

Reference No: E109/26/76; **Date:** 12/05/78

Circular 21/1978:- Third Level courses of education

A Dhuine Uasail

I am directed by the Minister for the Public Service to say that he has accepted an agreed recommendation made by General Council, under the conciliation and arbitration scheme for the civil service, relating to the recoupment of travelling expenses arising from attendance at certain third-level courses of education. Implementation of the terms of the agreed recommendation is authorised in this Circular. For convenience of reference, the existing arrangements relating to refund of fees for these courses are also included in this Circular.

Courses to which this Circular applies

2. This Circular applies to courses of study which

- (a) are provided by a University or other educational institution or professional body
- (b) lead to a third-level qualification
- (c) are accepted by this Department as relevant to the civil service employment of the officers attending them and
- (d) are pursued in the officers' own time.

3. For the purpose of paragraph 2 (c) the following are accepted as relevant to employment in the civil service generally

- (i) University courses leading to the degrees of Bachelor or Master of Arts or Commerce
- (ii) the course leading to the Diploma in Administrative Science and the one-year course in public administration provided by the Institute of Public Administration
- (iii) courses in the following subjects

- Accountancy
- Business administration
- Business studies
- Computer science
- Economics
- General management
- Industrial engineering (for Engineers)
- Law (for BCL, BL or Diploma in European Law only)
- Personnel management
- Public administration
- Secretaryship (Institute of Chartered Secretaries)
- Sociology
- Statistics
- Systems analysis

Refund of fees

4. Officers pursuing courses which fulfil the conditions in paragraph 2 may have the appropriate course and examination fees refunded to them. The refund will be made at the end of each completed academic year or corresponding course period, that is, where it is established, normally by written statement from the institution providing the course, that the officer gave satisfactory attendance at the course (or participated satisfactorily in the course, if it is a correspondence course) during the academic year/period and underwent the relevant examinations or other prescribed tests.

Recoupment of travelling expenses

5. Officers attending courses which fulfil the conditions at paragraph 2 above may also have travelling expenses incurred by them in relation to such attendance recouped subject to the following

- the course should, as far as reasonably possible, be attended at the nearest centre offering such a course
- the officer should be serving outside the urban area in which the course is being attended
- recoupment should be restricted to extra travel necessarily undertaken in attending the course, travel between office and home being discounted
- the basis of recoupment should be the lesser of
 - (a) the cost of travelling by public transport where this is available or
 - (b) mileage at the rates set out under "Reduced Rates" in Circular 57/75.

General instruction

6 Payments by way of refunds of fees and/or recoupment of travelling expenses under this Circular are subject to the following

- (a) payment may be made once only in respect of any academic year or course period _ payment may not be made in respect of years or periods which are repeated
- (b) each officer to whom a payment is made will be required to undertake in writing to refund the payment in the event of his leaving the public service before completing one year's service in respect of each academic year or course period for which a payment has been made, the academic years or course periods themselves not to reckon as service in this context.

Effective dates

7 Refunds of fees may be made in respect of the academic year or course period 1972-73 and subsequent years or periods.

Recoupment of travelling expenses may be made in respect of the 1977/78 academic year or course period and subsequent years or periods.

Delegated authority

8 Subject to the provisions of this Circular, Departments may themselves, without reference to this Department, recoup travelling expenses and refund fees in respect of courses indicated in paragraph 3.

9 Claims relating to courses other than those indicated in paragraph 3 should be sent to this Department together with information concerning (a) the title and contents of the course (b) the institution providing the course (c) the officer's grade and (d) the amount claimed. Requests from Departments for delegated authority in respect of any such courses will be carefully considered.

Circulation

10 This Circular should be brought to the attention of all officers in your Department.

Previous circulars

11 Circular 30/74 and Circular Letter 6/77 are superseded by this Circular.

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John Mc Gartoll