

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Marine Corps Acquisition Career Management Board
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31 Dec 02

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

Subj: MARINE CORPS POLICY GUIDANCE ON CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR THE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

Ref: (a) USD (AT&L) Continuous Learning Policy for the DoD Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce (AT&LWF) of 13 September 2002
(b) DON Memorandum on Department of the Navy Policy (DON) Guidance on Continuous Learning for the Acquisition Workforce of 4 November 2002

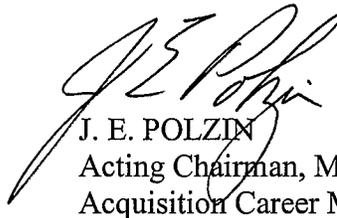
Encl: (1) Acquisition Continuous Learning Implementing Instructions
(2) Acquisition Continuous Learning Point Crediting Guidance

To meet the needs of our operating forces, our acquisition professionals work in a complex, fast paced and dynamic environment. It is important, now more than ever, that our workforce members stay abreast of the various and ever changing facets that impact our ability to deliver to our operating forces the materials they require to accomplish their mission. Accomplishing this means that ALL of our workforce members must continuously engage in developmental activities that strengthen and broaden their skills as acquisition professionals.

In accordance with the references, ALL civilian and military personnel occupying officially designated acquisition positions within the Marine Corps will complete a minimum of 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLP) every two (2) years commencing on the date the individual enters the acquisition workforce or as otherwise specified in enclosure (1). It is desirable that this is achieved by earning at least 40 CLP every 12 months. This policy is effective as of 1 October 2002 and supercedes all previous guidance.

Enclosure (1) assigns responsibilities and explains how this revised policy will be implemented throughout the Marine Corps. Enclosure (2) provides guidance for supervisors to uniformly award/credit points that are not automatically tracked through Register-Now.

Point of contact regarding this policy is Mr. Mark E. Camporini, Deputy for Acquisition Workforce Development at 703-784-2355.


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Career Field Functional Managers

Copy to:

DON, DACM

Acquisition Continuous Learning Implementing Instructions

APPLICABILITY: The acquisition continuous learning policy applies to all Marine Corps acquisition workforce members, civilian and military personnel occupying designated acquisition positions within the Marine Corps' total force structure. This policy is effective on 1 October 2002 and supercedes all previous matters relating to acquisition continuous learning

CONTINUOUS LEARNING STANDARD: All acquisition workforce members will complete a minimum of 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) every two (2) years with the goal of earning at least 40 CLPs every 12 months. **There are neither extensions of time nor waivers for meeting this requirement.**

TWO YEAR CYCLE: The two (2) year cycle for meeting the continuous learning standard will commence upon an individual's entry into the acquisition workforce for all members who enter the acquisition workforce subsequent to 1 October 2002. All other workforce members will have a start date of 1 October 2000 unless the workforce member has previously established a baseline date other than 1 October 2000 in Register-Now.

PRIORITY DESIGNATIONS: A priority is assigned to each person desiring to participate in continuous learning activities and events sponsored by the Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM). These priority designations are used to determine the registration sequence, and will be determined by automatic scan of the employee's automated data record in Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) and the Acquisition Workforce System of Management (AWSOM). The priority categories are:

Priority 1 - Those DON acquisition workforce members who are certified to the level required by their position and have not met their 80 CLP requirement.

Priority 2 - Those DON acquisition workforce members who are not currently certified to the level required by their position, or those who are certified and have already met their 80 CLP requirement.

Priority 3 - Those DON employees who are not members of the acquisition workforce.

TRACKING POINTS EARNED: The continuous learning module of Register-Now is the official tracking system for all of DON. All points earned must be documented in Register-Now. Points earned through attendance at DAU courses, and through attendance at DACM sponsored continuous learning activities where the workforce member has registered for the event through Register-Now, will be entered automatically. All other points earned must be entered by the individual workforce member with supervisory concurrence. Instructions on this system are contained in enclosure (2), Acquisition Continuous Learning Point Tracking System.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING CURRENCY/CERTIFICATION:

Workforce members are considered current in continuous learning achievement when they earn 40 CLPs in any 12-month period and earn 80 CLPs within their specific two-year cycle.

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The achievement of required career field certification level should always take priority over achievement of the continuous learning requirement. In support of the continuous learning requirement however, all DAU courses taken towards career field certification will also count towards the achievement of the 80 CLPs requirement.

CLPs will be applied to the cycle in which the activity was completed. CLPs points beyond the minimum required (80 in a two-year cycle) will not roll over from one two-year cycle to another nor is it appropriate to award points in a subsequent two-year cycle for an activity completed in a previous two-year cycle.

Upon attainment of the 80 CLPs within the two-year cycle, the employee will receive a certificate of achievement from the DCAM to recognize this accomplishment. The certificate will expire at the end of the next two-year cycle unless the employee earns an additional 80 CLPs. For example, employees earning 80 CLPs during the period 1 October 2002 through 30 September 2004 receive a certificate that expires 30 September 2006 unless the employee has documented an additional 80 points between 1 October 2004 and 30 September 2006.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Deputy, Acquisition Workforce Development: The Deputy is responsible for:

- Oversight of this policy and general program management.
- Manage the coordinate and support required to delivery of continuous learning opportunities.
- Assist Career Field Functional Managers and supervisors by providing career field functional managers with data they require to monitor progress on a periodic basis.

Career Field Functional Managers: Functional Managers are responsible for:

- Monitoring assigned acquisition career fields for workforce compliance with continuous learning policy.
- Identifying and supporting continuous learning activities that meet the needs of their career field members and /or broaden and strengthen their knowledge, skills and abilities.

Supervisors: Supervisors play a key role in continuous learning. They will:

- Ensure, within organizational workload and funding constraints, that individuals are provided duty time for planned continuous learning activities.
- Allow telework for continuous learning web based training, as appropriate.
- Ensure that the annual Individual Development Plans prepared for their personnel include opportunities for participating in continuous learning activities,
- Ensure the workforce members' completion of continuous learning activities is documented in Register-Now.
- Appropriately consider the currency of continuous learning achievement by those they supervise when preparing performance appraisals, considering award recommendations,

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considering the individual for an increase in duties or levels of responsibility or when making selections that would result in an increase in grade.

- Provide a written explanation, via the chain of command to the Chairman, Marine Corps Acquisition Career Management Board, within 30 days of notification that their employee failed to complete the continuous learning requirement. This explanation will include, for the two-year period in question, at minimum:
 - A record of leave taken to include dates and characterization of leave.
 - A record of all TAD taken and purpose of trip.
 - A copy of the individuals Individual Development Plan for the period.
 - A record of all developmental activities completed to include the nature and duration of the activity.
 - A copy of the IDP for the subsequent two-year period.
 - An explanation as to the actions taken with the employee.

Individual Acquisition Workforce Member: It is the responsibility of the individual workforce member to:

- Complete the continuous learning requirement of achieving 80 points biannually based on his or her baseline date.
- Identify and discuss with his or her supervisor during an annual review the types of continuous learning activities to pursue.
- Request point credit through Register-Now for those continuous learning activities that are not automatically tracked.
- Stay abreast of their continuous learning point status within Register-Now.
- Seek assistance from their career development specialist should information in Register-Now appear to be incorrect.

Acquisition Continuous Learning Point Crediting Guidance

Professional improvement is a continuing cycle. It includes certification training and the full range of continuous learning activities that serve to increase the performance capabilities as an acquisition professional. Individual goals that support continuous learning may include:

- learning about new acquisition, technology and initiatives
- staying current on changes in a career field
- completing training for higher certification levels
- learning something about, or becoming certified, in other career fields
- completing a degree program
- broadening experience and expanding technical expertise
- developing new leadership and management skills

The majority of the workforce will participate in a combination of continuous learning activities. These activities can be characterized as either a training, educational, experience or professional type activities. The following sections along with the subsequent table describe the guidelines for determining CLPs. These are only guidelines. The supervisor, in conjunction with the workforce member, should use these guidelines to determine points credited for any given training or developmental activity.

When experience or other non-assessed activities are to be used to earn CLPs, certain principles should be followed. Supervisors and employees should pre-define, as closely as possible, the tasks to be accomplished, expected outcomes, and the learning opportunities. If it is an assignment, the individual should be mentored during the assignment. Accomplishment of a product, such as a briefing, a project design, a report, or other work product that shows the learning attained, is desirable. Sharing the knowledge and experience gained and the product with others in the organization should be highly encouraged.

Training Activities

1. Career field certification training is required by DAWIA and is the most important facet of professional training for the workforce member. It should be the priority for those not certified to the level of their assignment. However, there are times, such as those while waiting for a class date or fulfilling the experience time requirements after training is complete, when other continuous learning activities are appropriate.
2. For professional growth and preparation for other opportunities, it is suggested that workforce members always strive to achieve Level III certification in his or her career field as well as certification in multiple career fields. Funding however, for certification training above that required for the position or for career fields other than the one identified with the position is not normally available from resources other than what may be available within the member's parent command. In all cases though, DAU courses taken towards career field certification will count for continuous learning points. Points will automatically be tracked in Register-Now.

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Acquisition Continuous Learning Point Crediting Guidance

3. In addition to DAU courses completed towards certification, the following would also be considered as training activities:

a. *Completing awareness training.* Periodically DoD and the Components conduct briefing sessions to acquaint the workforce with new or changed policy. There is no testing/assessment of knowledge gained.

b. *Completing learning modules and training courses.* These may be formal or informal offerings from a recognized training organization, including in-house training course/sessions or personnel demonstration projects, which include some form of testing/assessment for knowledge gained. If a course has been approved for and awards Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the successful completion of the course, then these CEU should be used as the guide for awarding continuous learning points. The CEUs can be converted to points at 10 points per CEU.

c. *Performing Self-Directed Study.* An individual can keep current or enhance his or her capabilities through a self-directed study program agreed to by the supervisor.

d. *Teaching.* DoD AT&LWF members are encouraged to share their knowledge and insights with others through teaching of courses or learning modules. Teaching is also a part of the Professional Activities category.

e. *Mentoring.* Helping others to learn and become more productive workers or managers benefits DoD and the individuals involved. Mentoring is also a part of the Experience category.

Educational Activities

1. The continued development of the workforce through formal educational programs at institutions of higher learning is encouraged. For formal academic programs offered by educational institutions, each semester hour is equal to one CEU. A three-hour credit course would be worth three CEUs and 30 points.

2. The supervisor makes the determination at the time that the workforce member's IDP is prepared as to which courses are appropriate for awarding continuous learning points. An engineer who is taking an accounting class leading to a Masters of Business Administration degree probably would get full credit for the semester hours. On the other hand, if the engineer is taking courses not related to his/her current or future duties, the courses would not be counted as continuous learning.

Experience

1. The Experience category includes on-the-job experiential assignments, and intra/inter-organizational rotational career broadening and developmental experiences. While supervisors and employees must use discretion in arriving at a reasonable point value to be awarded for rotational and developmental assignments, a sliding scale is recommended as per the table below.

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2. The assumption is that longer assignments are more beneficial than shorter assignments. The supervisor may feel that an individual may deserve more or less than the values shown. In determining the points for a rotational/ developmental assignment, the supervisor should consider both the long-term benefit to DoD, and the immediate benefit to the supervisor's organization and the workforce member. For example, a second rotational assignment of the same sort would be less valuable than a different type of rotational assignment.

Professional Activities

1. *Participating in Organization Management.* Membership alone in a professional organization will not be considered as fulfilling continuous learning requirements, but participation in the organization leadership will. This includes, when they meet the restrictions in DoD 5500.7-R (Joint Ethics Regulation), elected/appointed positions, committee leadership roles, or running an activity for the organization.

2. *Attending/Speaking/Presenting at Professional Seminars/Symposia/Conferences.* A workforce member can receive points for attending professional seminars or conferences. However, the supervisor needs to determine that the individual learned something meaningful from the experience. Due to the effort involved in preparation and delivery, making presentations should get full credit for each hour involved in preparation and presentation.

3. *Publishing.* Articles for publication normally will meet the criteria for continuous learning. Points will be awarded only in the year published. Compliance with DoD publication policy is required.

4. *Participating in Workshops.* Points should be awarded for workshops with planned learning outcomes.

5. *Professional Examination, License or Certificate.* This includes such activities as passing the CPA exam, licensing as a Professional Engineer, or Project Manager Certification from the Project Management Institute. CLPs will be credited only in the year awarded.

The following is a summary chart of recommended points:

Acquisition Continuous Learning Point Crediting Guidance

Table of Recommended Continuous Learning Point Awards

CREDITABLE ACTIVITIES	POINT CREDIT (see note)
Training Activities Courses/Modules	
DAU Courses/Modules	10 per CEU (see DAU catalog) or: .5 point per hour of instruction
• Awareness Briefing/Training — no testing or assessment associated	
• Continuous Learning Modules — testing or assessment associated	1 point per hour of instruction
Other Functional Training	1 point per hour of instruction
Leadership or Other Training	1 point per hour of instruction
Equivalency Exams	Same points as awarded for the course
Educational Activities	
Quarter Hour	10 per Quarter Hour
Semester Hour	10 per Semester Hour
Continuing Education Unit (CEU)	10 per CEU
Equivalency Exams	Same points as awarded for the course
Experience	
On-the-Job Experiential Assignments	Maximum of 20 points per year
Rotational Assignments	Maximum of 40 points per year
Training With Industry	Maximum of 40 points per year
IPT/Special Project Leader	Maximum of 15 points per year
IPT/Special Project Member	Maximum of 10 points per years
Mentor	Maximum of 5 points per year
Rotational Assignments or Training with Industry	Recommended Points
12 Months	80
9 Months	60
6 Months	40
3 Months	15
2 Months	10
1 Month	5
Professional Activities	
Professional Exam/License/Certificate	10-30 points
Teaching/Lecturing	2 points per hour; maximum of 20 points per year
Symposia/Conference Presentations	2 points per hour; maximum of 20 points per year
Workshop Participation	1 point per hour; maximum of 8 points per day and 20 points per year
Symposia/Conference Attendance	.5 point per hour; maximum of 4 points per day and 20 points per year
Publications	10 to 40 points

Note: All activities may earn points only in the year accomplished, awarded or published. It is expected that supervisors will use the Guidelines and their own professional judgment in arriving at points to be awarded for any activity undertaken to meet the standards. While supervisors have the authority to establish points for activities, any concerns of employees or disputes may be addressed through applicable dispute resolution procedures.