



MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE
PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE
FOR
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
NASSAU, N.P., THE BAHAMAS

POLICY
for
IN-SERVICE TRAINING AWARDS,
LEAVE,
EDUCATIONAL LOANS
AND REIMBURSEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Bahamas Government established the Public Service Training Centre in 1970. Its name was changed in 1996, to the Public Service Centre for Human Resources Development (PSCHRD). PSCHRD is under the direction of the Minister responsible for the Public Service and the Permanent Secretary. The Director of Training has direct supervision.

The Public Service Centre for Human Resources Development is the training arm of the Ministry of the Public Service and is responsible for formulating training policies, facilitating training for the entire Public Service and processing requests/recommendations for the following:

- **In-Service Training Awards (INSTAs)**
- **Bond Documents**
- **Unpaid Study Leave**
- **Special Leave**
- **Educational Loans**

This booklet is designed to provide the policies and procedures to human resources officers and others who are responsible for processing and submitting requests and/or recommendations relative to the above-mentioned areas.

The information in this booklet is presented in the following format:

- Policies;
- Procedures
- Flowcharts
- Checklists
- Samples of Relevant Documents

Applicants should also be aware that the authority for granting study leave is vested in the following agencies and no officer should be allowed to commence study leave without their written approval:

- **The Public Service Commission**
- **The Police Service Commission**
- **The Judicial and Legal Service Commission**
- **The Ministry of the Public Service**
- **Ministry of National Security (Defence Force Officers)**

Therefore, reference to any one authority is applicable to all.

Additionally, the policies contained in this document supercede all previous documents, references or circulars on the subject matter, with the exception of Cabinet Conclusions and current Industrial Agreements.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING AWARDS

In-Service Training Awards are granted for completion of studies at the Bachelor's and Master's Degree level or at the Diploma and Certificate levels, where applicable, for professional qualification of any duration.

Officers pursuing In-Service Training overseas are reminded that written approval for absence from duty to pursue studies should be granted from the relevant Commission **PRIOR** to proceeding on leave. There is no guarantee that the Commission will sanction study leave which commences in advance of approval. Public Officers absenting themselves from work without prior approval may be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with Public Service Commission Regulations.

I. TYPES OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING AWARDS

There are several types of In-Service Training Awards:

- Full In-Service Training Awards (International/Abroad)
- Full In-Service Training Awards (Local)
- Salary and Tuition
- Salary and 2/3rds Tuition
- Salary Only
- Tuition Only
- Tuition and Time off from work

(a) Full In-Service Training Award (International)

This Award includes:

- **Salary;**
- **Tuition Only (excluding all fees, e.g. insurance, housing & other charges,);**
- **One time roundtrip airfare (Nassau/Destination/Nassau)**
- **Training allowance - US, UK or Canada \$3,120 per annum or UWI (Jamaica Trinidad) \$1,440 per annum.**

(b) Full In-Service Training Award (Local)

This Award includes:

- **Salary;**
- **Tuition Only (excluding all fees, e.g. insurance, housing & other charges);**
- **One time roundtrip airfare (Family Island/Nassau/Family Island) for Family Islanders Only;**
- **Training allowance - \$1,320 per annum.**

II. **Limited/Partial In-Service Training Awards may include any one of the following:**

- **Salary Only;**
 - **Salary and 2/3rds Tuition (Teachers Only) ICO37(96)17;**
 - **Salary and Tuition Only (excluding fees, insurance, housing & other charges);**
 - **Tuition Only (excluding fees, insurance, housing & other charges) and Time Off to attend classes;**
 - **Tuition Only(excluding fees, insurance, housing & other charges);**
- (a) **Salary and Tuition (excluding all fees, e.g. insurance and other charges)**
The officer is not expected to attend work and receives no increment, promotion or earned/accrued vacation leave during the duration of the award.
- (b) **Salary and 2/3rds Tuition (in accordance with ICO37(96)17)**
This is granted to officers to complete Diplomas in Education or Bachelor of Education Degrees.
- (c) **Salary Only**
The officer is not expected to attend work and no other financial assistance is given. The officer receives no increment, promotion or earned/accrued vacation leave during the duration of the award.
- (d) **Tuition only (excluding all fees, e.g. insurance, housing and other charges)**
The officer is expected to attend work on a full time basis. No other financial assistance is given.
- (e) **Tuition and Time-Off to Attend Classes**
The officer is expected to attend work, but is given time-off to attend classes.

The Checklist must be completed and all supporting documents attached **before** the submission is prepared for the Permanent Secretary and/or relevant Commission. Incomplete submissions will be returned to the submitting Ministry (**See Appendix 1-Check List for INSTA**)

NB: It is the responsibility of employees to confirm with the National Accreditation and Equivalency Council of The Bahamas (NAECOB) as to whether a college is accredited before commencing studies. Ministries/Agencies must also check with the National Accreditation and Equivalency Council of The Bahamas (NAECOB) because colleges/institutions lose their accreditation from time to time or articulation agreements expire.

POLICY

- 1) In-Service Training Awards (INSTAs) are granted to officers who have been on the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years.
- 2) INSTAs will only be granted for a maximum of five years (depending on the area of study.) The duration will be determined by the Commission.
- 3) Recommendations for INSTAs must have the concurrence of the Permanent Secretary from the applicant's Ministry.
- 4) Requests for Full In-Service Training Awards at the Master's Degree level or above may be considered. However, Cabinet approval is required.
- 5) Officers must not be older than fifty (50) years.
- 6) INSTAs for Bachelor Degrees will be considered for applicants only if they have completed an Associate Degree from an institution accredited for Government purposes and have an aggregate of sixty (60) credits towards a degree at their own expense.
- 7) INSTAs are not available for study at the Associate Degree level except in special circumstances where there is an urgent demand for qualified personnel in a particular area of study (eg. Radiography, Medical Records Technology, Court Reporting etc.),
- 8) In accordance with Cabinet Conclusion ICO 22(08), no further approvals for In-Service Training Awards will be granted for public officers to pursue legal studies without specific prior approval of Cabinet.
- 9) INSTAs are granted to pursue studies locally or abroad. However, INSTAs are **not** normally granted to pursue degrees abroad if they are offered and/or can be obtained at one of the recognized local colleges. However, due consideration may be given to the application for studies abroad, with particular reference to the time it will take to complete a course of study and expenditure involved.
- 10) Financial clearance is not required for Limited In-Service Training Award (Salary only).
- 11) Financial clearance is required for any recommendations for an INSTA that is beyond salary (for example: tuition, airfare, training allowance)
- 12) For teachers, Cabinet Conclusion ICO 37 (96)17 permits officers to be granted salary and two-thirds tuition.
- 13) Requests for the awards should be sent from the Ministry and not the Department (for example, from the Ministry of Finance and not from the Customs Department). Therefore, the submission should **not** be prepared and forwarded for approval if the recommendation is from the Department, but should be returned to the Ministry.

14) Recommendations for In-Service Training Awards should be submitted to the Ministry of the Public Service in accordance with the policy contained herein, as follows:

- Requests for August - Deadline 1 March.
- Requests for January - Deadline 1 August of previous year

15) The priority list for In-Service Training Awards will be approved by Cabinet but is subject to change based on the prevailing needs of the Ministries/Departments.

16) In order to be eligible for an In-Service Training Award, the applicant should have an **acceptance letter** from an institution accredited for government purposes. The area of study on the acceptance letter should match what is being requested by the Ministry and the applicant.

17) Officers who receive Limited In-Service Training Awards (salary only) are permitted to go to school on a full-time basis for the duration of the award and are not expected to report to work.

18) Limited INSTAs (salary only) are **not** granted for studies where classes are held on the weekend or after work hours.

19) Officers who receive local In-Service Training Awards (usually limited to tuition or tuition & time off to attend classes), where classes are held on the weekend or after work hours, are expected to report to work on a full-time basis.

20) Officers who are granted In-Service Training Awards **must** submit a transcript at the end of each academic semester. If the transcript indicates that the applicant is failing, his/her Ministry or the Ministry of the Public Service can request that the officer be placed on probation for a specified period or the award be revoked.

21) The officer must provide proof that he/she has authorized the institution to forward the transcript to his/her Ministry for onward submission to the Ministry of the Public Service no later than by the end of the first semester of study. Failure to do so may result in the officer's salary being coded or revocation of the award.

22) Officers who are granted In-Service Training Awards **must** maintain a minimum Grade Point Average of 2.5 each semester as well as a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.5. Failing grades will result in probation or revocation of the award. Consideration may not be given to extensions of INSTAs due to failing grades or GPAs below 2.5.

23) Recipients must carry a full course load each semester.

24) Recipients must **not** change their major or college/university without obtaining official approval from the relevant Commission.

- 25) Additional funds or duplicated payments will not be paid for failed, repeated or withdrawn courses. Any funds paid outside of relevant Commission's Order to or on behalf, intentionally or in error, of the officer **will be** recovered in accordance with the Recovery of Overpayment Policy.
- 26) Recipients must authorize the college/university to forward official transcripts to the sending Ministry for onward submission to the Ministry of the Public Service during the first semester and must not engage in full time employment during the award except for work study or internship attached to the degree under study.
- 27) Officers who are granted INSTAs will not receive vacation leave, promotion or increments during the period of the award.
- 28) No funds should be expended to the institution for the ensuing semester before a transcript is in hand for the previous semester. Any funds paid to an institution or an employee outside of the Public Service Commission's award intentionally or in error will be recovered in accordance with the Recovery of Overpayment Policy.
- 29) Recipients of INSTAs will be advised of Nos.16 through 28 in the approval letter.
- 30) Limited In-Service Training Awards (salary only) may be granted to pursue Masters Degrees. However, evidence of Cabinet approval should accompany requests that require more than a salary.
- 31) In-Service Training Awards may be granted to pursue Doctoral Studies. However evidence of Cabinet approval should accompany the request. The Ministry should forward a copy of the draft Cabinet Memorandum to the Ministry of the Public Service for review and comments **before** submitting to Cabinet.
- 32) Where the applicant's request may differ from that of the Ministry, the submission should be made in accordance with the Ministry's recommendation.
- 33) If the officer is requesting an extension of an In-Service Training Award, justification must be given.
- 34) Extension of an In-Service Training Award may be considered if the officer is pursuing the same degree. Extension of an award is **not** granted to pursue another degree or a different area of study, even if it is at the same institution. Any new area of study must be submitted as a new request.

For example: *If an In-Service Training Award is granted for an LLB Degree at the College of The Bahamas, a request to pursue the Certificate of Legal Education at the Eugene Dupuch Law School is **not** an extension. It should be processed as a new award.*

- 35) Requests for **police officers** to receive In-Service Training Awards should be submitted to the **Police Service Commission for approval. All other requests should be submitted to the Public Service Commission for approval, except as noted on page 3.**
- 36) Amendments to In-Service Training Awards should be sent to the relevant Commission for approval.
- 37) Officers who receive In-Service Training Awards are required to be bonded to serve the Bahamas Government for a minimum period that is equal to the duration of the award in addition to any other funds expended (for example: salary for the period of the award plus the tuition and/or allowance). In cases where the officer is granted a Limited In-Service Training Award (tuition only), the officer should be bonded for the funds and not the salary as the officer would have worked on a full-time basis.
- 38) Officers who fail to serve their bonded period, except in cases of revocation, will be required to reimburse the Bahamas Government for all funds (airfare, training allowance, salary, tuition, etc.) expended on the award.
- 39) Applicants should be aware that when submitting the names of bondsmen, the persons must have the capacity and willingness to meet the financial obligation of the bond, should it become necessary.
- a. The bond document should be amended so that it reads: **I (Bondsman name) agree that I have the financial capacity and agree to fulfil the financial obligation in the amount of on this Bond document if the applicant fails to do so.***

REQUESTS FROM THE APPLICANT'S MINISTRY

The following should be submitted in support of requests for In-Service Training Awards:

- A detailed memorandum from the Ministry, which should stipulate the type of award (Limited, Full etc.), proposed degree and area of study (e.g. Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Master's Degree in Chemistry, etc.), a statement regarding the Permanent Secretary's concurrence, justification for the application, name and location of institution, effective date and duration of the award.
- The applicant's personal letter of request. This should contain the type of award being requested, proposed course of study, location, commencement date and duration of programme and the award.
- A fully completed In-Service Training Awards Application Form is required.
- The acceptance letter from an accredited college or university and application form for study leave.
- However, in cases where the requests for teachers to receive In-Service Training Awards are retroactive, the application form can be accepted.
- An official letter from the College/University stipulating the exact number of credits accepted on transfer, is required. This will determine the actual duration of the leave.
- If the request is for more than salary (e.g. tuition), financial clearance is required.

See Appendix I for checklist.

LIST OF ACCREDITED LOCAL COLLEGES OR OFFSHORE UNIVERSITIES

Always refer to the **National Accreditation and Equivalency Council of The Bahamas (NAECOB)**.

SUBMISSION TO THE IN-SERVICE TRAINING AWARD COMMITTEE

1. Before preparing the submission profile, it is recommended that the checklist for In-Service Training Awards (**Appendix I**) be completed to ensure compliance with the requisite policies and practices.

2. If the requisite documents do not accompany the application, the application and documents will be returned to the Ministry.
3. If all of the supporting documents have been forwarded, a submission profile should be prepared. The following must be included:
 - a. The proposed degree and area of study, name and location of college or university, effective date, duration of the award, and the accreditation of school.
 - b. The date the officer was appointed to the Public Service, the officer's age and the date the officer became permanent and pensionable should be stated. The officer's age is important because officers must be on the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years and be less than 50 years of age in order to be eligible for an In-Service Training Award.
 - c. The applicant's qualifications. This is stated to ensure compliance with the policy regarding the Associate Degree or an aggregate of sixty (60) credits, as a pre-requisite for an In-Service Training Award.
 - d. The applicant's transcript for the Associate Degree will be requested, if it is not on file, to verify the applicant's ability to perform at a Grade Point Average of 2.50 or above.
 - e. The justification and any discrepancies for the INSTA.
 - f. The surety information on the three (3) sureties should include: Home number, Street, Mailing and E-mail addresses and Telephone contacts. (The Bond Document should include the statement: ***I (Bondsman name) agree that I have the financial capacity and agree to fulfil the financial obligation in the amount of on this Bond document if the applicant fails to do so.***
 - g. Employee Performance Appraisal Records for three (3) years immediately before the In-Service Training Award.
 - h. The folio numbers for the supporting documents should be identified.
 - i. Evidence of Cabinet approval must accompany the submission for Full In-Service Training Awards at the Masters level or above.
4. When the submission is presented to the In-Service Training Award Committee for approval only the submission profile should be placed on the front cover. The supporting documents (e.g. memorandum, acceptance letter etc.) should be placed in the file and numbered by an officer from the Records Management Unit.

5. The In-Service Training Award Checklist (**Appendix I**) should accurately reflect the aforementioned information.

APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST

1. The In-Service Training Award Committee makes recommendations to the Permanent Secretary.
2. When the submission is returned to PSCHRD, careful attention should be given to the Permanent Secretary's directives or comments for example: "approved". "not approved", "deferred" etc.

SUBMISSION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OR POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL

1. If the request is approved by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service, a submission should be prepared by PSCHRD and addressed to the Secretary of the relevant Commission (Public Service Commission or Police Service Commission) for final approval.
2. When making the submission to the relevant Commissions, all supporting documents (minute paper, memorandum, acceptance letter etc.) should be duplicated and placed on the front cover of the file. It should be noted that the Public Service Commission retains this information for its record. Hence, it is critical that the requisite information and documents are duplicated accordingly and placed on the file.
3. The In-Service Training Award Checklist should be attached at the front cover of the officer's personal file.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION or POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION

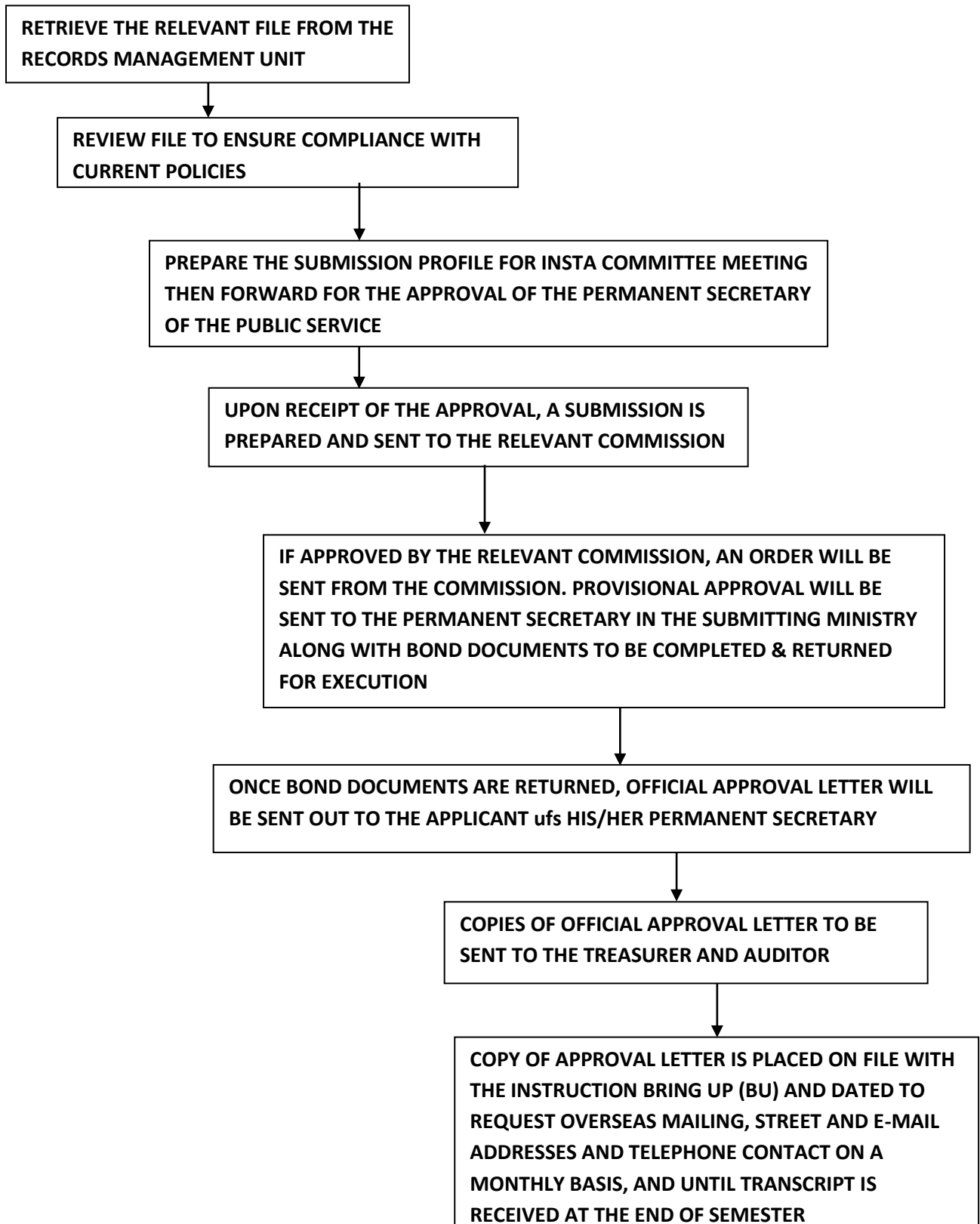
1. If the Public Service Commission approves the recommendation, an Order will be issued on pink paper.
2. If the Police Service Commission approves the recommendation, an Order will be prepared on Official paper.

3. The submitting Ministry is granted provisional approval for an In-Service Training Award (**Appendix II**). The Bond Documents should be witnessed in the presence of an authorized officer in the officer's Ministry
4. Once the Bond is properly executed, PSCHRD prepares the approval on the Ministry of the Public Service's letterhead. It is addressed to the applicant (name and position) ufs his/her Permanent Secretary. (**See Appendix IV**).
5. The approval letter will include the following:
 - (a) **Paragraph I**

This contains the Order Number, date Governor General signed, the date of PSC Meetings, duration of the award, course of study and name of institution where study is to be completed.
 - (b) **Paragraph II**
 - includes what the applicant is eligible for (for example: salary only, tuition etc.)
 - the period to be bonded to the Bahamas Government
 - a request for an official transcript to be submitted every academic semester.
 - (c) In addition the officer will be informed that he/she must:
 - maintain a 2.50 Grade Point Average each semester
 - complete bond documents prior to the issuance of the cheque (**See Appendix III**)
 - carry a full course load each semester;
 - **obtain** official approval from the relevant Commission before changing college/university and/or changing major.
 - (d) In addition the officer will be informed that he/she must:
 - show documentary proof of authorization for the college to forward transcripts to the Ministry of the Public Service during the first semester;
 - not engage in full-time employment during the award except for work study or internship attached to the degree under study; and
 - submit a current mailing address by which the applicant can be contacted at all times within one month of commencing leave, plus E-mail, street addresses and telephone numbers.
 - (e) Further he/she will be informed that:
 - vacation leave and increments are **not** accrued during the period of the Award;
 - he/she will not be eligible for promotion while on INSTA;
 - failing grades will result in probation or the revocation of the award;
 - failure to serve the bond period will result in having to reimburse the Government for all funds (salary, tuition etc.) expended on the award;

- tuition fees will not be paid until the transcript for the previous semester has been submitted;
 - additional funds or duplicated payments will not be paid for failed, repeated or withdrawn courses or for non-credit courses;
 - any funds paid outside of the Governor General's Order to or on behalf of the officer, whether intentionally or in error, will be recovered in accordance with the Recovery of Overpayment Policy.
5. The envelope for this approval letter should be addressed to the Permanent Secretary and **not** the applicant. This procedure ensures that the Permanent Secretary informs the applicant rather than vice versa. Two copies of the approval letter should be enclosed; one to be signed by the recipient and returned to the Ministry of the Public Service.
 6. The approval letter should be copied and sent to the Treasurer and Auditor General. The words, **Treasurer** and **Auditor General**, should be typed at the bottom of the approval letter. **(See Appendix IV)**.

**FLOW CHART FOR PROCESSING IN-SERVICE TRAINING AWARDS
AT THE MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE**



BOND DOCUMENTS

POLICY

1. Officers who are granted In-Service Training Awards will be bonded to serve The Bahamas Government for the period of the award **and** expenditure of funds (salary, tuition etc.).
2. In order to prepare bond documents, the applicant should submit to his/her Human Resources Officer, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three (3) sureties. Information on the salary for the period of the award and/or any other funds that were expended should be submitted to PSCHRD. For Full In-Service Training Awards, the applicant should also submit to the Human Resources Officer, the tuition, (excluding all fees), cost of one-time roundtrip airfare (Nassau/Destination/Nassau). This information should be submitted on the application form for study leave.
3. An itemized bill of all costs is required because the **exact tuition cost only** should be determined before payment is made.

PROCEDURES

1. Before preparing bond documents, note the period/duration of the award so that the applicant can be bonded accordingly. Further, examine what the officer received under the terms of the award. This will determine the amount of money for which the officer will be bonded.

For example:

An officer receives salary and tuition for the period January, 2010 to June, 2011.

The salary is \$20,000 per annum.

Tuition is \$10,000 per annum

The calculation should be as follows:

Salary - \$20,000 per annum x 1 1/2 years (duration) = \$30,000

Tuition - \$10,000 per annum x 1 1/2 years (duration) = \$15,000

Total amount of money of the bond is: \$45,000.00

Total duration/period to be bonded: 2 1/4 years.

(e.g. \$20,000 per annum + \$20,000 per annum + \$5,000 = 2-1/4 years in salary)

This procedure/formula should be followed for any additional terms (training, allowances, etc.) of the award.

2. The submitting Ministry is granted provisional approval for an In-Service Training Award (**Appendix II**). The Bond Documents should be witnessed in the presence of an authorized officer in the officer's Ministry.
3. The submitting Ministry must return the Bond documents for final execution to the Ministry of the Public Service **before** the official approval letter is issued (**Appendix IV**). (**See sample of Bond Document**).
4. The Bond documents should contain the terms of the Award [(eg) salary, tuition, period of the award, names, telephone numbers and addresses of sureties] and should clearly state the type of INSTA awarded [(e.g.) Full In-Service, Limited/Salary only] etc.). (**Appendix III**). The bondsmen should confirm their capacity and willingness to meet the financial obligation should it become necessary.
5. When the bond document is prepared, five (5) copies should be produced and sent to the applicant ufs his/her Permanent Secretary, to be signed and executed.
6. The instructions for completing the bond documents should be attached.
7. When signed bond documents are returned to the Ministry of the Public Service, they will be checked and if correct they will be sealed. If not correct, they will be returned immediately to the relevant Ministry, ufs The Permanent Secretary for appropriate action.
8. If correct, they will be sent under cover of a memorandum to the following as listed below:
 - two (2) copies to the applicant's Ministry with the instructions to retain one and forward the other to the applicant
 - one (1) copy to the Treasurer
 - one (1) copy to the Auditor General
 - one copy to be placed on the applicant's personal file at the Ministry of the Public Service.

Extension of In-Service Training Award

If the applicant is requesting an extension or a new award, bond documents from the initial award must be completed before the submission of a new request for further study.

SPECIAL LEAVE

POLICY

Special leave is normally granted by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service, for professional development courses, less than six months. Officers **will not** be granted a 7 (a) increment upon completion.

1. Special Leave of less than six months may be granted to officers who are on the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment or have been confirmed in appointment as well as to contract officers.
2. The officer's written request is required.
3. Requests which must include justification should be submitted to the Ministry of the Public Service at least **two (2) months** prior to leave date.
4. Special Leave of any duration is not granted to complete degrees as they are not classified as short programmes or courses.
5. Specialty training for Nurses and any course of study, six (6) months and more, must be processed as an In-Service Training Award and subsequently be submitted to the Public Service Commission for approval in accordance with INSTA Policy.
6. The grant of Special Leave is limited to salary only. In exceptional cases consideration may be given to justifiable requests for a stipend to assist the officer engaged in studies considered beneficial to the Public Service. Any additional assistance requested would be considered, providing funding is available in the budget of the relevant Ministry and/or Department.
7. Special Leave must also be approved for the attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops as well as permission obtained for the expenditure of funds where necessary. Ministries and Departments nominating public officers to attend international conferences, seminars or workshops not included in the approved budgeted programme of the Ministry must obtain prior approval for such travel and expenditure of funds from Cabinet. Confirmation from the agency must also be obtained.

REQUEST FROM THE APPLICANT'S MINISTRY

See Appendix V for the checklist.

The following documents should accompany the request:

- a) the memorandum from the applicant's Ministry stating the proposed course of study/programme, effective date and duration of the leave;
- b) documentation (acceptance letter/invitation/nomination etc.) from the institution/agency to verify the request; and
- c) the officer's letter of request.

SUBMISSION TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The submission should be prepared on a minute paper and addressed to the Permanent Secretary. It should include the following:

- a) a summary of the Ministry's request;
- b) the effective date and duration of the leave;
- c) the purpose of the leave and the proposed course of study;
- d) the officer's date of appointment to the Public Service;
- e) the officer's date of confirmation in appointment and/or to the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment; and
- f) the Ministry's rationale for the leave.

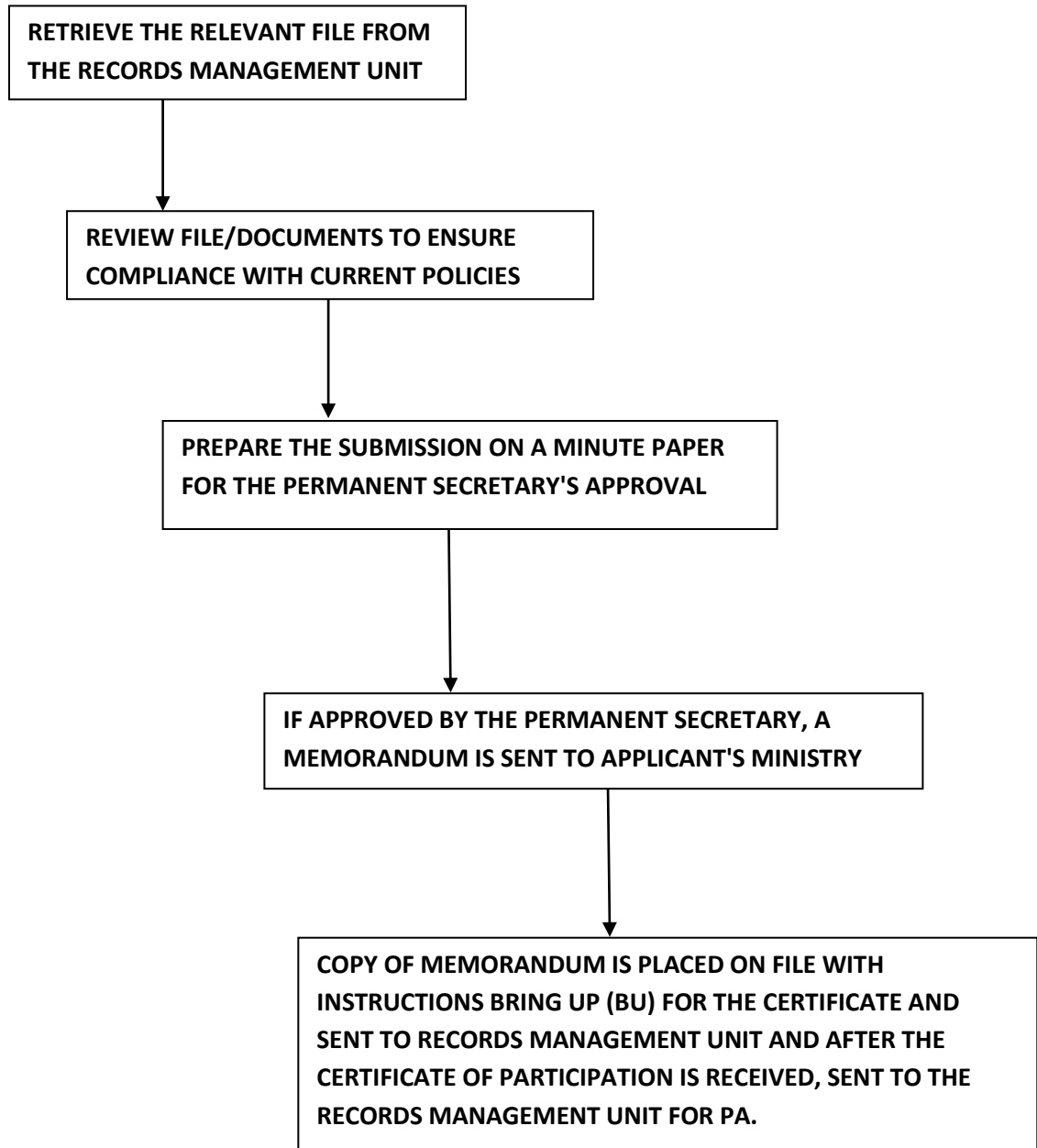
APPROVAL OF REQUEST BY PERMANENT SECRETARY

1. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service, approves Special Leave.
2. The decision of the Permanent Secretary is sent in a memorandum to the applicant's Ministry addressed to the applicant's Permanent Secretary, Attention: Human Resources Officer. The applicant will be informed **in writing** by the submitting Ministry. (**Appendix VI-Sample Approval for Special Leave**).
3. If the expenditure of funds is required the applicant's Ministry should be advised in the approval memorandum to seek financial clearance from the Ministry of Finance.
4. The approval memorandum should request that a copy of the certificate of participation be submitted to the Ministry of the Public Service on completion of the leave.

5. In these cases, follow this process:
 - a) Bring up (BU) and date the applicant's file to request the certification of participation.
 - b) A copy of the memorandum must be placed on the applicant's personal file with the instruction put away (PA) if the certificate is submitted/received;
 - c) Upon completion, the file should be sent to the Records Management Unit.

6. PSCHRD should submit an annual report of all Special Leave for study purposes to the Permanent Secretary and, thereafter, it should be sent to the relevant Commission.

**FLOW CHART FOR SPECIAL LEAVE
IN THE MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE**



UNPAID STUDY LEAVE

POLICY

Unpaid Study Leave is granted for study purposes by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service, to officers who have been on the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment for a minimum period of two (2) years.

1. This leave should be preceded by any vacation leave and leave of absence to which the officer may be entitled.
2. Approved Unpaid Study Leave does not break "pensionable service" however, the applicant should not receive any emoluments during the leave.
3. The leave may be granted for two (2) years or less at a time up to a maximum of five (5) years. A longer period may be considered depending on the course of study. This should be determined based on the amount of credits needed for completion of the course of study.
4. The area of study on the acceptance letter should match what is being requested by the Ministry and applicant.
5. Unpaid Study Leave is granted to pursue degrees at accredited institutions that are accepted by the *National Accreditation and Equivalency Council of The Bahamas (NAECOB)* for Government purposes.
6. Officers who attend Institutions/Colleges that are not accredited for Government purposes will neither be remunerated nor will they be eligible for a 7(a) increment.
7. **The officer should be advised in writing that:**
 - a) He/She will neither be remunerated nor eligible for a 7(a) increment in the cases where institutions are not accredited for Government purposes;
 - b) An officer who is granted Unpaid Study Leave must submit an official transcript at the end of each academic semester.
8. Unpaid Study Leave may be granted to pursue studies at all levels of degrees.
9. There should be certified evidence that the officer has authorized the institution to forward the transcript to his/her Ministry for onward submission to the Ministry of the Public Service no later than by the end of the first semester of study. Should the Ministry of the Public Service not receive the transcript in the prescribed time, this may result in revocation of the unpaid Study Leave.

10. If the Ministry wishes to have an Unpaid Study Leave converted to an In-Service Training Award, financial clearance must be provided along with relevant supporting Documents required for INSTA. (**see INSTA Checklist Appendix 1**). INSTAs would only be considered for conversion after unpaid study leave, once the officer has served for three additional years after resumption of duty. The INSTA guidelines must be followed.
11. Officers on Unpaid Study Leave may request permission to resume duty in the Public Service during school breaks and be paid accordingly. *Note the Permanent Secretary's approval and financial clearance are required before the officer commences work.*
12. If an officer is on Unpaid Study Leave and wants to resume duties on a full-time basis, official approval from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service is required. Financial clearance must be provided along with other supporting documents specifically, the certified official degree, official transcript, and officer's letter of request to resume duty, salary progression.
13. If the officer is requesting an extension of the Unpaid Study Leave, written justification should be given. Such approval is granted by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service.
14. Officers should not be allowed to engage in gainful employment while on Unpaid Study Leave without approval.
15. Recipients of Unpaid Study Leave should be advised of Items 1-13 above.
16. PSCHRD should submit an annual report of all Special Leave for study purposes to the Permanent Secretary and, thereafter, it should be sent to the relevant Commission.

REQUESTS FROM THE APPLICANT'S MINISTRY

1. The following documents should accompany the request:
 - a. the memorandum from the Ministry which should state the proposed course of study (for example: Bachelor's degree in Information Systems), effective date and duration of the leave;
 - b. the applicant's personal letter of request;
 - c. the acceptance letter from the college, university or institution;
 - d. a copy of the official transcript, if the applicant has begun studies; and
 - e. certified copies of the degree and official transcript, if the request is retroactive and the officer has completed studies.

See Appendix VII for checklist.

SUBMISSION TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

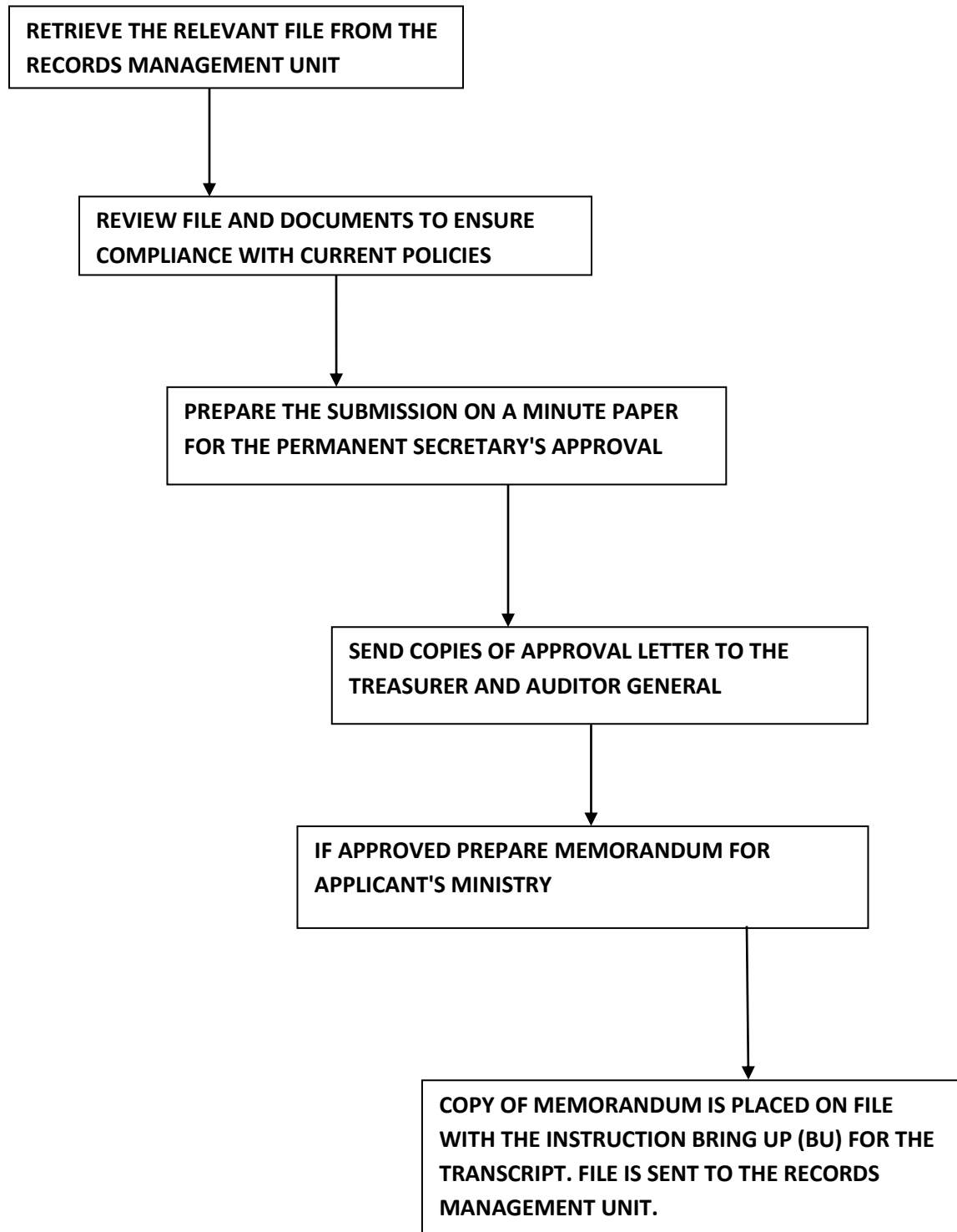
1. Before preparing the submission the Unpaid Leave checklist (**Appendix VII**) should be completed to ensure compliance with the requisite policies and practices. Incomplete submissions will be returned.
2. The submission is to be prepared on a minute paper and addressed to the Permanent Secretary through the officer responsible for the Unit. The following should be included:
 - a) a summary of the Ministry/Department's request;
 - b) the effective date and duration of the leave;
 - c) the purpose of the leave (for example: proposed course of study);
 - d) the name of the university/college the applicant will be attending;
 - e) The officer's date of confirmation or appointment to the Permanent and Pensionable Establishment. This is necessary in order to verify compliance with the requisite two (2) year status of being Permanent and Pensionable; and
 - f) The recommendation to the Permanent Secretary.
3. Folios for the supporting documents should be clearly identified on the Checklist.

APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST

- 1) The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service, approves Unpaid Study Leave.
- 2) The decision of the Permanent Secretary is sent by memorandum to the applicant's Ministry addressed to his/her Permanent Secretary, Attention: Human Resources Officer. The applicant is to be informed in writing, accordingly.
- 3) If approved, the approval memorandum should include the statement:
"This leave should be preceded by any vacation leave and leave of absence to which the officer is entitled."
See Sample Approval for Unpaid Study Leave – (Appendix VIII)
- 4) If the officer is currently pursuing studies, the approval memorandum must also request a copy of an official transcript every academic semester. This is important to verify that the officer is actually pursuing academic studies.
- 5) If the request is retroactive, the memorandum should request copies of the official transcript and certified degree.
- 6) The approval letter should be copied and sent to the Treasurer and Auditor General. The words **Treasurer** and **Auditor General** should be typed at the bottom of the memorandum.

- 7) A copy of the memorandum should be placed on the applicant's personal file with the instructions "PA" (put away) and sent to the Records Management Unit. However, one way to ensure that recipients are pursuing studies is to "BU" (bring up) the file every semester to request a copy of the transcript.
- 8) There is a difference between **Unpaid Study Leave** and **Unpaid Leave**:
- **Unpaid Study Leave** is given for academic purposes only.
 - **Unpaid Leave** can be given for other circumstances, for example: sicknesses, care for others etc. This leave is usually processed by the Establishment side of the Ministry of the Public Service.

FLOW CHART FOR UNPAID STUDY LEAVE



EDUCATIONAL LOANS

1. Educational Loans can be granted to persons on Unpaid Study Leave or persons studying at locally recognized institutions to help defray their educational expenses while they work.
2. In exceptional cases, Educational loans are given to recipients of Limited In-Service Training Awards (salary only) who are experiencing financial difficulties in meeting training expenses.
3. Educational loans will not be granted for an Institution which is not accredited for Government purposes.
4. The maximum amount of such loan is \$3,000.00 (one per study period) and recommendations should be made one month in advance . These loans have an 8% interest added to them. Deductions normally begin on completion of the course.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE APPLICANT'S MINISTRY

The following documents should accompany the request:

- a. The memorandum from the applicant's Ministry stating the purpose and amount of the education loan requested;
- b. Documentation (acceptance letter etc.) from the institution to verify the request; and
- c. The officer's letter of request.

See Appendix IX for checklist.

SUBMISSION TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

1. The submission should be prepared on a minute paper and addressed to the Permanent Secretary. It should include the following:
 - a) A summary of the Ministry/Department's request;
 - b) The purpose and amount of the educational loan; and
 - c) The recommendation to the Permanent Secretary.

APPROVAL

1. The decision of the Permanent Secretary is sent in a memorandum to the applicant's Ministry.
2. The memorandum should be addressed to the applicant's Permanent Secretary, Attention: Human Resources Officer, who would advise the officer in writing, accordingly.
3. The memorandum should state the name and position of the officer and the amount approved for the educational loan.
4. Copies of the approval memorandum should be sent to the **Treasurer** and **Auditor General**. These words should be typed at the bottom of the memorandum.
5. A memorandum is sent by the Ministry of the Public Service to the Treasurer requesting that a cheque be prepared for the officer in the amount approved for the educational loan.
6. A copy of the memorandum must be placed on the applicant's personal file with the instruction, put away (PA). The file is sent to the Records Management Unit.

REMUNERATION

A. POLICY

Remuneration is considered in accordance with the Ministry of the Public Service Circular No. 18 of 2014 dated 14th August, 2014 and the Bahamas Public Service Union (BPSU) Agreement for area of priorities for degrees obtained at local accredited institutions which are accepted by the Public Service.

1. The applicant must be permanent and pensionable.
2. Remuneration is given for the completion of a degree from an accredited institution, not individual subjects of a degree or partially completed transcripts. Hence, the copy of the certified degree/diploma is very important. The BPSU Agreement makes provision for officers to be remunerated for certificates also (i.e. certificate of less than six months duration \$500, certificate/degree of at least six months - \$1,000). The certificate must be relevant to the job.
3. Financial Clearance is required for the amount that is being requested for remuneration.
4. The request for remuneration should come from a Ministry, not from a Department.
5. **Officers must have a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.5.**
6. **The Ministry does not pay for failing grades or classes from which the officer has withdrawn.**

B. REQUEST FROM THE APPLICANT'S MINISTRY

The following documents should accompany the request:

- memorandum from the applicant's Ministry which should state the purpose of the remuneration and the amount to be remunerated;
- statement confirming the Ministry's approval to pursue the degree;
- financial clearance for the amount of the remuneration;
- certified copy of official transcript;
- certified copy of degree.

See Appendix X for checklist.

C. SUBMISSION TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

1. Before preparing the submission, it is recommended that the checklist (**Appendix X**) be completed to ensure compliance with the requisite policies. Incomplete submissions will be returned.
2. The submission should be prepared on a minute paper, addressed to the Permanent Secretary and must include:
 - evidence that the area of study appears on the Ministry or Department's area of priority for remuneration purpose (i.e. the Manual on Training Priorities in the Public Service) ;
 - evidence that the area of study is applicable to the officer's job;
 - a summary of the request from the applicant's Ministry (purpose of remuneration, amount of remuneration, etc.);
 - the date the applicant became permanent and pensionable;
 - identification of the folios for the financial clearance, transcripts and the degree;
 - a statement regarding the prior approval from the applicant's Ministry to pursue the Degree, in accordance with the BPSU Agreement;
 - the Industrial Agreement;
 - PSCHRD's recommendation.
3. If there is a number of applicants from one Ministry, the required information can be submitted on a spreadsheet.
4. The financial clearance for the amount being requested.

D. APPROVAL

1. The decision should be conveyed to the applicant's Ministry.
2. The memorandum should be addressed to the applicant's Permanent Secretary, Attention: Human Resources, who would advise the officer.
3. If approved, the memorandum should state the name and position of the officers, amount to be reimbursed and the purpose of the reimbursement.
4. Copies of the approval memorandum should be sent to the **Treasurer** and **Auditor General**.
5. A copy of the memorandum should be placed on the applicant's personal file with the instruction, "PA". The file is sent to the Registry.