1.0 Purpose
Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) supports fair and equitable educational opportunities for employees when the education benefits the institution by enhancing job performance or by increasing promotional opportunities. This policy provides the guidelines for awarding both state and local funds for tuition assistance for credit courses. LFCC continuous learning courses (credit classes) are provided at no charge to the employee.

2.0 Revision History
Original Policy: September 1, 2005

3.0 Applicability
This policy applies to all full-time teaching and administrative faculty, full- and part-time classified staff and wage employees who work at least 20 hours per week.

4.0 Policy

Employee Eligibility for Tuition Assistance

1. New full- and part-time classified employees and full-time faculty and administrative employees are immediately eligible to receive tuition assistance for tuition and mandatory fees.
2. Adjunct faculty employees are eligible once they have taught for a minimum of two continuous semesters.
3. Wage employees whose position is projected to continue for at least one year following the period for which tuition assistance is requested are eligible to receive tuition assistance. Student employees are not eligible for tuition assistance. Tuition assistance reimbursement for wage employees will be
pro-rated based upon the number of authorized work hours. Eligible wage employees will be working at a performance level comparable to the level of contributor as required for full-time staff.

Any classified employee whose level of job performance is below contributor or faculty/administrator whose level of job performance is unsatisfactory shall not be eligible for educational assistance.

Course Eligibility

All educational courses that are either job-related or for degree requirements must be credit courses and meet the appropriate eligibility criteria below:

A. Job Related – Education or training related to employee’s current position to meet one of the following objectives:

1. To train the employee in the use of new or modified methods and equipment.
2. To train the employee in skills and knowledge required by changes in the employee’s current position.

B. Degree Requirement – Academic courses taken at accredited institutions to meet one of the following objectives:

1. To enable qualified administrative and teaching faculty to attain advanced degrees for the maintenance of established standards of the College or to meet specific needs that have been authorized by the College.
2. To enable classified employees to complete degree programs that will enhance job performance.

C. Continuous Learning courses must be credit courses and may be job-related or non job-related. Continuous learning courses can be taken at any of the LFCC locations.

Work schedules

The general expectation for any employee attending classes is that classes will be taken outside of regular hours of work. If a course is not offered anytime other than during normal work hours and the course is needed as a job requirement or is a degree program requirement, the employee’s supervisor can approve the class during normal work hours. An adjustment of work hours will be required for classified employees. Classified employees must adjust their work hours to fulfill their normal work hours per week.
1. For non-exempt classified employees, time in a job-related class during normal work hours is considered hours of work when computing any overtime liability.
2. Exempt employees must make up missed work time or take leave.
3. Wage employees may attend courses that are directly related to current job performance during scheduled work hours with the supervisor’s approval, provided this does not create a conflict with job responsibilities. The employee must make up any work hours missed or he/she will be paid only for those hours actually worked.

Exceptions to Eligibility Criteria for Educational Assistance

1. The president may waive or interpret the eligibility requirements in the interest of the effective and efficient operation of the College.
2. When eligibility requirements are waived or denied, an explanatory justification statement approved by the president shall be attached to the Educational & Continuous Learning Enrollment Form and maintained in the College files.

5.0 Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency-Initiated Courses</th>
<th>Courses required by the College in an employee’s performance review for which educational assistance will be provided.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Learning Courses</td>
<td>Credit courses offered at LFCC to employees at no cost. The courses may be job related or non job related. Continuing education classes (non-credit) are not covered by this policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Courses</td>
<td>Credit courses at an accredited business school, community college, technical institute, college or university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Tuition Assistance</td>
<td>Financial support for approved educational courses or the acquisition of job-related degrees, professional certifications or licenses. It may be granted for a single course or combined with educational leave. The financial support shall consist of the cost of tuition and mandatory fees. In cases with educational leave, full pay, partial pay or leave without pay may be provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Requested Courses</td>
<td>Courses not required or suggested by the College and which an employee requests tuition assistance outside of LFCC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Mandatory Fees
Fees required for the course (e.g., technology, student registration, application fees).

### Part-time Classified Staff
Employees who work 20–31.9 hours per week for 12 months per year.

### Satisfactory Completion
Completion of approved courses with passing grade of “C” or better or receipt of professional certification or licensure.

### Wage Employees
General wage hourly employees (excludes student employees) who work 20–30 hours per week.

#### 6.0 Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for submitting the required and completed paperwork to their immediate supervisor for course approval.

The human resources manager is responsible for reviewing course paperwork for completion and approving eligible reimbursement costs for payment to the employee or to the course provider.

#### 7.0 Procedures

##### Application Process

1. Eligible employees must submit an Educational & Continuous Learning Enrollment Form and an Educational Assistance Agreement Form, available on the intranet, along with supporting documentation through the immediate supervisor and to the human resources department.
2. When the president’s endorsement is required, human resources will forward the request directly to the president.
3. The original copy of all requests shall be maintained in the employee’s personnel file and a copy shall be provided to the employee. Those not eligible or not approved will be returned to the employee with the reason/s written directly on the form.

##### Payment Options

1. Employee Pays: The employee pays the required tuition and fees and is reimbursed for the costs when the course is completed and appropriate documentation is submitted, or
2. Up-front Payment: The College will pay for the course at the time of registration. The employee and LFCC will execute an Educational Assistance Agreement Form for the amount of tuition and mandatory fees
prior to registration for the class. Payment for tuition will be transmitted to
the institution from the business office. Employees will be required to
work a minimum of an additional six months for assistance received.

Upon Completion of Course

1. Employees will submit their course grade report or evidence of
   satisfactory completion of course. Grade “C” or higher is considered
   satisfactory completion.
2. Ensure that original receipt(s) for the course and receipts for any other
costs as allowed by state regulation and/or the educational assistance
agreement have been provided to human resources.

For employee-initiated courses, tuition assistance will be limited to the following:

Undergraduate courses shall be reimbursed at a maximum of $1,400 per fiscal
year. The $1,400 reimbursement shall be available from state and/or local funds but
in no case shall the combined reimbursement from both funds exceed the annual
maximum amount.

For graduate courses, the College will reimburse up to $3,700 per fiscal year. The
$3,700 reimbursement shall be available from state and/or local funds but in no
case shall the combined reimbursement from both funds exceed the annual
maximum amount.

The president may, at his/her discretion, award additional tuition reimbursement to
employees in June of the fiscal year if funds are available to do so. Conversely, the
president may reduce award amounts when necessitated by budgetary constraints.
Any such reductions shall be conveyed to personnel as timely as possible.

For courses required by the College, the employee will be reimbursed 100 percent
for satisfactory completion. The designation “passed” is sufficient in the event a
letter grade is not awarded.

Employee Obligations

When tuition assistance is provided for employee-requested courses, the employee
incurs an obligation to the College to work for the College for up to six months
following course completion, and to repay tuition assistance costs incurred by the
agency, in certain situations. This requirement shall be evidenced by a signed
Educational Assistance Agreement form that includes conditions under which
repayment of educational assistance may be required.

Employees shall repay tuition when they are dismissed for cause or voluntarily
separated within six months of course completion. The amount to be repaid shall be
pro-rated and interest shall be assessed as stated in the educational assistance agreement.

The president, upon the recommendation of the director of human resources, may cancel the employee’s work obligation in whole or in part if employment is terminated either voluntarily or involuntarily prior to completion of the work obligation period. The president, upon recommendation of the human resources manager, may also waive full or partial repayment of educational assistance when an employee separates. Written justification for any such waiver shall be placed in the employee’s personnel record.

8.0 Sanctions

If an employee elects to proceed with a course prior to receiving approval, they must accept personal responsibility for the costs, in the event the course is not approved.

9.0 Interpretation

The authority for interpretation of this policy rests with the LFCC director of human resources.

10.0 Authority/Reference

- Department of Human Resource Management Policy 5.10 – Educational Assistance
- VCCS Policy 3.10.0 – Education Assistance Guidelines
- Department of Human Resource Management Policy 1.40 – Performance Planning and Evaluation
- Department of Human Resource Management Policy 1.60 – Standards of Conduct

Per governance policy, personnel policies are not part of the governance model for policy formation.

President