



REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE ARMED FORCES

STUDY LEAVE POLICY

By Command of the
Defence Policy Committee

January, 2011

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TOWER HILL
FREETOWN

RSLAF STUDY LEAVE POLICY

References:

- A. Defence Council meeting of 27 November 2003.
- B. Defence Council meeting of 19 February 2004.
- C. Defence Council meeting of 29 April 2004.
- D. Defence Council meeting of 5 August 2004.
- E. D/MOD/3011/1 dated 29 September 2004.
- F. Army Orders No 1 of 1965.

Purpose

1. The RSLAF has historically created the opportunity for officers and soldiers to be granted Study Leave in order to develop our human resource capability and enhance our professionalism. This will further enable the RSLAF to meet the military and diplomatic challenges in the new world order, and to proficiently contribute to Sub-regional, Regional and International peace and security. This policy outlines the Study Leave policy and process. While it is acknowledged that Study Leave represents an important investment in individual development, it must deliver demonstrative long-term value back to the RSLAF. The success of Study Leave will be measured by clearly defined increases in military capabilities and professionalism. Furthermore, it must be affordable within the annual spending priorities and any potential value must be weighed against the full capital cost of any proposal, including both the actual time away from a military post and longer term career benefits. Study Leave sponsorship is derived from the RSLAF Statement of Training Requirements (SOTR).

Conditions

2. Study Leave deals with courses NOT run in formal military institutions, but rather for courses conducted both in Sierra Leone and overseas at a civilian institute as detailed on the SOTR. When funding is available, the following conditions must be met before an application for Study Leave is considered:

a. Applicants should have served a minimum of 5 years. Any exception will require a robust justification (e.g. specialists such as Doctors, Legal and Engineers).

b. There must be full endorsement of the application by the chain of command. At each level, units/formations must consider the military impact of the individual's absence from normal duties and comment realistically on that impact. Military duties supersedes' studies, should there be a call to duty if security situation changes to Red (civil disobedience, insurrections or insurgency), immediate withdrawal of all personnel on studies will be a possibility.

c. Formations, Units Commanders and supervisors must clearly identify the value the application will bring to RSLAF current or future capabilities and make a clear recommendation accordingly. It will not suffice to simply forward the

ROS CALCULATION

1. When a member of the RSLAF undergoes training sponsored by the RSLAF they will be subject to a Return of Service (RoS) period under the following conditions:

a. Full Sponsorship (Full-time), defined as when the RSLAF would provide funding for the course and the individual's current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would be excused all military duties for the duration of the course. The RoS period is calculated as 3 years for every 12 months study up to a maximum of 5 years RoS.

b. Full Sponsorship (Part-Time), defined as when the RSLAF would provide funding for the course fees and the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would continue to undertake the majority of their military duties, but would receive a limited quantity of time away from work by negotiation with his/her Unit Commander in order to pursue part-time study. The RoS period would be 1 year for every 12 months of study.

c. Part Sponsored (internal), defined as when the RSLAF would not pay any course fees but would provide the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would continue to undertake the majority of his/her military duties, but would receive a limited quantity of time off away from work by negotiation with his/her Unit Commander in order to pursue part-time study. The RoS period would be 6 months for every 12 months study.

d. Part Sponsorship (external), defined as when the RSLAF would not pay any course fees but would provide the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing to dependants) for the duration of the course. The individual would be excused all military duties for the duration of the course. The RoS period would be 1 year for every 12 months of study.

Selection Board

5. The Study Leave Selection Board will convene once a year (Ideally not later than September due to the academic year acceptance availability) to consider applications. It will be chaired by the ACDS Pers/Trg and comprise of DDTER, D Def Pers, COS HQ J1/J2, CO AFEC and SO2 DDTER. The J1/J7 IMATT representatives should also be invited to attend.

Categories of Study Leave Sponsorship

6. The Board will assess individual applications in light of the published conditions and is empowered to award the following categories for courses in civilian institutions in and out of Sierra Leone:

Category (a)	Description (b)	Return of Service (RoS) (c)
1A	Full Sponsorship (Internal Full-Time) , defined as when the RSLAF would provide funding for the course and the individual's current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would be excused all military duties for the duration of the course.	Individual must complete and sign the RoS at ANNEX B. The RoS period is calculated as 3 years for every 12 months study up to a maximum of 5 years RoS
1B	Full Sponsorship (Internal Part-Time) , defined as when the RSLAF would provide funding for the course fees and the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would continue to undertake the majority of their military duties, but would receive a limited quantity of time away from work by negotiation with his/her Unit Commander in order to pursue part-time study.	Individual must complete and sign the RoS at ANNEX B. The RoS period would be 1 year for every 12 months of study.
2A	Part Sponsored (Internal Part-Time) , defined as when the RSLAF would not pay any course fees but would provide the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing) for the duration of the course. The individual would continue to undertake the majority of his/her military duties, but would receive a limited quantity of time off away from work by negotiation with his/her Unit Commander in order to pursue part-time study.	Individual must complete and sign the RoS at ANNEX B. The RoS period would be 6 months for every 12 months study.
2B	Part Sponsorship (External Full-Time) , defined as when the RSLAF would not pay any	Individual must complete and sign the

	course fees but would provide the individuals current military salary (including all normal monetary allowances, rice ration, military health care and military housing to dependants) for the duration of the course. The individual would be excused all military duties for the duration of the course.	RoS at ANNEX B. The RoS period would be 1 year for every 12 months of study.
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Board Decision

7. Board decisions will be promulgated through the chain of command by DDTER within five (5) working days after the Board convened. Under no circumstances will the RSLAF pay educational costs for applicants who begin Study Leave without signed authorization from the Directorate of Defence Training, Education & Recruiting.

Administrative Arrangements

8. Personnel approved as Categories 1A & 2B will be placed on the Advanced Training List (ATL) by the Study Leave Selection Board for the duration of their course. CO AFEC is responsible for all Category 1A approved Study Leave personnel while on course. DDTER will be responsible for Category 2B. Those approved as Categories 1B & 2A sponsorship will continue to be administered by their Unit Commanders. D Def Pers will post Category 1A & 2B students to the Y List and state AFEC or DDTER in their posting orders.

MS Implications

9. All Categories 1A & 2B students are not eligible to be selected for promotion until resumption of work. The promotion board following the individual's resumption of work will consider him/her if due for promotion and will give temporal rank to those yet to undertake the career courses (specialist units are exempted). The rank will be substantive after successful completion of the career courses. The individuals with outstanding results (e.g Div I/II) will be awarded back-dated seniority equal to seniority date of last promotion. Personnel that do not perform well will be promoted without back-dated seniority. However Categories 1B & 2A students may be eligible to be selected for promotion since they remain employable within the area of their studies. Categories 1B & 2A students are not to be posted out of their approval units until their courses are completed.

10. All specialists (Legal, Medical, Engineer, etc) trained by the RSLAF should remain in that directorate/unit as specialists upon completion of his/her course.

11. All overseas courses are to be communicated to the relevant Sierra Leone Embassy through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to enable them facilitates the supervision of students.

Reporting for Duty

12. Category 1A Study Leave. Personnel are to report to AFEC within 5 working days of the start of their approved course. They will be given an administrative aide memoire

(Annex C) and formally taken on strength. In the event that studies disperse for more than one month within the duration of a course, personnel are to report to AFEC at the beginning of the dispersal period whereupon they will be attached to the Field Force until the course re-convenes.

13. Category 2B Study Leave. Personnel are to report to DDTER within 5 working days after the approval of their Study Leave application. They will be given an administrative aide memoire and formally posted to Y List. Personnel are to report to DDTER 14 days after the expiration of their approved Study Leave as recorded on the Trg RoS. DDTER will inform D Def Pers for their posting order.

14. Categories 1B & 2A Study Leave. Personnel are to confirm with their Unit Commander that satisfactory administrative arrangements are in place for their part time study no later than five (5) working days before their study commences.

15. All categories of personnel are to submit personal and course institutions contact details (residential, phone and e-mail) to DDTER/CO AFEC/Unit Comd as applicable.

Personnel Report

16. Category 1A Study Leave. This category of students must be accounted for on AFEC weekly personnel report.

17. Category 2B Study Leave. DDTER must account for personnel of this category on the weekly personnel report.

18. Category 1B & 2A Study Leave. The Formations/Units must account for personnel of this category on the weekly personnel report.

Course Reports

19. Category 1A Study Leave students are to present course reports to CO AFEC while Category 2B students are to send their course reports to DDTER by mail delivery or e-mail (i.e. scanned copy). Categories 1B & 2A students are to present course reports to their Unit Commander. For courses longer than one year's duration, failure to present an annual progress report will result in removal from the Study Leave Scheme and students liable to repay costs. Sub-standard reports will result in the same penalty. For courses of less than one year, failure to provide an end-of-course report will result in the liability to repay sponsorship costs.

20. CO AFEC will be visiting various institutions to monitor the progress of the sponsored students.

Course Duration

21. The RSLAF does not sponsor courses beyond 4 years full time training except for medical doctors, lawyers and engineers (Honors class).

22. When students complete the approved category of sponsorship, they are to complete the binding agreement (Trg RoS) period before applying for another sponsorship except where a robust justification can be made by the unit commander/HOD for instant RSLAF capability enhancement.

Course Revision/Changes

23. Student will not be allowed to change courses from what was awarded by the Study Leave board. In the circumstance where this happens, immediate withdrawal of sponsorship will occur and the student called back to work and required to repay all covered expenses.

Application for Extension of Study Leave

24. Personnel wishing to apply for an extension of study leave sponsorship must have a justification and those on overseas sponsorship must apply through DDTER and those on local sponsorship through CO AFEC. All applications for extension must be forwarded before July each year.

25. Application for extension is for one year only and personnel are only entitled to apply once.

Training Return of Service (Trg RoS)

26. The contractual obligation to give a Trg RoS upon completion of approved Study Leave is embodied at ANNEX B of this policy. It must be signed by any individual that is awarded study leave sponsorship and a copy retained in the individual's personal file before they proceed on the course. The new TACOS will be used when signed as a binding agreement.

27. Trg RoS must be signed by the individual, a supervisor and a witness. When once the Trg RoS is signed, the individual is not eligible for voluntary retirement until he/she completes serving the RSLAF for the prescribed period of Trg RoS. Failure to complete the prescribed Trg RoS, the individual is liable to return cost of sponsorship (including salaries, rice/ration, etc) with 10% interest.

Absence Without Leave (AWOL) on Study Leave

28. AWOL procedure for personnel on study leave sponsorship will be initiated under the following conditions:

- a. Failure to report for duty 14 days after the expiration of an approved Study Leave as recorded on the Trg RoS.
- b. When progress reports are not received for the personnel by the start of the new academic year (preferably October).
- c. When the student or his/her institution is contacted and no response is received in 30 days.

29. The supervising officer (DDTER/CO AFEC/Unit Comd) will initiate the Study Leave AWOL procedure which will be followed by:
- a. Legally pursuing the individual; diplomatic means will be used to arrest, detain and deport those overseas.
 - b. Apply for the Immigration department to withdraw the right of the individual to use his/her service passport.
 - c. All cases of AWOL while on study leave once proven by the relevant authorities must be punished and gazetted.
 - d. Study leave AWOL cases are not entitled to discharge benefits. Legal action will then be taken to recover all monies spent on sponsorship (cost of tickets, course fees, salaries, rice/ration, medical, etc) with 10% interest.

Removal Procedure

30. In the event that an individual fails to complete an approved course to the standard required by the institution, or does not provide the required progress reports to CO AFEC (for Category 1A students), DDTER (Category 2B) or the Unit Commander/HOD (Categories 1B & 2A), then he/she is to report to be reassigned. Failure to report will result in the individual being posted AWOL with the resultant stoppage of pay and allowances. Disciplinary procedures will follow including the liability to recover course costs. In the event that an individual fails to make satisfactory progress during any key stage or academic year of his/her course, he/she will be given only one second chance to repeat the key stage or academic year.
31. Any individual who breaks his/her course for one academic year will be removed from that sponsorship and must reapply for another study leave sponsorship.

Entitlement To Travel Expenses

32. There will be no entitlement to travel expenses in connection with approved Study Leave.

Recommended Courses

33. The Study Leave Selection Board will give priority to courses that offer a direct benefit to RSLAF occupations as detailed in the SOTR. Priority is also based upon the preferred manning levels of specialist occupations. However, proposals for other courses not identified on the SOTR can be submitted not later than 15 June to DDTER for consideration to be included on the calling notice issued in July. Typical course disciplines of priority for Study Leave are:
- a. Medical
 - b. Legal
 - c. Engineering

- d. Technical courses directly related to current jobs.

(Note: This is not a complete or prioritised list)

Signed by

Signed by

JAO Jah-Tucker
Brig Gen
ACDS Pers/Trg

RY Koroma
Maj Gen
CDS

Authorised to sign on behalf of the Defence Council

Dated: January 2011

Annexes:

- A. RSLAF Application for Study Leave.
- B. RSLAF Training Return of Service Declaration.
- C. RSLAF Study Leave Administrative Aide Memoire.

ANNEX B TO
RSLAF STUDY LEAVE POLICY
DATED MAY 2011

STUDY LEAVE RETURN OF SERVICE DECLARATION

1. I, No.....Rank.....Name.....Initials.....
accept*/do not accept* the offer of study leave to attend.....
.....
from to Furthermore, I accept*/do not
accept* that as the course attracts a Return of Service of [] years from the end date of
the course. I will be unable to tender my resignation from RSLAF until after
.....

2. Failure to accept this Return of Service condition will result in the withdrawal of the offer of study leave.

3. Having been awarded study leave that attracts a RoS, if I fail to honour the RoS commitment, I will face either disciplinary, administrative and/or legal action and I will be liable to repay all of the salary and ration received during the course, as well as all associated costs (materials such as books, course fees etc) plus 10% interest.

..... Signature Signature Signature
..... Name & Initials Name & Initials Name & Initials
..... Rank Rank Rank
Applicant	Witness	Supervising Officer

Disposition:

- 1 copy to candidate
- 1 copy to D Def Pers (Officers) or AFPC (Ors) for P/file
- 1 copy to DETER

Note:

See overleaf for ROS calculation.

application up the chain without a realistic assessment of the benefit. This evaluation must realistically assess the merit of any specific usable skills that the applicant will attain or, in the case of academic courses, the level of enhancement to staff skills.

d. Study leave will be underpinned by a contractual Return of Service (Trg ROS) upon completion of the approved course.

Calling Notice

3. The calling notice for individuals to start submitting their Study Leave applications will be issued at the end of July each year. This will be preceded by the D Def Pers providing DDTER with the number of targeted sponsorship for Study Leave. D Def Pers, in liaison with DDTER, will indicate annual vacancies in order of priority, and courses for which sponsorship can be secured.

Applications

4. Annex A provides a copy of the RSLAF Study Leave Application Form. For all HQ JFC Formations/Units, it should be submitted through the chain of command using the process identified in Figure 1. MOD personnel, or those in units commanded directly by MOD should follow the process identified at Figure 2. All applications must be clear and concise and a supporting recommendation from the chain of command must be evident, including acceptance letter from the institution of study; otherwise applications will be filtered out prior to the formal selection Board. Preference will be given to applicants who propose part-time course of study wherein their normal military duties are combined with time away to pursue their studies.

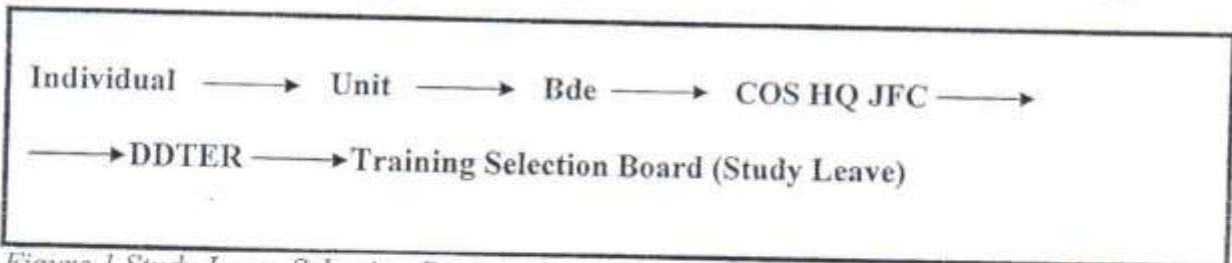


Figure 1 Study Leave Selection Process for JFC Units

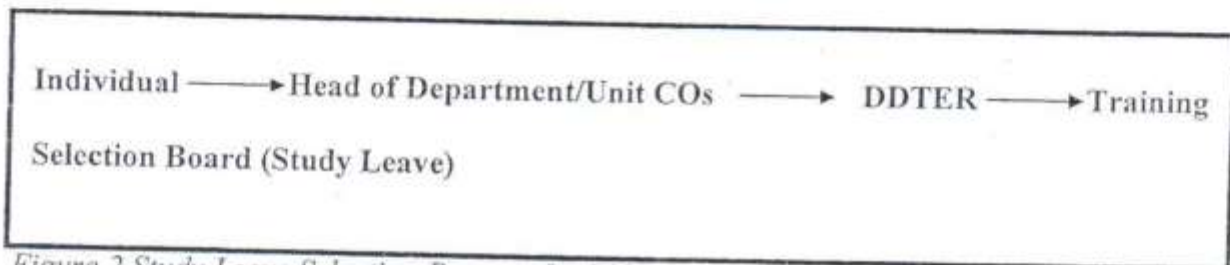


Figure 2 Study Leave Selection Process for MOD Units