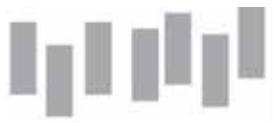


HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY



Office of the Information Commissioner
Queensland

STUDY AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE SCHEME

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Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS)

1.1 Introduction

Employees of the Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC) are employed under the *Public Service Act 2008* (PSA) or by Governor in Council for Senior Executive appointments. OIC human resource (HR) policies are developed directly from the PSA and policies, procedures and directives issued by the responsible Minister and the Public Service Commissioner. All OIC HR policies are approved by the Information Commissioner as the delegated authority and are representative of the size and function of the OIC.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the assistance available to eligible employees who participate in further education and detail the relevant processes to claim such assistance.

1.3 Effective Date

Approved by the Information Commissioner on 19 December 2011.

1.4 References

- Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations Directive 12/99 Study and Examination Leave

1.5 Application

This policy applies to all employees of the Office engaged for a continuous period greater than or equal to 12 months at the discretion of the Information Commissioner.

The Information Commissioner has sole responsibility and total discretion in deciding whether to grant or refuse assistance under SARAS and overall responsibility for determining the tier of assistance.

An employee seeking to access financial and leave assistance for study purposes should refer to the three tier system encompassing part-time and full-time study or research in accordance with Directive 12/99 Study and Examination Leave.

Prior to any application for SARAS, the employee should discuss with their immediate supervisor their intention to, or interest in undertaking further study. The intention or interest should be noted in the employee's Personal Performance Plan.

To apply for SARAS, the employee should personally discuss the proposed course with their supervisor and Unit Commissioner.

1.6 How to Apply for SARAS

Once the Unit Commissioner has advised the employee that an application for SARAS would be considered, the employee should complete the SARAS application form (Attachment A) and attach/include the following information:

- full course program
- a statement outlining the benefits to the Office and a statement of reasons supporting their application and why they should be granted SARAS
- full cost and what form of assistance (e.g. financial, leave) they are seeking
- a schedule for any proposed leave

The employee should submit the application to their Unit Commissioner who will record a recommendation before referring to the Information Commissioner for a decision.

The Information Commissioner will consider each individual application for SARAS with regard to the following:

- relevance of the proposed course of study or research to the key service priorities and performance measures of the Office
- operational convenience where the application involves periods of leave from the Office
- the employee's conduct and diligence at work

The Information Commissioner will also consider the financial commitments of a SARAS program considering other financial commitments and priorities in the Office.

Employees who are participating in a SARAS program are to ensure that records, results and progress is provided to the Information Commissioner at the completion of each period.

1.7 Reimbursement of Fees

Reimbursement is subject to the successful completion of the subject approved under SARAS and payment to the level of assistance approved by the Information Commissioner.

Claims must be forwarded to the employee's Unit Commissioner for endorsing prior to the Information Commissioner granting approval to pay reimbursement.

Sufficient evidence supporting all claims for reimbursement must be attached to the claim. Employees with an approved SARAS agreement, approved by the Information Commissioner, can apply for reimbursement of fees for the approved percentage of SARAS upon provision of:

- a statement from the educational institution of successful completion of subjects
- provision of a tax invoice from the same educational institution
- provision of a receipt for the payment of the tax invoice

All claims must be made within 6 months of completion of the relevant subject and/or semester.

Claims are to be made progressively i.e. per subject and/or semester. Additional approval must be sought to defer a claim until a later date.

Any costs incurred as a result of changes to the course of study must be met by the employee and will not be reimbursed by the organisation.

Amendment Log

Date	Version No.	Name	Change
19 December 2011	2	Greg Argue	Updated to reflect change in organisation structure resulting from introduction of the RTI and IP Acts 2009



STUDY AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE SCHEME (S.A.R.A.S)

APPLICATION FORM

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

Title:	Surname:	Given Names:	Date of Birth:
Payroll No:	Present Position:		Classification:

B. DETAILS OF PROPOSED COURSE

Full title of course:	Educational institution:
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C. PRESENT EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification:	Educational Institution:	Year completed:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

D. ATTACH THE FOLLOWING:

- i. Course program (please list entire course program with initial application; ongoing applications list details of semester/year and subjects completed to date an/or exemptions granted)
- ii. Statement of reasons why you should be granted SARAS and information supporting your application
- iii. Leave requirements for year/semester

Signature of applicant	Date / /
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OFFICE USE ONLY

To be completed by the Employee's Unit Commissioner

- 1. The course is relevant to the employees role and key services of the Office
Yes No
- 2. The employees conduct and diligence is satisfactory
Yes No
- 3. Where applicable, it will be operationally convenient for the requested leave to be granted
Yes No
- 4. Level of assistance recommended (see Attached Form for details)
Essential Highly Desirable Desirable

Recommendation

.....
.....
.....

Signature

Position

Date / /

To be completed by the Information Commissioner

Certification

- 5. Assistance is approved
Yes No
- 6. Level of assistance approved (see Attached Form for details)
Essential Highly Desirable Desirable

7. Details of approved assistance/comments

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Financial Authorisation

In considering the financial commitment of funds for this application, I certify that this expenditure has been committed and is in compliance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* or any other Acts or law relating to that expenditure and that the sum of money set forth in the application above is a lawful charge indicated thereon and accordingly.

Signature

Information Commissioner

Date / /

Applicant's name:
Course title:

STUDY AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE SCHEME (S.A.R.A.S.)

ASSISTANCE APPROVED

Financial Assistance

Leave Assistance

Tier of assistance sought	Tick one	Assistance	Financial Assistance										Leave Assistance						
			Higher education contribution	Student services fees	Examination fees	Books	Travel to/from residential schools	Compulsory residential schools – accomm exp	Non compulsory residential schools – accomm expenses	Material costs, fees etc	Travel costs	Other financial assistance	Examination leave on full salary	Course attendance leave on full salary convenient to unit	Study leave (with or without salary)	Compulsory residential school (with or without salary)	Non compulsory residential school (with or without salary)	SARAS leave – without salary	
		Essential part time																	
		Essential full time																	
		Highly desirable part time																	
		Highly desirable full time																	
		Desirable part time																	
		Desirable full time																	

 Not applicable