

# DON Acquisition Workforce Tuition Assistance Program (AWTAP)

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## Policy

03/01/2011

**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
ACQUISITION WORKFORCE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

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## **Chapter 1 – SCOPE**

### **1.1. Program Purpose.**

The following provides the operating policy for the Department of the Navy (DON) Acquisition Workforce Tuition Assistance Program (AWTAP). AWTAP assists civilian acquisition workforce members in meeting education standards for DAWIA certification for their designated career field and to comply with statutory requirements. Accordingly, the program supports courses and degrees in those disciplines that underpin the acquisition functions specified in 10 U.S.C. 1721. These disciplines include the sciences, engineering and other technical fields as well as business and management programs.

### **1.2. References.**

1.2.1. Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA, Public Law 101-510)

1.2.2. Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C) 1721

1.2.3. DoD Instruction 5000.66, Operation of the Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development, dated December 21, 2005

1.2.4. The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Catalog for the current fiscal year

1.2.5. Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition) DoN, DAWIA Operating Guide

### **1.3. Cancellations.**

1.3.1. Acquisition Workforce Tuition Assistance Program (AWTAP), Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), 29 April 2009.

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## **Chapter 2 – ELIGIBILITY**

### **2.1. Guidelines.**

Eligibility for AWTAP is confirmed through eDACM, the Department of the Navy’s official repository for acquisition records and through the supervisor’s confirmation that the employee is eligible to participate.

### **2.2. Civilian acquisition workforce members.**

Tuition assistance is available for all DON civilian acquisition members who:

- 2.2.1. Occupy a designated AT&L acquisition workforce position;
- 2.2.2. Are DAWIA certified to the Level required at the time of application with the following exceptions:
  - 2.2.2.1. Civilians in AT&L workforce positions who have not met their career field certification education requirements or Acquisition Corps education requirements.
  - 2.2.2.2. Civilians occupying developmental AT&L Workforce positions with a target grade of at least GS-11 or equivalent, with a full performance requirement that includes DAWIA Level II Career Field Certification and who demonstrate they are making progress towards their certification.
  - 2.2.2.3. Civilians in AT&L workforce positions who are participating in the DoN Contracting Professional Development Program (CPDP).
- 2.2.3. Meet minimally acceptable performance standards;.
- 2.2.4. Hold currency in Continuous Learning.
- 2.2.5. Are not pending disciplinary action; and
- 2.2.6. Do not already meet the highest required or desired education standards

### **2.3. Military acquisition workforce members.**

Military acquisition workforce members, with the exception of enlisted personnel in contingency contracting billets, are not eligible to participate in AWTAP. Enlisted personnel in contingency contracting billets will be considered for AWTAP funding after they have exhausted other venues for tuition assistance.

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## **Chapter 3 – PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

AWTAP Supports the educational goals described under the Core Plus Certification Requirements for the applicant's primary acquisition career field. Goals include mandatory credit hours, mandatory undergraduate degrees, and recommended certificate programs and masters degrees. AWTAP funding is limited to one educational goal only.

### 3.1. Allowable Schools.

The course or degree granting institution must be accredited by an agency approved by the United States Department of Education. These schools can be found on the Internet at <http://www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.

### 3.2. Allowable Courses.

3.2.1. AWTAP will fund Business courses to meet requirements for Acquisition Corp membership and/or certification in selected career fields.

### 3.3. Allowable Programs.

3.3.1. AWTAP will fund tuition and most fees towards certificate programs, baccalaureate degrees, and master's degrees that are described as a required or desired education standard for the Defense Acquisition Corps or identified in the Certification Standards Checklists published by USD (AT&L) for the applicant's primary career field.

3.3.2. Masters degree programs in a business-related field, such as business management and business administration are considered desirable for all career fields.

3.3.3. A second master's degree may be approved if the following conditions apply:

3.3.3.1. AWTAP funding was not used for any previous course work or degree program, AND;

3.3.3.2. The Acquisition Workforce member wishes to pursue a masters of business administration and holds a masters degree in a DAWIA-related technical field, such as engineering, logistics, computer science, physics, mathematics, operations research, statistics, physical science, architecture, chemistry, and biology, OR;

3.3.3.3. The Acquisition Workforce member wishes to pursue a DAWIA-related master's degree and holds a non-DAWIA related masters degree.

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3.4. Transferring.

3.4.1. AWTAP participants may transfer to an alternate institution/program if and only if the gaining institution accepts 100% of the credits earned with AWTAP funding.

3.4.2. Prior approval from the AWTAP Program Manager is required before transferring.

3.5. Enrollment Period.

3.5.1. Subject to the availability of funding, AWTAP eligibility shall not exceed five consecutive fiscal years.

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## **Chapter 4 – FUNDING**

AWTAP is not a reimbursable program. Payments are made directly to the college or university when the school presents proper documentation to the designated AWTAP billing office. Accordingly, participants should not have to prepay any tuition expenses.

### 4.1. Guidelines.

- 4.1.1. The maximum amount of tuition assistance available per acquisition workforce member, per fiscal year is \$6,300.00. This figure is subject to change and will be reviewed annually.
- 4.1.2. Workforce members who are approved for AWTAP funding will receive funding assistance for the length of time required to complete their educational goal, limited to the authorized enrollment period and subject to the availability of funding.
- 4.1.3. The following may be funded when required for a degree or certificate program:
  - 4.1.3.1. Mandatory prerequisite coursework
  - 4.1.3.2. General electives
  - 4.1.3.3. Online/Intranet access fees
  - 4.1.3.4. College equivalency assessments
  - 4.1.3.5. Instructional fees, laboratory fees, registration fees and mandatory fees
  - 4.1.3.6. Portfolio assessment
- 4.1.4. The following expenses are not covered under this program:
  - 4.1.4.1. Courses or education beyond the masters degree level
  - 4.1.4.2. Non-credit courses
  - 4.1.4.3. Application and graduation fees
  - 4.1.4.4. Entrance examinations
  - 4.1.4.5. Public internet access fees
  - 4.1.4.6. Parking fees
  - 4.1.4.7. Travel and lodging expenses

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- 4.1.4.8. Courses completed or started at the time of acceptance into the program
- 4.1.4.9. Courses for which other reimbursement has been or will be obtained, e.g. GI Bill.
- 4.1.4.10. Materials and equipment that becomes property of the student, e.g. books, computers, calculators, etc.
- 4.1.4.11. Late or delinquent fees incurred by the student



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4.2. Priorities.

Properly completed applications received from eligible applicants will be processed on a first come, first served basis, in accordance with the priorities outlined below. In the event that funding becomes insufficient to accept all eligible applicants, every effort will be made to continue financial support for new and previously approved participants to meet *required* educational standards, and continued support for desired levels of education.

- 4.2.1. Priority 1: Acquisition workforce members with approved Educational Development Plans (EDP), pursuing required educational standards for career field certification and DOD Acquisition Corps requirements.
- 4.2.2. Priority 2: Acquisition workforce members, with approved EDP seeking desired education.
- 4.2.3. Priority 3: Acquisition workforce members, who are new applicants, seeking mandatory or desired education.

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## **Chapter 5 – APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

### **5.1. Educational Development Plan (EDP)**

Acquisition workforce members, who meet the eligibility requirements, are required to build and submit an online EDP via eDACM for Tuition Assistance, <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/navyedacm>.

- 5.1.1. Prior to submitting the EDP, workforce members are required to acknowledge and accept the terms and conditions of the applicant agreement provided at the attachment.
- 5.1.2. The EDP must contain a complete plan demonstrating how you will reach the stated educational goal within the funding guidelines.
- 5.1.3. The EDP must be endorsed by the applicant’s supervisor of record.
- 5.1.4. The EDP is then submitted to the eDACM Support Specialist a minimum of 30 calendar days in advance of the first course start date.
- 5.1.5. Approval / disapproval notice OR request for additional information is sent to the applicant by the eDACM Support Specialist within 5 business days of receipt of the EDP.
- 5.1.6. When the EDP is approved, the student must confirm the current fiscal year course information and enter the anticipated cost as well as start and end dates.
- 5.1.7. EDPs must be kept up-to-date and accurate; course number, title, start date, and end date on the EDP must exactly match the data on the SF 182, the school’s invoice, and the official grade transcript; AWTAP approval will be withdrawn for those participants who do not comply with this guidance.
- 5.1.8. The EDP must be updated when course information changes, e.g. course start date, end date, course number, and title.
  - 5.1.8.1. Course Deletion  
Prior to the course start date, when course title and number change, the EDP must be updated and the course deleted and re-added with the correct information. Deleting the course from the EDP will generate a SF-182 cancellation.
  - 5.1.8.2. Course Edits  
If the course start date, course end date or course cost is changed, an SF-182 amendment will be processed.

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- 5.1.8.3. Student must ensure the SF-182 cancellation or amendment is provided to the college/university.

5.2. EDP Components.

At minimum, the EDP must contain the following information. If the following information is not provided, the EDP will be disapproved.

- 5.2.1. The EDP must contain a complete plan, with all course credits required for program graduation.
- 5.2.2. The EDP must contain a link to the Institution's program information and credits identified in the EDP must coincide with credits required by the degree/program.
- 5.2.3. The EDP must contain a link to the college/university tuition and fees information.
- 5.2.4. If a member of a centrally managed intern program, the EDP must annotate the name of the intern program.

5.3. Submitting Request For Funding.

Once the applicant receives notification that their EDP has been approved, the student reviews their EDP to ensure course information, start and end dates, and course costs are accurate. Then, the student requests an SF-182 through eDACM. This can be done up to 60 days prior to the start of the course or as late as 15 days after the start of the course. Note: The course start date is the determining factor as to the fiscal year in which funding will be requested and authorized.

- 5.3.1. Notification of an approved SF-182 is emailed to the student.
- 5.3.2. Student registers for the course and provides SF-182 and the school payment processing letter to the college/university.
- 5.3.3. College/University invoices the AWTAP program point of contact per the billing instructions.
- 5.3.4. SF-182s that are manually altered will not be honored.

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## **Chapter 6 – GRADES**

Students participating in AWTAP funded courses must meet the following grade requirements. Students who fail to meet the grade requirements outlined below will be required to reimburse funding received through AWTAP and will have their EDPs suspended until proof of payment is received. Any funding requests pending approval will remain in a pending status until proof of payment is received. Students who fail to reimburse AWTAP funding may find themselves subject to wage garnishment procedures and may be subject to removal from AWTAP eligibility as well.

### **6.1. Requirements.**

- 6.1.1. Students are required to earn a grade of “C” or better for undergraduate level courses.
- 6.1.2. Students are required to earn a grade of “C” or better for certificate program courses.
- 6.1.3. Students are required to earn a grade of “B” or better for graduate level courses.

### **6.2. Documentation.**

- 6.2.1. Documentation of grade(s) earned must be submitted within 45 days after the stated course end date.
- 6.2.2. Grade(s) must be reflected on an official document and clearly identify the school, student name, course title and number, number of credits earned and the school session, term or semester dates.
- 6.2.3. The course title and number on the official transcript must match the course title and number indicated on the EDP and the SF 182.
- 6.2.4. Grade documentation must be submitted for all courses identified on a student’s EDP, regardless of whether or not the classes were funded by AWTAP.

### **6.3. Extensions.**

- 6.3.1. Grade extensions may be approved by the eDACM Support Specialist on a case-by-case basis. Students must submit a formal grade extension request via eDACM.
- 6.3.2. The grade extension request must include the reason for the delay in completing the course, as well as the school’s approval of the grade extension. If the extension request is associated with a grade appeal, the request must also include formal documentation of the grade appeal submitted to the school as well as a copy of the school’s policy on grade appeals.

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- 6.3.3. Documentation of final grade(s) earned must be submitted no later than the end date of the approved extension. The grade report submitted to the eDACM Support Specialist must meet the documentation requirements in listed section 6.2.

## **Chapter 7 – EDP COMPLETION**

### 7.1. Program Completion.

Students are required to notify their supervisor and the eDACM Support Specialist when they graduate or complete their EDP.

### 7.2. Discontinued EDP Participation.

Students who decide to cease pursuit of their education goal must provide notification through eDACM. The decision to cease program participation should be carefully considered as students have only one opportunity to participate in AWTAP. If students do not complete their educational goal in the allotted timeframe, they will not be given another opportunity to participate in AWTAP.

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**ATTACHMENT A: APPLICANT AGREEMENT**

Acquisition Workforce Members who are selected into AWTAP are required to accept the following terms and conditions.

Applicants will be required to accept the following *terms and conditions* of the program:

1. I AGREE that, upon completion of the Government sponsored training described in this authorization, if I receive salary covering the training period, I will serve in the agency three (3) times the length of the training period. If I received no salary during the training period, I agree to serve the agency for a period equal to the length of training, but in no case less than one month. (The length of part-time training is the number of hours spent in class or with the instructor. The length of full-time training is eight hours for each day of training, up to a maximum of 40 hours a week).

*Note: For the purposes of this agreement the term "agency" refers to the employing organization (such as an Executive Department or Independent Establishment), not to a segment of such organization.*

2. If I voluntarily leave the agency before completing the period of service agreed to in item 1 above, I AGREE to reimburse the agency for fees, such as the tuition and related fees, travel, and other special expenses (EXCLUDING SALARY) paid in connection with my training. These fees are reflected in Section C Costs and Billing Information. Note: Additional information about fees and expenses can be found in the Guide to Human Resource Reporting (GHRR). <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/ghrr/index.asp>
3. I FURTHER AGREE that, if I voluntarily leave the agency to enter the service of another Federal agency or other organization in any branch of the Government before completing the period of service agreed. I will give my organization written notice of at least ten working days during which time a determination concerning reimbursement will be made. If I fail to give this advance notice, I AGREE to pay the full amount of additional expenses 5 U.S.C. 4109 (a) (2) incurred by the Government in this training.
4. I understand that any amount of money which may be due to the agency as a result of any failure on my part to meet the terms of this agreement may be withheld from any monies owed me by the Government, or may be recovered by such other methods as are approved by law.
5. I FURTHER AGREE to obtain approval from my organization and the person responsible for authorizing government training requests of any proposed change in my approved training program involving course and schedule changes, withdrawals or incompletion, and increased costs.
6. I acknowledge that this agreement does not in any way commit the Government to continue my employment. I understand that if there is a transfer of my service obligation to another Federal agency or other organization in any branch of the Government, the agreements will remain in effect until I have completed my obligated service with that other agency or organization.

*Specifics Regarding Department of the Navy AWTAP participants:*

*Since the AWTAP program funds college courses to be taken outside of duty hours, the typical pay-back period will be 30 days of work in a DOD position commencing immediately after a funded course ends. As a program participant, you will typically "pay back" the previous semester while proceeding to the next.*

*I acknowledge that I have read and understand the [Dept of Navy AWTAP Policy and Guidelines](#).*