisition & Development	September 2022
	Ray Glennon	HoD Talent & Organisation Development	September 2022
	Ciara Larkin (LEG)	Senior Legal Counsel	September 2022
Approved by	Policy Review Committee		October 2022

Contents

1. What is the APTS Scheme?	4
2. What programmes and courses are covered by APTS?	4
3. Who is eligible for APTS?	5
4. What support is available?	6
5. How to apply.....	8
6. Considering the Business Case (for line managers).....	9
7. Clawback Provision.....	10
8. Exam and Study Leave	13
9. Providing documents to L&D	14
10. Failed Exams/Assessments.....	15
11. Deferral/Withdrawal	16
12. General Scheme Rules.....	19
13. Roles and Responsibilities	20
14. Policy Review.....	21
15. Associated Policies, Procedures, Supporting Documents.....	21
16. Contacts/Further Questions	21
Appendix 1 – Recommended Maximum Study Leave	22

1. What is the APTS Scheme?

The Academic and Professional Training Scheme (hereinafter, 'APTS' and the 'Scheme') provides support to eligible employees of the Central Bank of Ireland (the Bank) to pursue relevant academic courses. Further detail on eligibility and relevant courses is provided in sections 2 and 3.

These courses must be at third level, post-graduate or professional level and accredited by Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or an international equivalent accreditation scheme.

For courses that are not accredited by the NFQ, courses that are aligned with the Bank strategy will also be considered under APTS. In these cases the course must be provided by a recognised education provider and supported by a strong business case outlining clear strategic alignment.

The Scheme aims to support the development of employees while ensuring the Bank has the necessary capabilities to deliver on its strategic commitments. The Bank's Learning and Development team (L&D) administers the Scheme and reviews and approves employees' applications to participate in the Scheme, subject to initial local management approval and submission of a robust business case.

This policy gives further details on the operation of the Scheme and should be consulted before any initial application is made to ensure the qualification being considered falls within the scope of this policy.

2. What programmes and courses are covered by APTS?

The Scheme covers:

- Third level, post-graduate or professional-level courses and programmes accredited by the NFQ or an international equivalent accreditation scheme.
 - Note: if applying for a course run by an educational institution in another country please consult [NARIC Ireland](#), which provides advice on the academic recognition of a foreign qualification by comparing it to a major award type and level on the NFQ. If the course you are interested in applying for is listed on the NARIC database, please include detail of the comparable level on the NFQ. This will aid in the assessment of your application.
- Third level, post-graduate or professional-level relevant courses outside of the NFQ, aligned to the Bank's strategy, provided by a recognised education provider and supported by a strong business case outlining clear strategic alignment.

Each application to the Scheme will be considered on an individual basis and approvals for participation and support will always be made at the discretion of the Bank through L&D. L&D will

independently assess the suitability of the requested course, in addition to assessing the business case, value for money, quality of the vendor offering the course and the course curriculum.

L&D retain the discretion to refuse an application where similar learning can be obtained by undertaking an internal programme such as the One Bank Curriculum, One Bank Leadership and Learning Pathways.

Where an applicant is completing modules leading to completion of a full qualification and undertaking a staged APTS application, this application will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Where an entrance exam is required for admission to a course, this should be treated as an application in its own right; employees should apply for support to sit the entrance exam, and when the exam is passed, should re-apply for support for the first year of their programme. Examples of where this may occur include GMAT tests ahead of MBA courses or TOEFL assessments ahead of modular degrees.

APTS has a limited budget and, where the budget has been exceeded in a calendar year, applications will be placed on a waitlist for approval in the next financial year. In addition, the portion of the budget allocated to non-NFQ courses is relatively limited and applicants are advised to consider this when selecting their course.

3. Who is eligible for APTS?

The following employees are eligible to apply for support under APTS:

- Permanent Bank employees who have completed the Bank's probation process
- Bank employees on contracts of specified purpose or fixed-term contracts who have completed the Bank's probation process
 - Those employed on contracts of specified purpose and fixed-term contracts may participate, where their probationary periods have concluded, and where the duration of their intended course of study does not exceed the duration of their contract. **Note:** considerations for line managers set out in Section 6 and the clawback provisions set out in Section 7.

The following employees are not eligible to apply for support under APTS:

- Contractors employed by external suppliers
- Employees currently undertaking a programme of study under APTS
- Employees who have not successfully completed a previous course supported under APTS and provided final results to the L&D team, save for the below circumstances;

- If applying for support for a different course within two years of failing to complete the original programme, all expenditure incurred by the Bank on the applicant's behalf for the incomplete course of study must be repaid. The application should also be supported by a Head of Division (HOD) / Head of Function (HOF), outlining why they believe the applicant should receive new support under the Scheme, with reference to the applicant's previous failure to complete.
- The Bank will, on a case-by-case basis, consider allowing re-admission to the Scheme where employees have failed to complete a course of study owing, for e.g., to certified long-term absences from work or in instances where employees have been reallocated to areas of the Bank where their new role and responsibilities will not benefit from the completion of their original course of study. L&D will consider the business case made in each such scenario and has the authority to recommend or reject as appropriate.

Probation

Employees must have successfully completed the Bank's probation process before applications to the Scheme will be considered. The Bank will consider discretionary exceptions to the probation completion requirement where a hiring Manager requires a new employee to undertake professional training or complete professional training in which the new joiner is already enrolled, in order for the new employee to fully discharge the duties of their role, e.g. actuarial studies. Approval for such exceptions must be sought through L&D before the new employee submits an application under APTS and are only granted in exceptional circumstances.

4. What support is available?

Support is provided in the form of course fee payment and provision of study and exam leave.

- Course fee payment
 - Expenditure under the Scheme is restricted to fees paid to approved colleges / professional institutions / recognised education providers only; related expenditure will not be met by the Bank (related expenditure includes, but is not limited to, travel expenses incurred attending classes and exams, textbooks and support materials, which may be available through the Bank's Library, and

subsistence costs incurred while attending classes and exams).

- All anticipated costs for which the applicant is seeking support must be documented in the initial application
 - Support will be given for the completion of full qualifications, or modules leading to completion of full qualifications. Where specified prerequisites must be satisfied before entry to a course of study can be allowed (e.g. entrance exams, language or aptitude assessments), the Bank will accept staged APTS applications and approve payment for such pre-requisite stages to reaching full qualification (subject to Section 7: Clawback Provision)
 - For multi-year courses, the Bank will only pay fees for the current year of study to minimise the Bank's financial exposure should the employee resign from the Bank during their course of study. Employees are required to detail in their applications the full breakdown of annual costs over their course of study.
- Provision of study and exam leave
 - Study and/or exam leave is allocated where required and where business needs allow. Please see Section 8: Exam and Study Leave for recommended guidelines
 - Study leave may only be used for APTS-related leave. Should study leave be used for other purposes, the Bank may reduce the employee's annual leave accordingly.
 - No additional leave is granted for classes held abroad. Travel and subsistence expenditure incurred are the sole responsibility of the APTS member.

Support is **not** provided for:

- Student Professional Subscriptions
 - Some qualifications will require a student to become a member of a professional body prior to undertaking a course of study or that body's examinations; such applications should be made under the bank's [Professional Subscriptions Policy](#).

Retrospective support

No retrospective support is available. Expenditure made by the participant prior to L&D receiving the APTS participant's approved and signed contract will not be reimbursed.

Conference/Graduation Ceremony

Attendance at conferring/graduation ceremonies must be facilitated by the participant's annual/flexi leave entitlements.

5. How to apply

Each application to the Scheme is made through the L&D Hub, which can be accessed on Plaza. The application process is outlined below:

- **Line manager approval**
Employees seeking support under APTS should, in the first instance, speak with their direct line manager, Head of Function, Head of Division or Director (as appropriate) to secure verbal support from their direct line manager for their intended course of study. In the case of applications for non-NFQ courses, Director approval will be required in addition to direct line manager support.
- **Complete online application**
Once line manager and Director (if required) support has been secured, applicants must complete the online APTS application form available on the L&D Hub. The relevant manager will be contacted automatically via the workflow process to seek their approval, and their agreement will be recorded electronically. This step should be completed at least 6-8 weeks in advance of the course application deadline to allow sufficient time for payment.
- **Approval**
Where participation in the Scheme is approved, L&D will contact the participant to complete and sign an APTS contract.

Where approval for participation in the Scheme is not secured from L&D, the Applicant and their local Manager(s) may rework the application and reapply to the Scheme. L&D will offer guidance (where possible) as to the reasons for any refusal, to clarify for the employee why their application has been rejected. Such reasons may include, for example, the type of course proposed, insufficient evidence of the benefit of completion to the Bank and/or individual or the fact that an employee has yet to complete their probationary period.

- **Complete APTS contract**
If the application is approved by the employee's Manager(s) in the first instance, and subsequently by L&D, then the applicant will be required to sign the Academic and Professional Training Scheme Membership Contract (hereinafter, the 'Contract'). This will

be forwarded to the applicant and must be printed, signed, and returned to L&D. The Contract provides details of the financial support which will be provided under the Scheme, and offers local managers guidance on appropriate study and examination leave (the award and approval of which will at all times remain at the discretion of local management, and will be subject to local business needs). The Contract will specify the terms attached to the employee's participation in the Scheme. Signing the Contract binds the employee to the terms of the Contract and APTS Policy and therefore if the employee does not understand any aspect of the Policy or Contract, or if the employee has any questions, they should seek guidance in advance of signing the Contract.

- **Make first payment to course provider**

APTS applications must be received at least 6-8 weeks before the first payment is due to the course provider or college, since following successful application to the Scheme, the process to release payment involves multiple approval steps and requires time to complete. Applications failing to meet this timeline will be dealt with on a best-efforts basis, and L&D will take no responsibility for an applicant failing to be admitted to a course of study owing to late receipt of an application, nor will the Bank reimburse the applicant for any fines or penalties incurred owing to late enrolments. Employees will be responsible for any such charges, should they decide to pursue their course. As such, L&D recommends early applications for support, where possible.

Approved participants must conduct all registration with their prospective college or institution of learning on their own behalf; L&D will not administer registration on the participant's behalf. Invoices etc. for fee payment should be sent by the participant or the vendor institution to the Bank's Accounts Payable (AP) function, unless the participant is otherwise informed by L&D. AP will execute all outward payments of fees and should be contacted directly by the employee where difficulties arise.

6. Considering the Business Case (for line managers)

All applications are assessed subject to the below questions and it is important for line managers to consider these when preparing the business case for an application. Please note additional factors may be considered, as appropriate, when reviewing applications.

- Can similar learning objectives be met by completing an internal programme such as the One Bank Curriculum, Learning Pathways or One Bank Leadership?
- How does completion of the course align to the Bank's strategic direction, presently and long-term?
- How will completion of the course meet the current (or future) development needs of the employee in the context of their career at the Bank?
- Is the course viewed as adhering to industry benchmarks and accredited by a recognised national assessing institution or aligning to the Bank's strategy?

- Does the course represent the lowest cost to the Central Bank?
- Does completion of the course help achieve a strategic need or objective of the business area?

An application to the Scheme should demonstrate the programme's relevance to the employee's current role or to their career development plan, and should always outline relevance to the current or future business needs of the Bank. Decisions to award support under the Scheme are based on the Bank's organisational capability requirements, the development goals of the individual, and the business case made in each application.

Employees on a specified purpose or fixed term contract

Line managers should wait until the employee's period of probation ends before submitting an APTS application on their behalf and should only submit applications for courses/programmes which are scheduled to conclude before the employee's contract of specified purpose or fixed term contract expires.

Business cases made by line managers in support of APTS applications made by specified purpose or fixed term contract employees must note the contractual terms of the individual applying and state the likely duration of the applicant's contract. Applications for APTS support will be rejected if the anticipated concluding date of the course/programme exceeds the end date of the employee's contract. Employees on contracts of specified duration or fixed term contracts are liable to clawback (See Section 7 for more detail). Line managers should stress the relevance of same to applicants, being mindful of clawback difficulties which may arise should the applicant's employment with the Bank end.

7. Clawback Provision

All employees who receive local management and L&D approval to participate in APTS will remain subject to the terms and conditions outlined below for the duration of the course of study which they intend to undertake, and for a period of up to two years following the provision of final results, failure to complete the programme or, voluntary cessation of study. The table below outlines the general provisions applicable. Certain exceptions to the general clawback provision are also outlined in this section.

All Employees*		
Date of Resignation or Termination	Reimbursement Requirements	Reimbursement timeframe

<p>During course or programme of study</p> <p>(before date final grade received)</p>	<p>100% of all expenditure</p> <p>You will be required to reimburse 100% of all expenditure paid by the Bank on your behalf in relation to the course of study approved.</p>	<p>Up to 1 year</p> <p>Payment in full must be received within one calendar year of resignation or termination*. Deductions will be made to final payroll during notice period.</p>
<p>Within 1 year of completion</p> <p>(after date final grade received)</p>	<p>2/3 of all expenditure</p> <p>You will be required to reimburse two-thirds of all expenditure paid by the Bank on your behalf in relation to the course of study approved.</p>	<p>Up to 1 year</p> <p>Payment in full must be received within one calendar year of resignation or termination*. Deductions will be made to final payroll during notice period.</p>
<p>Within 1-2 years of completion</p> <p>(after date final grade received)</p>	<p>1/3 of all expenditure</p> <p>You will be required to reimburse one-third of all expenditure paid by the Bank on your behalf in relation to the course of study approved.</p>	<p>Up to 1 year</p> <p>Payment in full must be received within one calendar year of resignation or termination*. Deductions will be made to final payroll during notice period.</p>

Important notes on Clawback Provision

- Expiration or termination of specified purpose or fixed-term contract
 - *The clawback provisions detailed above apply in circumstances where termination of employment arises by virtue of an expiration and non-renewal of a fixed term contract or a contract of specified purpose, and in cases where an employee's fixed term contract or contract of specified purpose is terminated by the Bank before the contract end date. Employees employed on fixed term contracts, or contracts of specified purpose, will not receive approval to participate in courses of study scheduled to end at dates **after** the expiration of their employment contract. Such employee contracts,

however, may expire or not be renewed after a course is completed and within 2 years of the end of that course. In such cases, the employee will be held liable to the clawback provisions above.

- If an employee on a specified purpose or fixed-term contract resigns from the Bank of their own accord after a course is completed and within 2 years of the end of that course, they will be liable to the clawback provisions above.
- Termination of permanent employment (i.e. an employee on a contract of indefinite duration)
 - In the event of termination of an APTS participant's contract of employment with the Bank during their studies, the conditions above will apply in respect of all expenditure incurred by the Bank on the employee's behalf in relation to the course of study. This includes termination by the Bank and resignation by the employee.
 - Reimbursement of expenditure will not apply in circumstances where termination of employment arises as a result of redeployment and/or reorganisation of employees due to the business requirements of the Bank.
- Voluntary cessation of study
 - Where a participant ceases study voluntarily, the conditions above will apply in respect of all expenditure incurred by the Bank on the employee's behalf in relation to the course of study for a period of two years from the date of cessation.
 - Applicants who personally decide to discontinue a course of study, in order to pursue another course, will be required to repay all expenditure incurred by the Bank in relation to the incomplete course, before any new application for support under the Scheme will be considered
- Waiver of Clawback reimbursements
 - Should an employee be unable to complete any course due to extended approved or certified absences, clawback reimbursements from such employees may, at the discretion of L&D and the employee's local

management, be waived.

8. Exam and Study Leave

APTS participants may be entitled to benefit from both study leave and exam leave related to their course of study. All leave however, is awarded and approved at local management's discretion, and decisions of local managers are final in this regard. Recommended leave allowances, as issued by L&D and incorporated in the participant's contract, will vary by course and may increase for those undertaking courses of study of longer duration, or for courses accredited at a higher level on the NFQ. All leave must be scheduled in consultation with the employee's immediate line manager in order to suit local work requirements. See Appendix 1 to this policy for recommended maximum guidelines on leave.

Leave recommendations are sub-divided in two categories – **study leave** and **exam leave**.

- **Study leave**

- Study leave must be taken between the commencement date of the course of study, and the date of the final exam (if applicable), or the date on which the final graded assignment related to the course is due for submission (including resits and resubmissions of failed assessments).
- Where full or half-day attendance is required for classroom tuition during the working week, this time away from the office must be booked from the allocated study leave allowance the participant receives at the commencement of the course.
- Should the approved course require more days' attendance than approved under the terms of their APTS Contract, the participant will provision for these additional days from their own personal leave allowance.
- Leave entitlements are calculated on a pro-rata basis for those on atypical working arrangements.

- **Exam leave**

- Exam leave may only be taken during specified exam periods as set by the relevant college or examining institution, and may only be utilised to attend examinations

required to complete the approved course of study.

- A half day's leave will be granted per examination provided the exam is held during the working week and during working hours. This leave is separate to study leave as detailed above. No exam leave will be granted for examinations falling on weekends. Details of the participant's exam timetable must accompany their application for exam leave.
- Recommended exam leave allowances will not be detailed in the participant's contract; instead it is policy that all exams occurring during core working hours qualify for a half a day's exam leave, subject to exceptional business requirements detaining the employee. (In such rare instances the Bank will pay for any fees associated with resits / supplemental exams. Should this circumstance occur, the employee should ask their line manager to document the circumstances and forward details to the L&D mailbox (training@centralbank.ie).

Neither exam nor study leave can be carried forward past the final date of examination or classroom tuition on the course undertaken (to include resits/supplemental exams). All leave must be booked in the same manner as annual leave, through the appropriate link on the Bank's Plaza site.

9. Providing documents to L&D

APTS participants must forward proof of their end-of-module examination results to L&D within three weeks of receipt of same from the awarding body. Confirmation from the college or institution attesting to the student's successful completion of exams, or scans of transcripts, will both be accepted. Participants are not required to submit results for all individual assignments; however, at a minimum, final results for each year of a multi-year course, or semester (for a course of one year's duration), should be sent to L&D, since successful completion of a module/semester will usually act as a prerequisite for the student's progression in a given course. Further financial payments will not be released under APTS until this confirmation of exam results has been received.

Scheme members are required to submit all relevant documents to L&D in a timely manner throughout the duration of their course of study. Submissions will include their online application form, their course outline details, course exam timetables, exam results, and any other relevant documentation.

10. Failed Exams/Assessments

Should participants be unsuccessful in their examinations or assessments, membership of the Scheme will be suspended until required exams and/or assignments have been successfully completed. Participants will be required to meet all expenses connected with examination repeats / assignment resubmissions they are required to undertake. Should study leave, as initially recommended under the participant's Contract, remain unused at this point, local management will retain the discretion to decide if the participant can utilise this study leave ahead of repeat assessments.

Exam leave shall be granted for one repeat attempt at each examination only, where exams are scheduled during core working hours. Exceptions to this provision may apply, for example, where a participant is unable to complete an assessment or sit an examination owing to certified absences. In such instances, subsequent sittings of papers or submissions of assignments (where viewed by the respective college as a first sitting of the exam/assessment) will be supported through the Scheme, and the participant's standing in the Scheme will not be affected.

Should a participant be unable to complete an examination or assessment owing to unforeseen work commitments, once documented by their line manager and forwarded to L&D, subsequent first sittings of papers or submissions of assignments will be funded through the Bank's Scheme (where, for example, fees are required to take resits of exams).

APTS participants who fail to complete an approved course of study (owing to failure of assessments or examinations, including resits taken after certified absences) will not be permitted to undertake an alternative course of study under APTS during the two year clawback period which commences from the date of their last exam or assessment, unless the student first reimburses the Bank in full for any expenditure incurred in relation to the incomplete course of study.

11. Deferral/Withdrawal

Deferment by APTS Participant

Should an APTS participant defer their course of study or any element of it, e.g. a semester/module, the Scheme participant has one calendar year from the date when their most recent semester or modular results are received, or from the date on which they defer from the course (whichever date falls later), to make further attempts at completion of the course or module, without having to reimburse the initial expenditure paid by the Bank on their behalf for the course.

Such deferral will not count as a failed attempt at the examination or assignment and, as such, the Scheme participant will not incur clawback for undertaking the deferred examination or assignment, once the deferral lasts no longer than one calendar year from the date it commences.

Where a course provider requests a deferral fee, this cost must be met by the employee. L&D must be notified by the employee of their deferral. Further attempts to complete outstanding examinations or assignments beyond this one calendar year deferral period may be facilitated, subject to the approval of L&D and the Scheme participant's local Head of Function / Head of Division, and will, for example, be facilitated where the participant is certified absent from work during the period of deferment.

In general, there is a limit of one deferral per course of study for a maximum duration of one year. L&D must be advised immediately if a participant is considering deferring the Scheme.

Should an APTS participant prove unsuccessful in their further attempts to complete their course of study or an element of it following the end of their deferral period, the participant will then be required to reimburse all expenditure paid on their behalf by the Bank in relation to their course of study in accordance with the clawback provisions, and in any event reimbursement will be required prior to undertaking a new course of study.

Standard clawback provisions will apply in this instance, i.e. from the date of the last failed exam or assessment, the employee will enter a two year clawback period, during which a percentage of fees will need to be repaid before a new APTS sponsored course of study can commence.

Deferment by Manager

Participation in the Scheme may also be deferred at management's instruction. For example, if during a participant's course of study, the participant is subject to a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or their Manager determines their performance continues to be below the standard expected following appropriate performance discussions and/or interventions to address the participant's performance issues, their Manager can enforce the option to have them defer their Scheme participation for up to one year. As per the employee initiated deferral process detailed above, the employee will not incur any initial expense for this manager-initiated deferral.

L&D should be immediately informed should the above scenario occur, and must also be notified when the local manager is willing to allow the participant re-engage with their studies.

The clawback provision will remain in force during such a deferral should an employee resign or their employment be terminated however, the clawback period will not elapse during such periods of deferral, i.e. once the employee re-enters study, time remaining in the two year clawback period will restart.

In addition, should business requirements significantly increase, and affect the Scheme participant's ability to complete their course of study, management may, with sole discretion, instruct the participant to defer their course of study indefinitely, at no cost to the participant. L&D should be immediately informed should the above scenario occur.

As above, the clawback will still apply in this situation should the employee leave, and the two year clawback period will extend from the date studies recommence.

Career Break, Maternity Leave and Deferrals

Participants who wish to commence a career break during or immediately after their course of study should be aware that while on a career break, APTS contracts are suspended temporarily. As such, clawback periods are suspended during career breaks, and will recommence once the employee returns to work. However, should the employee resign during their career break, clawback provisions will apply.

The participant should notify L&D of the intended commencement date of their career break, as well as the date of their return to work.

Should an employee continue their studies while on leave, any expenditure incurred during that leave period will not be met by the Bank on their return to employment. Should an employee resign from the Bank immediately following their return from a career break, they will be required to refund the necessary expenditure incurred by the Bank (as per Section 7: Clawback Provision) relating to their course of study from their pre-career break Scheme participation.

Participants on maternity leave will **not** have their APTS contract temporarily suspended.

Secondees and Deferrals

Participants who wish to commence a secondment during or immediately after their course of study should be aware that while on a secondment, APTS contracts are suspended temporarily. As such, clawback periods are suspended during secondments, and recommence once the employee returns to work, but clawback penalties still apply, should the employee resign during their secondment.

The participant should notify L&D of the intended commencement date of their secondment, as well as the date of their return to work.

Should an employee continue their studies while on secondment, any expenditure incurred will not be met by the Bank on their return to employment.

Should an employee resign from the Bank or be terminated immediately following their return from a secondment, they will be required to refund the necessary expenditure incurred by the Bank (as per Section 7: Clawback Provision) relating to their course of study from their pre-secondment APTS scheme participation.

Participant withdrawal

Should a participant withdraw from the Scheme for any reason other than those outlined above, the participant may be liable for all expenditure incurred by the Bank in relation to that course of study, and may not be readmitted to the APTS programme for a period of two years following their withdrawal or until all such expenditure has been refunded (whichever occurs earliest). Subsequent applications to APTS will also be more rigorously assessed and the likelihood of the participant's completion will be carefully assessed. L&D must be advised immediately by the participant if a scheme participant is considering withdrawal from the Scheme.

12. General Scheme Rules

In addition to the provisions specified above, and those agreed to in the participant's contract, the following general rules apply to participation in the Scheme:

- No monetary awards will be made upon completion of the participant's qualification. Completion of a given course of study will not lead to any review of the participant's grade or role; however, successful completion will be recorded in the PMDP process. Any prizes or awards received by a participant for their course work are the property of the student and need not be returned to the Bank.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their details are correct on the Bank's IT systems, to ensure correct routing of approval workflows.
- All employees who apply for APTS are requested to ensure they are seeking value for money in terms of course cost and provider quality.
- Approved APTS participants' development plans must be updated by their Manager to include successful completion of the course of study as a stated development goal; progress in the chosen qualification will also be reviewed in the employee's performance reviews.
- Any intended written project, dissertation or thesis, the content of which will relate to the Bank or the work of the Bank, must be approved prior to commencement by the participant, through their Line management within their division(s). Pre-approval is required to assess the appropriateness of the subject matter, and to ensure no issues arise in relation to confidential Central Bank information, including Section 33AK of the Central Bank Act 1942 (as amended). APTS participants should allow sufficient time for their Director, Head of Division and/or Head of Function to review any proposed topic in this regard, and should take into account the time that may be needed to adjust elements of their proposal in advance of completing and submitting their written work. Local management's decision in this regard will be final; material deemed unsuitable for inclusion in written submissions may not be used, and failure to comply with such instruction may lead to disciplinary procedures.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees applying for support from APTS must provide an honest appraisal of their ability to complete the chosen qualification within the timeframe specified without their work being negatively affected. • Once admitted to the Scheme, the participant must abide by all conditions of the Scheme, as outlined in their APTS Contract and detailed in the APTS Policy, including the clawback provision (Section 7)
Line Managers	<p>Line managers should review the clawback provision in Section 7 and stress the relevance of same to applicants, being mindful of clawback difficulties which may arise if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The applicant resigns from the Bank or has their employment terminated within 2 years of completion of their course, or 2. The employee's employment with the Bank expires/is not renewed at the end of their contract (in the case of employees on FTC/SPCs). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All line managers must fully complete a business case supporting the employee's application for joining the Scheme. In doing so, the line manager must consider the points laid out in Section 6 (Considering the Business Case (for Line Managers)). The business case will explain how the intended course of study is relevant to the Bank, and how it will add value to the individual and the organisation. If a participant's chosen qualification requires attendance at lectures during core working hours, the manager should ensure that their employee will be able to complete the qualification without their work being negatively affected. • Following admission of their employee(s) to the Scheme, managers must monitor their employee's progress, and note any negative impact on the participant's work performance. • Managers must also manage their employee's commitments and entitlements under the Scheme, and approve both study and exam leave requests subject to local business requirements. Recommended entitlements will be set out in the APTS Contract, which each manager will have to co-sign. The award of all such leave is made at local manager's discretion.
L&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L&D is responsible for monitoring and administering of APTS, and all final decisions for admission to the Scheme will be made by L&D. • Employees and Managers may also use the L&D team's expertise as a resource for information and advice on the Scheme.

14. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed by the Policy Owner and approved annually. The Bank's Policy Review Committee will have ultimate oversight of the policy.

15. Associated Policies, Procedures, Supporting Documents

The following policies and procedures should be referenced in conjunction with this policy:

Document name	Relevance
Online SharePoint Application Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms for completion and submission to L&D
Policy for Payment of Professional Subscriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available on Plaza
Suggested maximum recommended Leave Allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 to this policy

16. Contacts/Further Questions

If you have a query relating to APTS, or you would like to discuss your intention to study, please contact a member of L&D.

Email: training@centralbank.ie

Appendix 1 – Recommended Maximum Study Leave

Level of Programme (General)	Recommended Days Study Leave
Part-time Masters or Postgraduate Degrees including MBAs and PhDs (NFQ Level 9 / 10 or equivalent)	Up to 15 days per annum maximum per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Part-time Graduate (Higher) Diploma (Leading to Masters) (NFQ Level 9 Minor Award or equivalent)	Up to 15 days per annum maximum per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Graduate Cert / Graduate Diploma (NFQ Level 8 or equivalent)	Up to 10 days per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Honors Modular Degree (NFQ Level 8 or equivalent)	Up to 4 days per examinable subject to a max of 15 days per year; up to max of 60 days over all modules over 4 full academic years to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Ordinary Modular Degree (NFQ Level 7 or equivalent)	Up to 4 days per examinable subject to a max of 15 days per year; up to max of 60 days over all modules over 4 full academic years to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Diploma (1 year or more) (NFQ Level 6 or equivalent)	Up to 2 days study leave per examinable subject up to a max of 10 days per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Diploma (1 year or less) (NFQ Level 6 or equivalent)	5 days per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Certificate NFQ Level 6 or below (<i>assuming the course has a duration of at least 12 weeks and is examinable or assessed by assignment</i>)	5 days per full academic year to include class attendance where classes scheduled during core working hours
Specified Programmes	Recommended Amount of study leave
Certified Payroll Technician	2 days study leave for the course
Certificate in Financial Regulation	2 days study leave for the course
Certificate in Public Procurement Law and Practice	2 days study leave for the course
Professional Certificate in Stockbroking	2 days study leave for the course

ACCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 days study per examinable subject up to a maximum of 15 days per year - 3 extra days study leave can be availed of at either level 2 or 3. - 1 additional study day per subject to attend classes (study leave should be requested in this instance) will be available at levels 2 & 3 to max of 5 days across both levels
ACA/ICAI (Chartered Accountancy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAP1 (previously known as Prof II): 20 days study leave maximum - CAP2 (previously known as Prof III): 30 days study leave maximum - FAE: Final Admittance Exam 35 days study leave maximum
CIMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 study days per examinable subject, maximum 20 per academic year
CPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formation Exams 3 days study leave per examinable subject - Professional Exams 5 days study leave per examinable subject
CFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level 1: 5 days study leave - Level 2: 5 days study leave - Level 3: 8 days study leave
Barrister-at-law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modular 1 – 5 days - Modular 2 – 15 days
ACOI/QFA/ Insurance exams/Compliance Cert	1 day study leave per module
JFSD	1 day study leave per module
Bachelor in Financial Services through the IOB	15 days study leave in total
Public Administration Certificate/Diploma	4 days study leave per examinable subject up to a max of 15 days per annum.

N.B. Exam leave:

A **half days leave will be granted per examination** provided the exam is held during working hours i.e. between 09.30 am and 5.30 pm. An Exam Timetable must accompany the application for leave. The exam timetable must be forwarded to L&D prior to the commencement of exam leave. Exam leave should be applied for in the same manner that employees utilise when applying for other forms of leave using the appropriate page on the Bank's intranet.

T: +353 (0)1 224 6000
E: training@centralbank.ie
www.centralbank.ie



Banc Ceannais na hÉireann
Central Bank of Ireland

Eurosystem