

Guidelines on the Reimbursement Procedures for the Continuing Education Fund (CEF)

General Points to Note

1. Please study the “Notes on Completing the Reimbursement Claim Form” [SFAA195] before completing the Reimbursement Claim Form (RCF) [SFAA193].
2. Eligible applicants will be reimbursed 80% of their fees, subject to a maximum sum of HK\$10,000, (whichever is the less) on successful completion of a reimbursable course. The fees for more than one course may be reimbursed, subject to the maximum ceiling of HK\$10,000 per applicant not being exceeded. Each applicant may make **4 claims** of reimbursement within **4 years** from the date the application for opening an account with CEF was approved. The CEF account for the applicant will be closed once the fourth submission of claim has been made, no matter the claim was approved with reimbursement of fees or not, or when the full sum of HK\$10,000 has been drawn or at the end of the 4-year period, notwithstanding any unclaimed balance remaining in the account. Applicants cannot re-submit application for opening an account with CEF again in future.
3. Only courses on the reimbursable course list are eligible for reimbursement.
4. The claimant should submit the RCF to the Office of the Continuing Education Fund (OCEF) after successful completion of course(s) and before the expiry of reimbursement deadline. “**Successful completion**” of the course means that the claimant must have attended no less than 70% of the contactable hours of the course or such higher attendance requirement as prescribed for the course (whichever is higher) and attained the overall mark of either 50% or such higher percentage of assessment(s) as prescribed for the course (whichever is higher) as assessed by whichever method approved by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare (including any examination and assignment requirements with approved weighting).
5. Documentary proof of successful completion of the course may include a certificate of award, a letter or a transcript from the course provider certifying that the claimant has passed the relevant course assessment.
6. The claimant should be at age 18 to 65 at the time of submitting a Reimbursement Claim Form.
7. Each applicant may obtain approval for opening an account with CEF once a lifetime only. If the claimant successfully completes other reimbursable courses within the 4-year validity period, he/she can make reimbursement claim in respect of the completed courses without making a fresh application for opening an account with CEF before the course commences while the reimbursement deadline remains.
8. The claimant should complete all parts of the RCF, sign the form and attach all the required documents. Failure to provide all the necessary documents may lead to the rejection of the reimbursement claim.
9. The completed RCF and the supporting documents are not returnable. Claimants should **retain copies** for their own reference.
10. Reimbursement will be made by direct credit to the saving/current account nominated by the claimant. The name of the claimant on the account must be exactly the same as the name on the HK Smart ID Card.
11. Completed RCF and copies of the supporting documents should be submitted **by post** to the *Office of the Continuing Education Fund, Room 916, 9/F., Kwai Hing Government Offices, 166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories.* Claimants may also submit the reimbursement claims in person by placing them in the **drop-in box** at *12/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon.*
12. For enquiries of the reimbursement procedures and/or obtain the latest reimbursable course list, please call the CEF enquiry hotline 3142 2277 (handled by the staff of “1823 Call Centre”) or visit the CEF website: <http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/cef> .
13. Should there be any discrepancy between the English and Chinese versions of this Guideline, the English version shall prevail.

Reimbursement Procedures^{Test}

1. A Reimbursement Claim Form (RCF) will be sent to the successful applicant together with the letter of approval-in-principle for the CEF.
2. The claimant should complete and sign the RCF after successful completion of the course(s).
3. The claimant has to obtain certification from the institution(s)/course provider(s) on the RCF before submitting it to OCEF.
4. In submitting the RCF to OCEF, the claimant should attach
 - copy(ies) of course fee receipt(s),
 - copy(ies) of documentary proof of successful completion of the course(s),
 - copy(ies) of the front page of the bank passbook or statement showing the claimant's name, account number and bank name / bank code (name of account holder must be exactly the same as the name in the Hong Kong Smart ID Card).
5. **A claimant studying language courses (except written Chinese)** is additionally required to pass a specified benchmark test at the specified (or higher) level after the course has commenced and before the expiry of the 4-year validity period and submit
 - copy(ies) of documentary proof of passing a specified benchmark test(s)/examination(s) at the specified (or higher) level;
 - copy(ies) of benchmark test(s)/examinations fee receipt(s).
6. Under normal circumstances, reimbursement will be made by direct credit to the claimant's bank account within 6 weeks from the date of receipt of the RCF, subject to complete and satisfactory supporting documents being provided.
7. In case the claimant fails to provide all the required information or the information is not completed, OCEF will approach the claimant and/or the course provider concerned for the supply of additional information in support of his/her claim, and hence the payment processing time will be longer. OCEF will not accept reimbursement of additional courses which are not stated on the RCF.
8. If a claimant has obtained loans from the Non-means-tested Loan Scheme administered by SFAA and the loans are borrowed towards the payment of tuition fees for a reimbursable course of study recognised for the purpose of CEF, the CEF reimbursement would be used to offset any outstanding NLS loans so borrowed by the applicant for paying the tuition fees in respect of the same course. Any remaining balance of the CEF reimbursement after offsetting will be credited to the designated account of the applicant. The processing time will be longer under this circumstance.

Language Benchmark Tests/Examinations (applicable to language courses except written Chinese)

1. **Claimants studying language courses (except written Chinese) are additionally required to pass a specified benchmark test at the specified (or higher) level** after the course has commenced and before the expiry of the 4-year validity period.
2. Benchmark test(s) should be taken **after the course has commenced and before the expiry of the 4-year validity period** stated in the letter of approval-in-principle for CEF. Claimants should check on the examination dates and details of relevant benchmark tests/examinations with the examination bodies/agents and plan their study schedule.
3. Claimant must submit a copy of documentary proof of passing the specified benchmark test/examination at the specified (or higher) level together with the RCF. To claim reimbursement of the fees for benchmark tests/examinations, a claimant should complete the "Continuing Education Fund – Reimbursement Claim Form for Benchmark Test/Examination Fees" [SFAA 205] and submit a copy of the receipt of the benchmark test/examination fees. A claim for reimbursement of the fees for benchmark tests/examinations will only be entertained if it is accompanied with a claim for the relevant language course.
4. Claimant can make use of the same benchmark examination to support the claim for more than one language course. However, the examination date of the benchmark examination must fall after the course commencement date of the reimbursable course used for claiming CEF.
5. For the information of the benchmark tests and/or updated information of CEF, please visit CEF website <http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/cef>.

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