

# Payment of Professional Fees for Officers



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# **1.0) Title**

Policy for the Payment of Professional Fees.

# 2.0) Statement

This policy sets out the arrangements for the payment of professional fees to employees. The reimbursement of professional fees is an illustration of the Council's commitment to the continuous development of its employees and enables employees to develop their full potential in delivering professional advice, guidance and services to customers.

# 3.0) Aim

The aim of this policy is to explain:

- which roles in the Council are eligible for the payment of professional fees,
- how to claim for reimbursement of professional fees for qualifying roles.

# **4.0) Scope**

The policy applies to all Council employees who are employed on a permanent contract or a temporary contract which is likely to last for longer than 18 months at the time it is entered into.

# 5.0) Related Policies

Other Council policies linked to the policy for the payment of professional fees are:

Employee Learning and Development Policy

# 6.0) Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the reimbursement of professional fees all of the following conditions must be met:

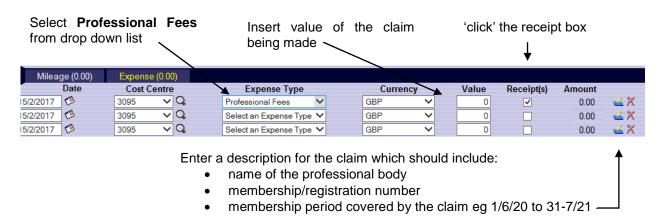
- Membership of a professional body must be deemed appropriate for the role by the Council<sup>1</sup> and,
- Membership of a professional body must be specified as an essential criterion in the person specification for the role and,
- Professional fees can only be reimbursed for membership of one professional body in any given year and,
- The professional body is included in the HMRC list of allowable subscriptions: Click link to Access HMRC List.

#### Note:

The Council will not be liable for any tax liability in connection with an employee's reimbursement of professional fees. Employees should refer to HMRC if they are in doubt as to how this may affect their personal tax status.

# 7.0) Procedure for Claiming Reimbursement

Employees who meet all of the eligibility criteria set out at section 6 should claim for reimbursement via the Council's Transfare system.



Documentation at appendix 1 to support the claim for reimbursement should also be completed and forwarded to the Payroll section with receipts for the claim being made.

The cost of reimbursement will be met from existing departmental budgets.

# 8.0) Recovery of Fees

Should an employee leave the Council's employment having had his/her professional fees reimbursed, the Council reserves the right to recover the amount paid on a pro-rata basis for the remainder of the membership year.

#### 8.2) Secondments and Alternative Roles

Should an employee move to an alternative role within the Council or take up a secondment, internal or external to the Council, where there is no requirement for membership of a professional body the Council will not reimburse fees for the period working in the alternative role/secondment. The employee will be expected to maintain their membership at their own expense during any such period.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A list of all posts with a requirement for membership of a professional body/association will be available on the R drive and will be reviewed from time to time to demonstrate that membership of any particular body or association continues to provide benefit to the Council.

Upon return to their substantive role, if the eligibility criteria as set out at section 6 was met the employee could submit a claim at their next renewal date. However, the Council would not support any additional payments for example lapsed membership costs, joining fees, or assessments required to reinstate membership.

# 9.0) Review of Professional Fees Reimbursement

If it is not clear from the person specification for an existing post or in the case of a newly created post there is a requirement for the post holder(s) to be a member of a professional body an application should be made via an employee's line manager. This application should be forwarded to the Assistant Director of the Service or the Director where it is the Assistant Director making the request.

The application should be forwarded to the CMT for applications below Assistant Director level and to the SMT for applications at Assistant Director level and above. If approved the post holder should be notified and the role added to the list on the R drive.

If the requirement for a post holder(s) to be a member of a professional body ceases this should be taken through the same process outlined above and all affected post holders notified. Subscriptions paid would continue for the remainder of the membership year and at renewal the post holder if wishing to continue their membership would do so at their own expense.

# 10.0) Corporate Membership

Where the requirement for membership applies to a number of generic roles within a section or department the cost and terms of a team/corporate membership should be considered and applied where it represents a saving to the Council over individual membership.

# 11.0) Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

This procedure will be reviewed every four years in consultation with Senior Management and Trade Unions. However, the procedure will be reviewed sooner in the event of any one or more of the following:

- a) Failure or weakness in the policy is highlighted
- b) Changes in legislative requirements
- c) Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements.

# 12.0) Equality Assessment

This procedure has been equality screened and it has been concluded that this procedure is not subject to an EQIA. A copy of the equality screening is available from Human Resources.

# 13.0) Document Owner

**Human Resources** 

Policy Agreement:

LJCC : 4 February 2021
 SPRC : 11 March 2021
 Council : 7 April 2021

# **Appendix 1**

#### **Application form for Reimbursement of Professional Fees**

(This form should be read in conjunction with the Policy on the Payment of Professional Fees - January 2021)

1) Membership Details				
Name	Department			
Job Title			-	
Name of Professional Body			-	
Level of Membership				
Date(s) Membership Covers: from		to		
2) Justification of Payment				
Please confirm how membership of	f this professiona	I body relates to your role:		
Yes Complete section 3	No Co	pecification for your role as essential?  complete section 2a below  which required membership of a profession  Professional fees cannot be reimbursed by the Council and you should refer to section 9 of the policy	∘nali	
I enclose a receipt for £	for reimbursemer	nt		
I have completed this applicate Payment of Professional Fees		sement in accordance with the Policy for	the	
Signed date				
Please send this form and your receipt	of payment to HR f	or validation.		
HR Use Only Form Received (date)				

Confirm requirement for professional fees as per section (2)
Confirm requirement for professional fees as per section (2a) Tes
Reimbursement of Professional Fees is authorised
Reimbursement of Professional Fees is <b>not</b> authorised due to the following reason(s)
Employee Notified of the reason for non-payment?   Yes
Signed
Position
Date
Notes:

Completed form and receipt to be sent by HR to Payroll Section for payment.

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas Serving Down and South Armagh

For further Information in relation this procedure please contact HR on 0330 137 4025

Oifig an Iúir Newry Office O'Hagan House Monaghan Row Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig Downpatrick Office Downshire Civic Centre Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road Downpatrick BT30 6GQ