

Notice of Meeting and Agenda

Monday, 3 September 2012 at 10.30 am
in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

1 Order of Business

Including any notices of motion and any other items of business submitted as urgent for consideration at the meeting.

2 Declaration of Interests

Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

3 Minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 29 June 2012 (circulated) – submitted for approval as a correct record

4 Period 4 Financial Statement 2012/13 – report by the Treasurer (circulated)

5 Treasury Management Annual Report – report by the Treasurer (circulated)

6 External Auditor's Report to Those Charged with Governance on the 2011/12 Audit – report by Audit Scotland (circulated)

7 Quarterly Progress Report to the Joint Board – report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (circulated)

Sue Bruce
Chief Executive and Clerk

Membership

The City of Edinburgh Council (9)

Councillor Work (Convener)
Councillor Bagshaw
Councillor Ricky Henderson
Councillor Howat
Councillor Keil
Councillor McInnes
Councillor McVey
Councillor Perry
Councillor Rust

Midlothian Council (2)

Councillor Bryant
Councillor Russell

West Lothian Council (3)

Councillor King (Vice-Convener)
Councillor McCarra
Councillor Muldoon

East Lothian Council (2)

Councillor Gillies
Councillor Hampshire

Notes:

- (1) If you have any questions about the agenda or meeting arrangements, please contact Rhona Sinclair, Committee Services, City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ; ☎ 0131 529 4238 e-mail rhona.sinclair@edinburgh.gov.uk.
- (2) A copy of the agenda and papers for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Main Reception Office, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.
- (3) The agenda, minutes and public reports for this meeting can be viewed online by going to www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings. Members and Officers of the City of Edinburgh Council can also view them by going to the Orb home page and clicking on Committee Business.



Please recycle this paper

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Edinburgh, 29 June 2012

Present:-

City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Work (Convener), Bagshaw, Ricky Henderson, McInnes, McVey, Perry and Rust.

East Lothian Council – Councillor Gillies.

Midlothian Council – Councillors Coventry (substituting for Councillor Bryant) and Russell.

West Lothian Council – Councillors Dodds (substituting for Councillor Muldoon), King (Vice-Convener) and McCarra.

1 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 11 June 2012 as a correct record.

2 Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

The unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2012 were presented together with a report by the Treasurer who highlighted the key issues raised in the accounts.

The final accounts would be submitted to a future meeting of the Board on completion of the External Audit.

Decision

To note the report and unaudited Financial Statements for 2011/12 and that the statements would be re-presented to the Board on completion of the external audit.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

3 Performance Report 2011/12

Performance information relating to the work of the Valuation Service in 2011/12 was detailed. Key Performance Indicators for the work of Assessors in Scotland were in place for Valuation Roll and Council Tax and were submitted annually to the Scottish Government.

Internal performance standards were also set for staff with monitoring carried out on an ongoing basis and formally assessed in line with the Performance Review and Development policy.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Assessor.
- 2) To thank the Assessor and her staff for their commitment and hard work.

(Reference – report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted.)

4 Board Treasurer – Interim Arrangements

Interim arrangements for the Joint Board's Treasurer, in light of changes to the senior management structure within the City of Edinburgh Council, were detailed.

Decision

To appoint the Council's interim Chief Financial Officer as Treasurer to the Joint Board for a period of six months.

(References – Lothian Valuation Joint Board 28 November 2011 (item 4); report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted.)

5 Future Meeting Arrangements June 2012 to June 2013

A schedule of meetings for the Lothian Valuation Joint Board for the period to June 2013 and arrangements for meetings of the Joint Consultative Group were proposed. All meetings would be held in Edinburgh.

Lothian Valuation Joint Board
29 June 2012

Decision

To approve the following schedule of meetings for the Lothian Valuation Joint Board:

Proposed Date	Time
Friday 29 June 2012 (Unaudited Accounts)	10.00 am
Monday 3 September 2012	10.30 am
Monday 26 November 2012	10.30 am
Friday 1 February 2013 (JCG)	To be confirmed
Friday 1 February 2013 (Revenue Budget)	To be confirmed
Monday 18 March 2013	10.30 am
Friday 28 June 2013 (Unaudited Accounts)	10.30 am

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted.)

6 Internal Audit – Annual Report

The work carried out by Internal Audit during the financial year 2011-2012 was detailed. Action plans had been agreed with management on all recommendations made within the reports issued by the Internal Auditor and appropriate follow-up arrangements had been put in place.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report by the Chief Internal Auditor.
- 2) To note the Draft Statement on Corporate Governance as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report by the Chief Internal Auditor.

(Reference – report by the City of Edinburgh Council's Chief Internal Auditor, submitted.)

7 Annual Report on Equalities 2011/2012

The Annual Report on Equalities for 2011-2012 was presented. Details were provided of the general principles, the protected characteristics, actions/initiatives undertaken and access to buildings, functions and services.

Decision

To continue to promote equality for all staff and stakeholders and to commit to ensuring that the Equalities Policy was adhered to.

(Reference – report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted.)

8 Electoral Registration Report 2011/2012

An update was provided on the range of activities undertaken by the electoral registration service over the past 12 months. Details were also given of issues facing Electoral Registration in the coming years.

Decision

To note the content of the report.

(Reference – report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted.)

Period 4 Financial Statement 2012/13

3rd September 2012

1 Purpose of report

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Assessor and summarises the Revenue position for the period ending 31st July, 2012, together with projections of likely expenditure to the year end.

2 Main Report

Performance to 31st July 2012

2.1 The table below compares actual and budgeted expenditure for the four month period to 31st July, 2012, together with a year-end projection to 31st March 2013.

	Annual Budget £000	--- four months to 31.07.12 --- Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	%	-- Projected to -- 31.03.13 Outturn £000	£000
Expenditure							
Employee	4,573	1,584	1,524	(60)	(3.8)	4,469	(104)
Property	619	172	170	(2)	(1.2)	608	(11)
Supplies and Services	687	238	248	10	4.2	716	29
Transport	113	39	36	(3)	(7.7)	110	(3)
Third Party Payments	94	28	27	(1)	(3.6)	124	30
Support Services	78	-	-	-	-	78	-
	6,164	2,061	2,005	(56)	(2.7)	6,105	(59)
Income							
Fees and Charges	(43)	(10)	(11)	(1)	(10.0)	(43)	-
Interest	(3)	-	-	-	-	(3)	-
Net Expenditure	6,118	2,051	1,994	(57)	(2.8)	6,059	(59)

2.2 The performance at the four month stage shows a net underspend of £57,000 and is 2.8% below the net approved budget. The main variances are as follows:

(a) **Employee Costs underspend £60,000**

This is due to the non filling of staff vacancies.

(b) **Supplies and Services overspend £10,000**

This is mainly due to a network hardware refresh that was budgeted to take place in 2011/12 but will now be completed in 2012/13.

Projections to Year End

2.3 At this stage, the projected outturn indicates a potential net expenditure of £6,059,000 which results in a net underspend of £59,000. The principal reasons for the variance are as follows:

(a) ***Employee Cost underspend £104,000***

This is due to the non filling of staff vacancies, partially offset by additional costs in respect of a requirement to ensure that every household that does not return an electoral canvass form during the 2012 electoral registration canvass, receive a door to door visit. The extent of the additional cost will not be known until Stage 1 of the canvass is complete and an assessment of the number of non returns is made; however it is projected that this cost will be contained within the total employee budget provision.

(b) ***Property underspend £11,000***

This is mainly due to a projected underspend on grounds maintenance and lower than expected utility charges.

(c) ***Supplies and Services overspend £29,000***

This is mainly due to the computer network hardware refresh costs referred to in paragraph 2.2(b) above and a general uplift in postal prices.

(d) ***Transport underspend £3,000***

The continuing review of work practices, together with reduced construction activity has resulted in a lower than anticipated external survey requirement and associated transport costs.

(e) ***Third Party Payments overspend £30,000***

This is a result of a higher than anticipated activity of the Valuation Appeals Committee. This is due to the large number of outstanding appeals lodged in respect of material change of circumstances, and the increasing complexity both in valuation and legal terms that these appeals present. This additional cost is projected to be contained within the overall budget provision.

2.4 Voluntary Early Release and Redundancy Schemes have been approved by the Board at its meeting on 4th February 2011. The Board also approved at its meeting on the 29th November 2010, a recommendation that the Assessor, in consultation with the Board's Convener and Treasurer, be authorised to approve costs arising from the acceptance of voluntary early release requests. It was also the decision of the Board that the Assessor seek approval from the Board before instigating the procedure for compulsory redundancies as indicated in the Redundancy Policy. Any applications under these schemes will be evaluated on affordability and impact on service delivery.

2.5 In terms of Section 58 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Board has no specific power to retain reserves, however, unspent funding contributions from constituent councils can be carried forward as creditors to meet future funding commitments. In order to facilitate the introduction of early release measures, the Board, at its meeting in November 2010, approved a recommendation that the 2010/11 underspend, subject to consultation between the Assessor, Convener and Treasurer, be used to meet costs arising from early

release measures. Accordingly, £228,000 was set aside to meet potential future liabilities.

- 2.6 Similarly, at its meeting on 3rd February, 2012, the Board agreed that the underspend for 2011/12 also be used to meet costs arising from early release measures, this resulted in a further £42,000 being set aside. Total funding contributions carried forward therefore amounts to £270,000.

3 Conclusions

- 3.1 At this stage, there is a projected net underspend of £59,000.
- 3.2 The Board has no power to establish a general reserve, however unspent funding contributions of £270,000 have been carried forward as a creditor to meet liabilities arising through the Board's early release measures.

4 Recommendations

The Board is recommended to note the financial statement for the four month period to 31st July, 2012, together with the year end projections.

**Hugh Dunn,
Treasurer.**

Appendices	None
Contact/Tel:	Mr. I. Knowles: 0131 469 3173
Background Papers	Held at the Office of Treasurer

Treasury Management Annual Report

3rd September 2012

1 Introduction

To report on the Treasury Management activity undertaken by the Valuation Joint Board and the performance in investing the Board's surplus funds during 2011/12.

2 Summary

The Board has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Sector, and under the code, an Annual Report on Treasury Management has to be submitted to the Board after the end of each financial year. A separate mid-term report will also be produced during the financial year and therefore, no update on the current year is included in this report.

3. Investment Out-turn for 2011/12

3.1 The Board's Investment Strategy has been to maintain its bank account as part of the City of Edinburgh Council's group of bank accounts. Any cash balance is effectively lent to the Council, but is offset by expenditure undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Board. Interest is given on month end net indebtedness balances between the Council and the Board in accordance with the Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee's (LASAAC) Guidance Note 2 on Interest on Revenue Balances (IoRB). In line with recent short term interest rates, the investment return continues to be small, but the Board gains security from its counterparty exposure being to the City of Edinburgh Council. Net end of month balances for the first half of the year were:

Opening Balance	£607,666.36
April	£483,978.05
May	£653,785.02
June	£729,594.97
July	£668,213.72
August	£842,270.86
September	£815,353.79
October	£713,215.11
November	£695,520.69
December	£765,996.54
January	£852,031.73
February	£844,761.81
March	£750,090.21

3.2 The interest given is calculated from the average monthly balance over 11 months. The interest rate applied was 0.481%, giving an interest amount of £3,476.18.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board notes the Annual Report for 2011/12.

HUGH DUNN,
Interim Treasurer.

Appendix None

Contact/tel Innes Edwards, Tel: 0131 469 6291
(innes.edwards@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Report to those charged
with governance on the
2011/12 audit



Prepared for Lothian Valuation Joint Board
August 2012

Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. Together they ensure that the Scottish Government and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of public funds.

Contents

Summary	4
Introduction	4
Status of the Audit.....	4
Matters to be reported to those charged with governance	4
Accounting and internal control systems	5
Matters arising.....	5
Outstanding Information	5
Acknowledgements	5
APPENDIX A: Proposed Independent Auditor’s Report.....	6

Summary

Introduction

1. International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260 requires auditors to report certain matters arising from the audit of the financial statements to those charged with governance of a body in sufficient time to enable appropriate action.
2. ISA 260 requires us to highlight:
 - relationships that may bear on our independence and the integrity and objectivity of the appointed auditor and audit staff
 - the overall scope and approach to the audit, including any expected limitations, or additional requirements
 - expected modifications to the audit report
 - management representations requested by us
 - unadjusted misstatements, other than those that are clearly trivial
 - material weaknesses in internal control identified during the audit
 - qualitative aspects of accounting practice and financial reporting, including accounting policies
 - matters specifically required by other auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance and any other matters that are relevant to the audit.
3. This report sets out for the Board's consideration the matters arising from the audit of the financial statements for 2011/12 that require reporting under ISA 260. We are drawing to your attention those matters we think are worthy of note, so that you can consider them before the financial statements are approved and certified. An audit of the financial statements is not designed to identify all matters that may be relevant to those charged with governance. This report has been prepared for the use of Lothian Valuation Joint Board and no responsibility to any third party is accepted.

Status of the Audit

4. Our work on the financial statements is now substantially complete. The issues arising from the audit were discussed with those staff responsible for preparing the financial statements.

Matters to be reported to those charged with governance

Conduct and scope of the audit

5. Information on the integrity and objectivity of the appointed auditor and audit staff, and the nature and scope of the audit, were outlined in the Audit Plan presented to the Board on 3 February 2012, and follow the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice prepared by Audit Scotland in May 2011.

Audit opinion & representations

6. Subject to the satisfactory conclusion of any outstanding matters and receipt of a revised set of accounts for final review, we anticipate being able to issue an unqualified auditor's report on 3 September (the proposed report is attached at [Appendix A](#)). There are no anticipated modifications to the audit report.
7. Any errors identified during the audit have been corrected in the accounts and therefore there are no unadjusted misstatements.
8. As part of the completion of our audit we seek written assurances from the Chief Executive on aspects of the accounts and judgements and estimates made. A draft letter of representation under ISA 580 has been provided to the Chief Executive and copied to the Treasurer. This should be signed and returned by the Chief Executive with the signed accounts prior to the independent auditor's opinion being certified.

Accounting and internal control systems

9. In terms of International Standard on Auditing 610 (*Considering the Work of Internal Audit*) we reviewed the internal audit function and planned to place formal reliance on internal audit's testing of payroll and trade payables transactions. On this occasion we did not rely on the work of internal audit because of the timing of our financial statements audit. We carried out our own testing although in future we may rely on internal audit.
10. No material weaknesses in the accounting and internal control systems were identified during the audit which could adversely affect the ability to record, process, summarise and report financial and other relevant data so as to result in a material misstatement in the accounts.

Matters arising

11. In our view, no issues require to be brought to your attention regarding the appropriateness of accounting policies or accounting estimates and judgements, the timing of transactions, the existence of material unusual transactions or the potential effect on the financial statements of any uncertainties.

Outstanding Information

12. **Letter of Representation:** The formal letter of Representation is required prior to the auditor's certification of the financial statements.

Acknowledgements

13. We would like to express our thanks to the staff of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board and City of Edinburgh Council for their help and assistance during the audit of this year's financial statements which has enabled us to provide an audit report within the agreed timetable.

APPENDIX A: Proposed Independent Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of Lothian Valuation Joint Board and the Accounts Commission for Scotland

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of Lothian Valuation Joint Board for the year ended 31 March 2012 under Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Cashflow Statement and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union, and as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2011/12 (the 2011/12 Code).

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 125 of the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Accounts Commission for Scotland, I do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

Respective responsibilities of the Treasurer and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. My responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Accounts Commission for Scotland. Those standards require me to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to Lothian Valuation Joint Board's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Treasurer; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, I read all the financial and non-financial information in the statement of accounts to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my report.

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with applicable law and the 2011/12 Code of the state of the affairs of Lothian Valuation Joint Board as at 31 March 2012 and of the income and expenditure of Lothian Valuation Joint Board for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2011/12 Code; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Opinion on other prescribed matters

In my opinion:

- the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985; and
- the information given in the Foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I am required to report by exception

I am required to report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with Delivering Good Governance in Local Government; or
- there has been a failure to achieve a prescribed financial objective.

I have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

James Rundell, MA CPFA
Senior Audit Manager
7th Floor, Plaza Tower
East Kilbride
G74 1LW

XX September 2012

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT TO THE JOINT BOARD



3 September 2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise and update members as to the service overview and priorities, current issues and the future direction of the Joint Board.

2.0 ELECTORAL REGISTRATION SERVICE OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES

2.1 Electoral Registration – Service Overview 1st April 2012 – 21st August 2012

2.1.1 Local Government Election 3rd May 2012

The administration of the registers for the election progressed well with all tasks completed on time. The number of electors on the Lothian registers for the election was 596,054 including 105,200 who opted for postal votes, and 842 proxies. A total of 5,455 electors were added to the register for the election by the closing date for applications.

2.1.2 Absent Voters List

At the time of the 2012 Scottish Local Government Elections the absent voters list stood at 105,200, our highest ever level. As expected after elections, due to specific one-off applications, the number of electors on the absent vote standing list fell and at present the total stands at 99,097.

2.1.3 Rolling Registration

Since the election, during the rolling registration update periods for June, July, August and September my staff processed a total of 8,578 additions to the register, 8230 removals and 144 amendments. There has therefore been a very slight increase in the number of electors.

2.1.4 Cabinet Office Data Matching Pilot

I have given several reports to the previous Board members on the Cabinet Office data matching pilots which we are participating in. This is the second pilot and register data has been extracted and/....

2.1.4/ and sent for data matching with HMRC records. Hopefully participating in the pilots will provide me with a sound footing in preparation for the introduction of individual electoral registration in 2014.

The exercise is looking at the benefits of data matching of elector information, issues arising for the transfer and match of data and costs incurred. An analysis of the tasks undertaken is being carried out at each stage to measure the benefits of data matching, likely success rates, accuracy of the matching and costs incurred. Information will be supplied at regular stages of the exercise and a full report will be produced by the Cabinet Office in Spring 2013.

2.1.5 2012 Canvass

The method of carrying out the canvass has been reviewed in light of the Electoral Commission downgrading my performance in relation to the carrying out of personal door to door canvass. The costs of carrying out personal door to door canvass in the revised format is particularly high and as a result has necessitated the need to veer money from other budget heads thus impacting on other areas of the organisation. I have attached a copy of the Electoral Commission legal opinion regarding the need for personal door to door canvass and their opinion that cost is an irrelevant consideration. **See Appendix 1**

The Royal Mail are expected to have commenced delivery of Canvass forms from 31st August. 393,295 forms were provided to Royal Mail for delivery. I have added a statement to the front of the envelope in the hope of improving the percentage return from the first issue. A good return from the first communication would help to offset the high costs of carrying out the door to door personal canvass.

We have employed 4 temporary clerical/canvass staff for 1-3 months to assist with mail opening, sorting, scanning and indexing during the first phase of the canvass; the temporary staff will latterly carry out door to door canvass for areas where canvassers have not been employed. Approximately 250 canvassers will probably be employed to carry out door to door canvassing between 12th October and 11th November.

As a result of increased costs of carrying out the canvass publicity has been reviewed and reduced to only participate in advertising which is considered beneficial the resultant actions in place for this canvass includes;-

- Poster sites in place at Haymarket, Dalmeny, Kirknewton, Linlithgow, Longniddry, Livingston South, North Berwick, Newcraighall, South Gyle and Wallyford railway stations;
- Advertising panels on various telephone boxes throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians;
- Participation in West Lothian schools democracy challenge initiative;
- Press release to Local Area newspapers;
- /....

2.1.5/

- Use of constituent councils social media channels to provide information (Twitter and Facebook);
- Advert in the Edinburgh and area Service (HM Forces) community official guide;
- Advert in students 'What's On' magazine;
- Posters issued to all elected members (MSPs, MPs, MEPs & councillors) for display in constituency offices or surgery premises.

2.2 Electoral Registration – Service Priorities September 2012 – December 2012

2.2.1 The service priorities over the next 3 months

- Carry out postal and personal door to door canvass of all Lothian households;
- Continue with initiatives to encourage participation and improve registration rates;
- Complete Electoral Commission financial and performance standards return;
- Complete statutory statistical return;
- Apply absent voting requests as received;
- Work with the Cabinet Office in the Data Matching Pilot exercise.

3.0 COUNCIL TAX OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES

3.1 Council Tax – Service Overview– 1st April 2012 – 21st August 2012

3.1.1 Council Tax – New Dwellings

As at 1st April 2012 there were 393,059 chargeable dwellings in Lothian which has risen very slightly to 393,985 as at 21st August 2012, an increase of just 926 dwellings in almost 5 months. House building continues to be sluggish.

3.1.2 Council Tax – Altered Bands

During the period, as a result of alterations carried out prior to the date of sale and re-appraisal of bandings, the bandings of 49 dwellings have been altered. The number of band changes remains at a very low level possibly reflecting the lower number of house sales.

3.1.3 /....

3.1.3 Council Tax – Altered Houses with no sales

During the period, the records of 790 dwellings have been updated, as a result of alteration work being carried out to existing dwellings. As previously reported the updated information should improve the time taken to alter the bands of any altered dwellings which are subsequently sold and also ensure preparation for any future revaluation or property tax.

3.1.4 Council Tax – Proposals and Appeals

The numbers of Council Tax proposals/appeals outstanding continues to stand at reasonable levels. As at 21st August 2012 there were 63 cases outstanding. Appeal hearings continue to be arranged regularly to ensure the disposal of most of outstanding cases with latest hearings held on 23rd and 24th August.

3.1.5 Council Tax File Review

Within the organisation we hold details of every dwelling in Lothian. I have commenced a modernisation of the file contents and document retention. The contents of the files will be checked against electronically held data with the purpose of updating all electronic systems. Plans and other paper documentation which is not otherwise noted in data format is being scanned and paper files disposed of. This will be a long process which may take a number of years.

3.2 Council Tax – Service Priorities September 2012 – December 2012

The main service priorities in Council Tax are as normal:-

- Continue improvement on the time taken between completion of new dwellings and the insertion of the dwelling in the Council Tax List in accordance with performance targets;
- Continue improvement on the time taken between the sale of houses which have been altered and the date their Council Tax Band is changed;
- Update my records by carrying out the survey of Council Tax subjects which have been altered and not sold;
- Continue to resolve proposals and appeals against Council Tax banding;
- Continue with the transfer of house data from paper to electronic format.

4.0 NON DOMESTIC RATING OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES

4.1 Non-Domestic Rating – Service Overview 1st April 2012 – 21st August 2012

4.1.1 2005 Revaluation Appeals

There/....

4.1.1/ There has been no change in the number of 2010 Revaluation appeals which remain outstanding at the Lands Tribunal. The listing of such appeals is in the hands of the Tribunal and out with my control.

4.1.2 2010 Revaluation Appeals

A total of 10,927 appeals were received against the 2010 Revaluation Roll as published. The number of subjects appealed was 10,386. A total of 8,744 appeals have been resolved to date with 393 of those appeals being dealt with during the period April to August 2012. A diary of courts is arranged to ensure the appeals are all disposed of by the 31st December 2013, the last date permitted by statute. We had been making exceptional progress but Revaluation appeal courts are almost at a standstill as I am still waiting on a relevant Lands Valuation Appeal Court decision which is required to allow further appeal disposal.

I am pleased with progress to date but staff are aware that, due to the extremely large number of Running Roll appeals now received that appeal disposal will need to take top priority for the foreseeable future. Progress is under close monitoring.

4.1.2 Running Roll

My professional and technical staff have continued to survey and value subjects that have been newly constructed, altered or demolished. From 1st April 2012 to 21st August 2012, there have been 477 additions, 681 valuation alterations and 262 deletions.

4.1.3 Running Roll Appeals

As a result of amendments to the Valuation Roll and, issues relating mainly to the economic decline, running roll appeals are constantly being received and dealt with where possible. As at 1st April 2012, there were 8,426 appeals outstanding. During the period 1st April to 21st August 616 of those appeals have been resolved. As at 21st August the number of outstanding running roll appeals has risen to 13,804. Courts to deal with this type of appeal are scheduled to continue through the Autumn/Winter 2012 with 21 hearings scheduled to the end of this year. The appeals are required to be cleared, within the same statutory framework as the Revaluation appeals, by 31st December 2013.

I have previously highlighted the extremely high number of economic circumstance appeals that that have been lodged with the expectation that appeals will now be lodged on an annual basis instead of five yearly. This is an incredible number of appeals and resolution within the statutory timetable will be extremely difficult.

4.1.4 Lands Tribunal and Lands Valuation Appeal Courts

I am please to say that licensed premises appeals which had been set down to be heard by the Lands Tribunal for Scotland during the last week in August have all now been resolved. As such appeal cases are very costly both in financial and staff resources I am delighted that this cost has been avoided.

4.2 /....

4.2 Non-Domestic Rating – Service Priorities September 2012 – December 2012

The service priorities in Non-Domestic Rating are:-

- Prepare cases as may be required by the Valuation Appeal Committee;
- Schedule and action the disposal of appeals resulting from the 2010 Revaluation;
- Schedule and action the disposal of running roll appeals;
- Survey and value new property or alterations to existing properties to ensure the Valuation Roll is as complete and accurate as possible;
- Continue to update databases with rent, cost, turnover and throughput information to ensure analysis is as complete and accurate as possible.

5.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

5.1 UNISON

Regular JCC meetings continue to be held.

I have reviewed and agreed 2 policies which I have attached for noting.

- Career Development/Salary progression Scheme for Trainee Valuer/Valuers – **see Appendix 2**
- Training & Education Policy – **see Appendix 3**

Further policies are timetabled for review to ensure that all policies meet current legal, management and staff requirements.

5.2 Staffing

My Human Resource Manager resigned with effect from 31st March 2012. Knowing the budgetary restrictions, the decision was taken not to fill the vacancy. Subsequently my Personnel and Finance Officer resigned with effect from 21st July 2012. I approached the City of Edinburgh Council with a view to taking a managed HR service from them. After discussion and a trawl of staff, we are in the process of seconding an HR Officer for a 6 month trial period.

To fill some existing vacancies and meet the foreseeable workload demands on professional staff I advertised for 2 trainee valuer/valuer posts. One post was filled by a valuer who had been working on a temporary contract basis. The other post was filled by a trainee valuer who comes to us with good experience of working in another Assessor's office.

To/....

5.2/ To meet the demands of the peak work period of the canvass and taking cognisance of the reduced staffing numbers I have agreed to increase the working hours of 4 part time workers for the 3 month period.

5.3 Equalities

No items of concern have been received.

Equality impact assessments have been carried out for the 3 areas where I am carrying out a review of working practices.

6.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk register continues to be updated at each management meeting ensuring that all risks are considered and mitigated as soon as practicable. The strategic risk register continues to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Further job specific risk registers continue to be developed to meet audit recommendations.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Although there are no financial implications arising from this report it should be noted that there is a strong probability that greater than normal monies will almost certainly be veered between various budget headings..

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Board is requested to note the contents of this report, note the contents of The Electoral Commission Legal opinion, note the Career Development/Salary progression Scheme for Trainee Valuers/Valuers and finally note the Training & Education Policy

Joan M Hewton
ASSESSOR & ERO

3 September 2012

The Scope of the Duty under Section 9A of the RPA 1983

This document sets out the Commission's position on the legal responsibilities of EROs to maintain the register and conduct house to house enquiries within the meaning of the Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (the 1983 Act).

The Section 9A duty

Section 9 of the 1983 Act requires an ERO to maintain a register containing the details of the persons 'appearing to the ERO¹' to be entitled to be registered in it.

This section is cast as a duty. The duty is to '*maintain*' the registers of those whom it appears are entitled to be registered. The 'maintenance' of the register extends to both adding the names of individuals who appear to be entitled to be registered as well as removing the names of those who do not so appear². It would also include altering the particulars of entries.

Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (the 1983 Act) provides:

'S9A(1) Each registration officer must take all steps that are necessary for the purpose of complying with his duty to maintain the registers under section 9 above.

s9A(2) The steps include-

- a) Sending more than once to any address the form to be used for the canvass under section 10 below;*
- b) Making on one or more occasions house to house enquiries under subsection 5 of that section;*
- c) Making contact by such other means as the registration officer thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register;*

¹ Section 9(1) and (2) of the 1983 Act

² The remaining provisions in Part 1 of the Act set out detailed rules that must be followed by EROs in maintaining the register and these include processes for both the addition and the removal of names in appropriate circumstances.

- d) *Inspecting any records held by any person which he is permitted to inspect under or by virtue of any enactment or rule of law;*
- e) *Providing training to persons under his direction or control in connection with the carrying out of the duty.'*

The duty under section 9A is to take '**all steps that are necessary...**' in order to discharge the duty under section 9. The steps do not have to be taken in the order listed in section 9A(2). Nor does each step have to be taken in each case. However, the steps that must be taken are not qualified. Therefore, if a particular step is necessary in order to maintain a more complete or a more accurate register then the ERO has a duty to take such a step. The discharge of the section 9A duty must be undertaken in the context of any other legal duties, such as health and safety. Therefore there may be exceptional circumstances that mean that a particular step cannot be carried out. This is particularly relevant in the case of the requirement to make house to house enquiries.

One of the steps that are listed under section 9A is to make house to house enquiries under section 10(5) of the Act.

Section 10(5) provides as follows:

'In connection with a canvass a registration officer may, for the purpose of –

- a) *supplementing the information obtained by the use of any such[canvass] form, or*
- b) *where any such form has not been returned, obtaining any information designed to be obtained by the use of the form,*

Make such house to house enquiries as he thinks fit.'

This section is to be read in conjunction with the section 9A(2)(b) duty to take '**all steps that are necessary.**³

³ It is worth noting the remarks of Baroness Ashton of Upholland, the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State at the time the Bill was debated in Parliament, in response to questions put during the House of Lords discussion of the clause on 16 March 2006 where she comments:

*'The essence of this part of the Bill [...] [is] to ensure that we do **as much as we possibly can** to verify that people are there: that they are on the register when they should be and are not when they should not be. Within that, [...] a properly functioning system [...] will enable the right leeway to be given but*

Discharge of the Section 9 Duty

The discharge of the section 9A duty by an ERO must be undertaken in the context of any other legal duties.

For example, an ERO must take into consideration health and safety requirements in the conduct (or not, for such good reason) of house to house enquiries where an assessment has been made on a case by case basis that determines personal safety of canvassers would be at risk.

In the above example or other circumstances, the Commission considers⁴ that it is unlikely a blanket decision by an ERO not to conduct house to house enquiries would be lawful.

Best Value duty (Scotland)

Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003⁵ places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements which secure best value. In securing best value a local authority must maintain an appropriate balance between the quality of its performance of its functions, the cost to the authority of that performance and the cost to persons of any service provided by the local authority for them on a wholly or partly rechargeable basis.

In maintaining that balance the local authority is required to have regard to efficiency, effectiveness, economy and the need to meet equal opportunity requirements.

The duty raises the question as to whether, in deciding what steps are necessary to take for the purpose of discharging the canvass, an ERO is required to have regard to best value. However, the duty to secure best value is on the local authority and not the ERO. The 1983 Act provides that any expenses properly incurred by the ERO in the performance of his functions under the 1983 Act shall be paid by the local authority that appointed the

*appropriate intervention to be made to ensure that we have as much information as possible, including from consulting other records, **going to visit** and so on. (my emphasis)*

⁴Managing Electoral registration Guidance paragraph 2.23-2.24

⁵ See also Local Government Act 1999 for provision in England and Wales

ERO⁶. The requirement is for the expenses to be ‘properly incurred’ in the performance of the ERO’s statutory functions. Expenses incurred in the discharge of a statutory duty are likely to be ‘properly incurred’. The duty on the local authority to ensure best value is not a proper consideration for the ERO in deciding what steps are necessary to discharge the duty under section 9A of the 1983 Act.

Performance Standards- House to House Enquiries

Sections 9A, 9B and 9C of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 gives the Commission the power to set and monitor performance standards for electoral services. Under these provisions, the Commission may determine and publish standards of performance for relevant electoral officers in Great Britain (Electoral Registration Officers, Returning Officers– and Counting Officers).

In order to meet performance standard 3, EROs are required to have a comprehensive canvass plan which ensures that:

....properties which have not responded to the annual canvass and, where the ERO is not otherwise satisfied that eligible electors are resident, are subject to house-to-house enquiries on at least one or more occasions.

In addition, to support their assessment of their performance against the standard, the Commission has asked each ERO to confirm that they carry out a personal canvass of all households which they have not received a response from or have been able to confirm through secondary checks.

The term “personal canvass” has been used by the Commission in this context to refer to house-to-house enquiries. A personal canvass envisages a personal canvasser attending a particular property at least once. There may be occasions where a response cannot be obtained even after these enquiries (for example, where residents refuse to answer the door), but this does not necessarily mean that the property in question has not been subject to a personal canvass. The Commission would expect EROs, as a matter of best practice, to maintain a clear audit trail to demonstrate that properties

⁶ Section 54(1) of the 1983 Act

have been subject to a personal canvass and to be able to explain the actions taken in respect of all properties in the registration area.

As set out in Commission guidance, there may be circumstances which could lead an ERO not to send out personal canvassers to a particular property, for example on the grounds of personal safety. In deciding to not send personal canvassers to a particular property, in order to meet the section 9A duty, the ERO would need to demonstrate that they had carried out a proper assessment of the circumstances and that all options had been considered.

Bob Posner

Legal Counsel

The Electoral Commission

August 2012



DRAFT

CAREER DEVELOPMENT/
SALARY PROGRESSION
SCHEME FOR
TRAINEE VALUER/VALUER

CAREER DEVELOPMENT / SALARY PROGRESSION SCHEME FOR TRAINEE VALUER/VALUER

1 INTRODUCTION

This scheme applies to the post of Trainee Valuer/Valuer on grade GS1 – PO3 within the Technical Divisions of the Joint Board.

The career development/salary progression scheme, where appropriate includes:-

- the application of the SJC conditions of service;
- placement within the grades in recognition of meeting the criteria identified;
- normal incremental progression taking cognisance of Bar points;
- appropriate membership of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors;
- the provision/opportunity for study towards a professional qualification, practical work experience, continuing professional development.

2 EFFECTIVE DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

This scheme will supersede any previous scheme and will be effective from 1 August 2012.

3 PURPOSE

The purpose of the career development/salary progression scheme is to establish appropriate and consistent policy guidelines for use by the Joint Board. Factors in support of a uniform career development/salary progression scheme are:-

- to encourage the development of staff within clearly defined guidelines;
- to link further education opportunities and training directly to both organisational requirements and individual development potential;
- to improve retention of staff who have demonstrated commitment to the organisation and the potential to progress through career development training;
- recognise and reward staff uniformly for attaining relevant qualifications and professional development criteria being met.

4 GENERAL CRITERIA

The following general criteria will apply to career development/salary progression schemes:-

- a) /...

4/

- a) the career development/salary progression schemes combine relevant experience with qualifications. All increments are subject to satisfactory progress being attained;
- b) qualifications must be consistent with those identified in the career development/ progression scheme and evidenced where there are conditions of progression;
- c) employees will not progress through the grades until the specified qualifications or other criteria are met;
- d) the Education criteria requirements are compulsory;
- e) the contents of this document must be read in conjunction with the Training & Education Policy;
- f) trainees must sign and adhere to the Training & Education Policy Contract of Commitment;
- g) trainees must sign and adhere to the APC structured Training Agreement.

5 QUALIFICATIONS

- a) The BSc in Property Development & Valuation (part-time) at Napier University (recognised by the RICS) or other equivalent qualification.
- b) Fulfilment of the requirements for the APC RICS to be admitted to professional membership of the institution.

6 DESCRIPTION OF SCHEME

The scheme has been designed to meet the current educational option which exists in the Lothian area which is BSc Property Development & Valuation (part time). The course is presently set out as a 6 year course of study. Other qualification routes may be considered on provision of full details of costs, course content and confirmation of RICS acceptance as a qualifying degree.

Alternative courses will be agreed with management and salary progression will be set out at the onset to match where possible the progression shown in Appendix A.

- a) Employees must apply to the RICS to take the Assessment of Professional Competence during the last 12 months of their relevant course and no later than 6 months after obtaining the relevant degree or qualification.
- b) On obtaining Professional Membership of the RICS, MRICS, place on PO1 SCP 35 and designate Valuer. Thereafter, normal incremental progression until the top of grade reached PO3 SCP 45.
- c) Where increments and placement on scales are awarded these shall be effective from the first of the month following the date of successful examination or in the case of attaining MRICS from the first of the month following confirmation of MRICS status.
- d) Increments shall only be awarded where a complete year of study is achieved.

7 TRAINING PERIOD

The formal training period to attain degree status will take no longer than the following time scales:-

- (a) /....

7/

- (a) 7 years for trainees who start at Year 1 for qualification.
- (b) 5 years for trainees with a non-cognate degree.

Attainment of MRICS status must be obtained within 3 years of attaining a fully exempting qualification or within 3 years of commencement of employment with the organisation as a trainee valuer which ever is the later.

Should a trainee fail to obtain the qualifications during the time periods mentioned above then their employment will be terminated save exceptional circumstances. The Assessor will consider any exceptional circumstances and make a decision based on the information provided by the trainee as to their future employment.

Time off for study will be permitted and will generally consist of one day per week during term time only. Any other time off requests should be directed to the personnel section.

8 PRACTICAL TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Trainees will be given systematic on and off the job training and professional experience in accordance with the requirements of the RICS and the needs of the Joint Board.

Trainees must fulfil the requirements of the APC RICS to be admitted to professional membership of the Institution.

The responsibility for the day-to-day training and guidance will normally be that of the Divisional Valuer.

9 ANNUAL EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT & APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

An appraisal system will operate in the Joint Board and all employees currently within a career development/salary progression scheme will be afforded the opportunity to discuss their ongoing personal and professional development.

Increments will be awarded in line with the attached table however satisfactory progress with professional development is essential before progression to a higher grade.

Outwith the annual appraisal interview line managers will discuss, monitor and record progress of trainees within their sections on a 2-monthly basis. Reports will be filed with Personnel.

10 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR PROGRESSION

It will be the employee's responsibility to ensure that copies of the results are sent to the Personnel Section within 5 working days of receipt. Thereafter, the employee will be advised in writing of their new salary placing on the relevant grade, if appropriate.

11 REVIEW

This career development/salary progression scheme will be reviewed from time to time, in consultation with the trade unions, to ensure that it meets the needs of the Joint Board.

VALUER & TRAINEE VALUER SALARY PLACINGS - PLACEMENT ON SCALES IN RECOGNITION OF EXAM SUCCESS AND ON APPOINTMENT

GRADE	SCP	<u>Napier University BSc Property Development & Valuation</u>
GS3	13	← Minimum entry requirement is 240 UCAS points from Higher, Advanced Higher, Intermediate 2, A level, AS level or equivalent qualification subject to a minimum of 3 passes at Higher or AS level (SCP 13)
	14	
AP1	15	← Year 1 pass or on entry with non-cognate degree (SCP 15) BAR point
	16	
	17	
	18	
AP2	19	← Year 2 pass (SCP 19) BAR point
	20	
	21	← Year 3 pass (SCP 21) BAR point
	22	
AP3	23	← Year 4 pass <u>or</u> TechRICS membership with acceptance for RICS experienced route or fully exempting relevant surveying degree with minimal experience (SCP 23) BAR point
	24	
	25	
	26	
AP4	27	← Year 5 pass or Exempting degree + 1 full year experience (SCP 27) BAR point
	28	
	29	
	30	
AP5	31	← Year 6 pass or Exempting degree + 2 full year experience (SCP 31) BAR point
	32	
	33	
	34	
PO1	35	← Attainment of MRICS (SCP 35) BAR point
	36	
	37	
	38	
PO2	39	
	40	
	41	
PO3	42	
	43	
	44	
	45	← Maximum of Valuer grade (SCP 45)

BAR point = New **SCP point** cannot be attained unless qualification achieved



DRAFT

**TRAINING AND
EDUCATION
POLICY**

TRAINING AND EDUCATION POLICY

CONTENTS

SECTION	
1	Introduction
2	Aims of Training & Education Policy
3	Responsibility for Training & Education Policy
4	Professional Training
5	Technical Training
6	ICT Training
7	Administrative Staff Training
8	Administration
9	Costs & Expenses
10	Time Off for Course Attendance
11	Examination Failure & Time Limits to Support
12	Allocation of Study/Course Days for Distance Learning
13	Procedure for College or University Attendance
14	Local Agreement

APPENDIX 1	Contract of Commitment
------------	------------------------

TRAINING AND EDUCATION POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Lothian Valuation Joint Board recognises that employee development, through education and training can make an important contribution to the achievement of its strategic objectives and will provide appropriate support and assistance to employees. The Training and Education Policy will enable the Joint Board to adopt a consistent approach to training and education and encourage good practice, value for money and equality of access to opportunity.

2 AIMS OF TRAINING & EDUCATION POLICY

- 2.1 The aims of the Joint Board's Training and Education Policy are:-
- to support the Joint Board's commitment to the development and training of employees;
 - to provide qualified, skilled and experienced employees on a continuing basis to meet the Joint Board's requirements;
 - to provide appropriate support facilities;
 - to provide managers with a corporate scheme which will allow a consistent approach for the purposes of training and education; and
 - to allow effective monitoring of the application and benefits of training and education within the Joint Board.

3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAINING & EDUCATION POLICY

- 3.1 The Executive and Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring appropriate training and education.
- 3.2 Managers will be responsible for identification of individual employee training requirements arising from the annual Performance, Review and Development process: progress monitoring and record keeping and for making recommendations on appropriate courses of study.
- 3.3 The manager will make employees aware of the conditions of the Joint Board's Training and Education Policy, consider the learning objectives of the course and discuss how attendance at the course will assist employee development and work performance. Where the employee will attend a course of study leading to a qualification, the PRD interview will also be used to develop the employee's related work programme.

4 PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

4.1 Professional Qualification/APC

- 4.1.1 Trainee professional staff will be allowed facilities to study for approved RICS qualification relevant to their present post. Appropriate qualifications will be considered on their merit

- 4.1.2 /....

- 4.1.2 Financial assistance, study days, examination leave etc will be granted in accordance with the terms of this policy. Employees may only undertake courses of study in accordance with any time rules set by the relevant college or RICS.
- 4.1.3 Before commencing a course of study, each trainee must set out a programme of proposed studies which will include full details of all assignments and other work which requires to be undertaken. This programme will be discussed with the trainee's Divisional Valuer who will be responsible for monitoring his/her progress and also general supervision.
- 4.1.4 The Divisional Valuer will require to provide a brief quarterly report on the trainee's progress covering two specific aspects:-
- Assignments or other work submitted and marks obtained; and
 - Brief details of work carried out by the trainee during the last 3 months.
- 4.1.5 The report should be passed to the Divisional Assessor and a copy provided to the Personnel Section for retention in the candidate's personal file.
- 4.1.6 Students who are entitled to study within office hours eg correspondence course will do so within the office or elsewhere at the Assessor's discretion.

4.2 Recording of Examination Results and Qualifications

- 4.2.1 Any member of staff sitting examinations which have been approved and sponsored by the Assessor must furnish a copy of examination results timeously to the Personnel Section in order that an application for the next stage of examination or consideration of a resit, as the case may be, can be made.
- 4.2.2 Staff should understand it is the initial responsibility of the examinee to ensure that the application has been timeously made to the relevant examining authority.
- 4.2.3 All applications for further examinations or resits must be referred to the Executive.
- 4.2.4 In the event of examination failure, candidates must attempt resits at the next appropriate occasion and/or in accordance with college timetables. Resits will generally be permitted but only in accordance with this policy.

4.3 Monitoring Progress

- 4.3.1 Trainees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. A trainee who is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or who fails the examinations may be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, may ultimately have their employment contract terminated.

5 TECHNICAL TRAINING

5.1 Technical Qualification/Tech RICS

- 5.1.1 Trainee technician staff will be allowed facilities to study for approved RICS technical qualification relevant to their present post. Appropriate qualifications will be considered on their merit
- 5.1.2 /...

- 5.1.2 The introductory qualification to be obtained by Trainee Technicians is a Certificate of Higher Education or equivalent. Technicians will be encouraged to progress their qualifications to become technical members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Tech RICS).
- 5.1.3 The Assessor will decide on the appropriate course to be undertaken by candidates.
- 5.1.4 Before becoming a technical member of the RICS, a candidate may be required to undertake further approved study and also an Assessment of Technical Competence which requires compliance with a number of stipulated competencies and ATC.
- 5.1.5 Financial assistance, study days, examination leave etc will be granted in terms of this policy.
- 5.1.6 Employees may only undertake courses of study in accordance with any time rules set by the relevant college or by the RICS.
- 5.1.7 Before commencing a course of study, each trainee must set out a programme of proposed studies which will include full details of all assignments and other work which requires to be undertaken. This programme will be discussed with the trainee's Divisional Valuer who will be responsible for monitoring his/her progress and also general supervision.
- 5.1.8 The Divisional Valuer will require to provide a brief quarterly report on the trainee's progress covering two specific aspects:-
- Assignments or other work submitted and marks obtained; and
 - Brief details of work carried out by the trainee during the last 3 months.
- 5.1.9 The report should be passed to the Divisional Assessor and a copy provided to the Personnel Section for retention in the candidate's personal file.
- 5.1.10 Employees who are entitled to study within office hours eg correspondence course will do so within the office or elsewhere at the Assessor's discretion.
- 5.2 Recording of Examination Results and Qualifications**
- 5.2.1 Any member of staff sitting examinations which have been approved and sponsored by the Assessor must furnish a copy of examination results timeously to the Personnel Section in order that an application for the next stage of examination or consideration of a resit, as the case may be, can be made. Staff should understand it is the initial responsibility of the examinee to ensure that the application has been timeously made to the relevant examining authority.
- 5.2.2 All applications for further examinations or resits must be referred to the Executive.
- 5.2.3 In the event of examination failure, candidates must attempt resits at the next appropriate occasion and/or in accordance with college timetables. Resits will generally be permitted but only in accordance with this policy.
- 5.3 Monitoring Progress**
- 5.3.1 Trainees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. A trainee who is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or who fail the examinations may be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, may ultimately have their employment contract terminated.

6 ICT TRAINING

6.1 Developer/Technician Qualification

- 6.1.1 Trainee Developers and Computer Technician staff will be allowed facilities to study for approved information technology qualification relevant to their present post. Appropriate qualifications will be considered on their merit
- 6.1.2 The introductory qualification to be obtained by Trainee Developers is a BSc Degree, or equivalent, in an Information Communications Technology related discipline.
- 6.1.3 The Assessor will decide on the appropriate course to be undertaken by candidates.
- 6.1.4 Financial assistance, study days, examination leave etc will be granted in terms of this policy.
- 6.1.5 Employees may only undertake courses of study in accordance with any time rules set by the relevant college or university
- 6.1.6 Before commencing a course of study, each trainee must set out a programme of proposed studies which will include full details of all assignments and other work which requires to be undertaken. This programme will be discussed with the trainee's Manager who will be responsible for monitoring his/her progress and also general supervision.
- 6.1.7 The Manager will require to provide a brief quarterly report on the trainee's progress covering two specific aspects:-
- Assignments or other work submitted and marks obtained; and
 - Brief details of work carried out by the trainee during the last 3 months.
- 6.1.8 The report should be passed to the Head of ICT and a copy provided to the Personnel Section for retention in the candidate's personal file.
- 6.1.9 Employees who are entitled to study within office hours eg correspondence course will do so within the office or elsewhere at the Assessor's discretion.

6.2 Recording of Examination Results and Qualifications

- 6.2.1 Any member of staff sitting examinations which have been approved and sponsored by the Assessor must furnish a copy of examination results timeously to the Personnel Section in order that an application for the next stage of examination or consideration of a resit, as the case may be, can be made. Staff should understand it is the initial responsibility of the examinee to ensure that the application has been timeously made to the relevant examining authority.
- 6.2.2 All applications for further examinations or resits must be referred to the Executive.
- 6.2.3 In the event of examination failure, candidates must attempt resits at the next appropriate occasion and/or in accordance with college timetables. Resits will generally be permitted but only in accordance with this policy.
- 6.3 /...

6.3 Monitoring Progress

- 6.3.1 Trainees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. A trainee who is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or who fail the examinations may be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, may ultimately have their employment contract terminated.

7 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF TRAINING

- 7.1 Administrative staff may be allowed facilities to study for qualifications relevant to their current post at the discretion of the Assessor and subject to the exigencies of the service.

- 7.2 Appropriate qualifications will be considered on their merit but may include:-

- **AEA Certificate and Diploma - Electoral Administration**
- **HNC Business Administration;**

- 7.3 The Assessor will decide on the appropriate course to be undertaken by candidates.

- 7.4 Financial assistance, study days, examination leave etc will be granted in accordance with this policy.

- 7.5 Candidates may only undertake courses of study in accordance with any time rules set by the relevant college.

- 7.6 Before commencing a course of study, each candidate must set out a programme of proposed studies which will include full details of all assignments and other work which requires to be undertaken. This programme will be discussed with the candidate's Manager who will be responsible for monitoring his/her progress and also general supervision. Managers will be required to provide a brief quarterly report on the candidate's progress covering two specific aspects:-

- Assignments or other work submitted and marks obtained; and
- Brief details of work carried out by the candidate during the last 3 months.

- 7.7 The report should be passed to the Head of Administration and a copy provided to the Personnel Section for retention in the candidate's personal file.

- 7.8 Students who are entitled to study within office hours eg correspondence course will do so within the office or elsewhere at the Assessor's discretion.

7.8 Recording of Examination Results and Qualifications

- 7.8.1 Any member of staff sitting examinations which have been approved and sponsored by the Assessor must furnish a copy of examination results timeously to the Personnel Section in order that an application for the next stage of examination or consideration of a resit, as the case may be, can be made. Staff should understand it is the initial responsibility of the examinee to ensure that the application has been timeously made to the relevant examining authority.

- 7.8.2 All applications for further examinations or resits must be referred to the Executive

- 7.8.3 /....

7.8.3 In the event of examination failure, candidates must attempt resits at the next appropriate occasion and/or in accordance with college timetables. Resits will generally be permitted but only in accordance with this policy

7.9 **Monitoring Progress**

7.9.1 Employees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. Where the course is a pre-requisite of employment and the employee is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or fails to achieve qualification, the employee may be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, their contract of employment may ultimately be terminated.

8 **ADMINISTRATION**

8.1 **General**

8.1.1 Procedures will be followed for reviewing progress and providing support and guidance to employees enrolled on courses of training and education. Managers should be able to offer guidance and support to employees undertaking a course of study and this may include discussing topics and content of work based assignments, ensuring that work based assignments do not breach confidentiality, Data Protection or human rights.

8.1.2 Application for financial assistance or non-financial support from the Joint Board must be made using the Contract of Commitment (see **Appendix 1**). Sections 1 and 2 must be completed and submitted by the applicant at least six weeks prior to the commencement date of the course of study.

8.1.3 The employee is responsible for making and completing the application and for obtaining the information to be specified in Sections 1 and 2 of the Contract of Commitment.

8.1.4 The Contract of Commitment must be signed by both the employee and the Assessor, or delegated officer, as this document represents the contract between the employee and the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office.

8.1.5 The Assessor may introduce time limits on the period over which support will be provided based on the time in which the desired qualification is reasonably attainable.

8.2 **Financial Support**

8.2.1 Where the course fees and associated fees for a particular course of study consist of a number of components including:-

- Fees for course comprising modules, units or an academic year
- Registration including matriculation
- Examinations
- Membership of an approved professional body
- Residence
- Other costs such as graduation fees or an award ceremony

/....

8.2.1/ the Assessor has discretion to decide the level of financial assistance and may support some rather than all of the components.

8.3 Contract of Commitment

8.3.1 All employees who are granted financial assistance and/or non-financial support for training and education by the Assessor & ERO will enter into a formal Contract of Commitment with the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office, the conditions of which are stated in **Appendix 1**.

8.4 Timescales

8.4.1 In order to ensure that college or university enrolment deadlines are adhered to, the employee will make the written application on the Contract of Commitment form at least six weeks prior to the date of enrolment.

8.4.2 The Assessor/Depute Assessor will process and, if appropriate, authorise the Contract of Commitment and ensure the applicant is notified within fourteen days of receipt.

8.4.3 All responsibility for completing and timeously submitting necessary application forms, certificates or supporting material to any college or university, rests entirely with the employee.

8.5 Record Keeping

8.5.1 Details of courses attended, progress reports, and where appropriate, training programmes, will be placed in the employee's personal file.

8.5.2 The Personnel Section will monitor the overall application of the scheme to ensure equality of access to training and education.

8.6 Payment of Salary or Wages

8.6.1 For employees undertaking part-time further education as a requirement of their post, leave of absence to attend an approved course will involve no loss of salary or wages. The employee will generally be paid normal salary or wages in accordance with the appropriate national agreement on conditions of service as adopted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office.

8.6.2 Employees attending training or further and higher education courses during normal working hours will record the time in accordance with the approved arrangements.

8.6.3 Part-time employees who attend mandatory training courses during a working day will be paid at their normal rate of pay, for all course hours up to the standard working day, or be given time off in lieu, if appropriate.

9 COSTS & EXPENSES

9.1 Re-sit Examination Fees

9.1.1 Where a course includes term or annual examinations, financial assistance for resit examination fees may be given for a first resit of a subject, up to a maximum of 4 re-sits during the full course. Financial assistance will not be given for further resits.

9.2 /...

9.2 Repeat Course Fees

9.2.1 Where an employee is required to repeat part of, or the entire course, assistance with the associated fee will be at the discretion of the Assessor who will take into account any extenuating circumstances and treat each individual case on its merits. The employee will not normally receive paid time off to attend course sessions and examinations.

9.3 Essential Text Books

9.3.1 Where text books are required for an approved course of study, the cost of essential books will generally be met or supplied by the employer. The cost of books which are optional reading will not be met. When a course of study is completed, or if the employee leaves the service of the Joint Board, all books purchased for the employee must be returned to the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office. Books will be purchased through the normal purchasing procedure. Any loss or damage to books will be paid for by the employee.

9.4 Essential Tools & Equipment

9.4.1 Essential tools and equipment will generally be provided by the employer. They must be returned at the end of the course of study or if the employee leaves the service of the Assessor & ERO. Any loss or damage to tools and equipment will be paid for by the employee.

9.5 Excess Travel Costs

9.5.1 Excess travel costs are defined as the difference between usual travel to work costs and travel to place of study costs. These will normally be based on one daily return journey by **public transport**. The most appropriate and cost effective method of travel should be used which must be agreed by the line manager and the employee. If more than one employee is attending the same course, group travel benefits must be explored. Excess travel claims must be accompanied by receipts.

9.6 Professional Membership Fees

9.6.1 Where membership of a professional institute or body is a mandatory requirement for employees undertaking a course, only the first year student membership fee will be paid by the Joint Board.

9.7 Subsistence

9.7.1 Subsistence allowance will be paid in accordance with the Scottish Joint Council Scheme as adopted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office. No subsistence will be paid where employees have access to student canteens or catering facilities.

9.8 Exemption Fees

9.8.1 If an employee, following an approved course of training and education, is able to claim exemption from part of the course or examination, then any assistance with the associated fee will be at the discretion of the Assessor.

9.9 Late Fees for Sitting Examinations

9.9.1 Where an additional late fee is payable due to the employee failing to register on time, the employee will be liable to pay the late fee or late fee percentage.

9.10 /...

9.10 Graduation or Award Ceremony Fee

- 9.10.1 Payment of fees or time off for attending a graduation or award ceremony will not be met by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Office.

9.11 Residential components of a course of study

- 9.11.1 When residential attendance is a mandatory component of an approved course of study, residential fees, if separate from the main course fee, will be paid in full. Residential fees will not be paid and time off not given if residential attendance is optional.

10 TIME OFF FOR COURSE ATTENDANCE

10.1 Full Time Employees

- 10.1.1 When an employee is required to attend course sessions during the **normal working day**, time off with pay will be granted for a period of hours corresponding with the duration of the session. This would include necessary time for travel between place of work and the study centre and would normally be credited as no more than either one full day or one half day. Time will not be credited for course sessions or part sessions that take place outwith the employee's normal working day.
- 10.1.2 Where course sessions fall on public holidays the employee will be granted a period of time off in lieu which corresponds to the duration of the course session, credited at either one full day or one half day.

10.2 Part Time Employees, Including Job Share

- 10.2.1 Where a part time employee is required to attend course sessions during the normal working day the Assessor may arrange a temporary change in the pattern of hours which the employee works to facilitate attendance at the course session. Alternatively, time off with pay will be granted to cover attendance at the course of study which is outwith the employee's normal hours. The arrangements will include necessary time for travel between place of work and the study centre and would normally be credited as no more than either one full day or one half day. Time will not be credited for course sessions or part sessions that take place outwith an employee's normal working day.
- 10.2.2 Where course session fall on public holidays the employee will be granted a period of time off in lieu which corresponds to the duration of the course session, credited at either one full day or one half day.

10.3 Study Days for Distance Learning

- 10.3.1 Where a course of study may only be provided through distance learning, paid study time will be allowed in accordance with this policy.

10.4 Study Leave for Examination

- 10.4.1 Prior to a formal end of year/end of course examination, an employee will be granted paid study leave on one half day for each half day examination. This will be in addition to examination leave. Where course success is based on continuous assessment, study leave will not be given.

10.5 Time Off for Examination Attendance

- 10.5.1 /...

10.5.1 Prior to a formal end of year/end of course examination, an employee will be granted paid examination leave of one half day for each half day examination.

10.6 Repeat Course Attendance

10.6.1 The employee will not normally receive paid time off to attend course sessions and examinations.

10.7 Time off to attend the Graduation or Award Ceremony

10.7.1 Where an employee wishes to attend a graduation or award ceremony during normal working hours, paid time away from the work place will be paid at the discretion of the Assessor.

10.8 Residential Components of a Course of Study

10.8.1 Paid special leave or time off in lieu for attendance at residential courses/sessions which form a mandatory component of a study syllabus may be granted. This must be agreed in the Contract of Commitment and the course of study approved by the Assessor.

10.8.2 Paid special leave or time off in lieu for attendance at residential courses/sessions which are not a requirement of a study syllabus will not be granted.

10.8.3 Paid special leave or time off in lieu will not be granted for residential attendance which takes place outwith the employee's normal working hours.

11 EXAMINATION FAILURE & LIMITS TO SUPPORT

11.1 Persons Undertaking Conventional Examinations

11.1.1 First Resit of an Examination

11.1.1.1 Where an employee who has been granted education facilities fails an examination, the Assessor will grant paid leave to allow the employee to resit the examination and will only reimburse the examination fees if successful.

11.1.2 Repeat Course of Study

11.1.2.1 When an employee is required to repeat a complete course of study or subjects/units of study, this must be done outwith normal working hours, at evening classes, flexi study or open learning, however, some financial support may be granted.

11.1.3 Failure at First Resit of Examination

11.1.3.1 Where the employee fails the resit examination, having repeated the course of study, the employee will not be allowed further time off work or financial assistance for any further or higher education.

11.1.4 Success at First Resit of Examination

11.1.4.1 If the employee is successful in the resit examination, a normal resumption of further or higher education facilities will be granted.

11.1.5 /....

11.1.5 Failure at Examination Following Success at First Resit

- 11.1.5.1 Where the employee fails at a further stage in the course of study, no further assistance will be given either to resit examinations or to repeat the course of study. In the case of extenuating circumstances this procedure may be varied by the Assessor.

11.1.6 Failure at Second Resit of Examination

- 11.1.6.1 If an employee fails at the second resit of an examination, no further attempts will be permitted and he/she will be removed from the particular training course.

11.2 Persons Undertaking Modular Courses Through Distance Learning

- 11.2.1 It is expected that where courses are based on two modules per semester, as is the norm, candidates will proceed at that pace. Any candidate who wishes to proceed at a reduced rate of one module per semester may do so only with the express consent of the Assessor. Such a relaxation is not to be regarded as a permanent arrangement.

- 11.2.2 Support for persons undertaking courses of study involving modules will be contained within an overall time frame not exceeding twice the minimum number of years necessary to achieve the qualification or according to such rules as may be imposed by the provider.

- 11.2.3 Where a candidate has the approval of the Assessor to withdraw from the course for a period of time then it will be excluded from any computation.

- 11.2.4 In the event of a candidate failing to successfully complete the required suite of modules within the allotted time frame, further attempts at the same examinations will be wholly at the discretion of the Assessor.

- 11.2.5 Employees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. Where the course is a pre-requisite of employment and the employee is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or fails to achieve qualification, the employee will be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, their contract of employment may ultimately be terminated.

11.3 Persons Undertaking Modular Courses at Napier University or Similar

- 11.3.1 Courses at Napier University are contained within normal academic terms.

- 11.3.2 Support for persons undertaking courses of study involving modules at Napier University will be contained within an overall time frame not exceeding twice the minimum number of university academic years necessary to achieve the qualification having regard to the number of modules being undertaken each academic year.

- 11.3.3 Where a candidate has the approval of the Assessor to withdraw from the course for a period of time then it will be excluded from any computation.

- 11.3.4 In the event of a candidate failing to successfully complete the required suite of modules within the allotted time frame, further attempts at the same examinations will be wholly at the discretion of the Assessor.

- 11.3.5 /...

- 11.3.5 Employees' attitude to training will be monitored at all times. Where the course is a pre-requisite of employment and the employee is clearly not demonstrating a genuine effort to study for the appropriate examinations or fails to achieve qualification, the employee will be withdrawn from the course and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, their contract of employment may ultimately be terminated.

12 ALLOCATION OF STUDY/COURSE DAYS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

12.1 Total number of Study/Course Days

- 12.1.1 Staff will be allowed a maximum of 20 study/course days per semester, ie January to June and July to December. The availability of study/course days will at all times be subject to the exigencies of the service.
- 12.1.2 Where an employee is undertaking in any particular semester a reduced number of modules, the number of study/course days will be reduced pro rata.

12.2 Distribution of Study/Course Days

- 12.2.1 Staff will have discretion as to the pattern of days to be taken as study/course days which should be agreed in advance of each semester with their line manager and filed with the Personnel Section.
- 12.2.2 A single study/course day per week, (up to a maximum of 20 days per semester) will be regarded as the norm. These entitlements will not normally be varied and only in exceptional circumstances with the express consent of the Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager. The days will not be varied to be taken in conjunction with annual leave.

12.3 Monitoring of Study/Course Days

- 12.3.1 The Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager will at all times be responsible for the administration of the employee's study/course days and managers and employees must liaise closely throughout the training period.

12.4 Revision Seminars

- 12.4.1 The number of course/study days will not be reduced by required revision seminars organised by colleges but attendance at such seminars must be notified and approved in advance.

12.5 Examination Preparation

- 12.5.1 Prior to examinations, it is recognised that candidates may wish to take periods of annual leave and accrued flexi-leave in conjunction with normal study leave and examination leave, for preparation purposes. Any intention to seek an extensive period of absence must be discussed with the Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager well in advance and may be granted in accordance with the exigencies of the service.

12.6 Flexi-time Arrangements

- 12.6.1 A study/course day will be treated as a normal day as a maximum for flexitime purposes and adjustment sheets must be submitted in advance. If sickness or personal circumstances prevent an employee from undertaking college work, normal procedures must be followed and the absence timeously reported not later than 10.00am on the day.

13 PROCEDURE FOR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE

13.1 Total Number of Course Attendance Days

- 13.1.1 Where College or University courses are based around academic terms, students will be granted time off to attend course lectures as may be required to complete the course within a reasonable time scale. The precise structure of such arrangements will be at the discretion of the Assessor.

13.2 Distribution of Course Attendance Days

- 13.2.1 Staff will take as course attendance days those required for college or university lectures which should be agreed in advance of each term with their line manager and filed with the Personnel Section.
- 13.2.2 These entitlements will not normally be varied and only in exceptional circumstances with the express consent of the Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager.

13.3 Monitoring of Course Attendance Days

- 13.3.1 The Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager will at all times be responsible for the administration of the employee's leave days and managers and employee's must liaise closely throughout the training period.

13.4 Examination Preparation

- 13.4.1 Prior to examinations, it is recognised that candidates may wish to take periods of annual leave and accrued flexi-leave in conjunction with normal study leave and examination leave, for preparation purposes. Any intention to seek an extensive period of absence must be discussed with the Divisional Valuer or Admin Manager well in advance and may be granted in accordance with the exigencies of the service.

13.5 Flexi-Time Arrangements

- 13.5.1 A study day will be treated as a normal day for flexitime purposes and adjustment sheets must be submitted in advance. If sickness or personal circumstances prevent an employee from undertaking college work, normal procedures must be followed and the absence timeously reported not later than 10.00am on the day.

14 LOCAL AGREEMENT

- 14.1 This career development/salary progression scheme is a local collective agreement between the Joint Board and trade union. Every effort will be made by both parties to ensure that this scheme will be maintained as a local collective agreement and adjusted by agreement to meet changing future needs.
- 14.2 In the event of failure to reach agreement both parties reserve the right to terminate this local agreement by giving four months notice in writing. In such circumstances the terms of the local agreement will cease to apply to existing and future employees.

CONTRACT OF COMMITMENT

1 PERSONAL DETAILS – to be completed by applicant

Surname	<input type="text"/>	Forename	<input type="text"/>
Post Title	<input type="text"/>	Full or Part Time	<input type="text"/>
Salary Scale/Grade	<input type="text"/>	Appointment Date to Present Post	<input type="text"/>
Division	<input type="text"/>		
Section	<input type="text"/>		
Work Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>		
Previous relevant qualifications, with grades and dates			
<input type="text"/>			

2 COURSE DETAILS – to be completed by applicant

Enrolment Date	<input type="text"/>	College/University	<input type="text"/>
Course/Qualification applied for	<input type="text"/>		
Specify full qualification or intermediate stage	<input type="text"/>		
Main subjects			
<input type="text"/>			

Cont'd Over/...

Method of study, with options if appropriate

Full course duration start date Completion date

Stage duration start date Completion date

Examination dates

Is attainment of the qualification a requirement of your current post? Yes No
 (please tick appropriate box)

ESTIMATED OR ACTUAL COURSE COSTS	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Date	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Fees and Associated Fees	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Course	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Registration	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Examination	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First year Student Membership *	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Residential	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Excess Travel	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Books	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other Costs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Financial and/or non-financial support applied for

* Annual membership fees of professional bodies are paid by the employee

Details of other costs

I CERTIFY THAT THESE PARTICULARS ARE COMPLETE AND CORRECT. I HAVE CHECKED AND MEET ELIGIBILITY FOR ENTRY TO THE COURSE OF STUDY.

Applicant's Signature Date

3 RECOMMENDATION

To be completed by designated officer, following discussion with applicant and/or his/her line manager. (This may be the applicant's line manager or section head).

PLEASE PROCESS THIS APPLICATION WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIPT

Is the course a prerequisite of your employment?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is this application the result of an annual appraisal interview?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have the attached course cost estimates been confirmed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can the level of financial support be contained in the training budget?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Agreed level of support/study arrangements

Signature

Designation Date

Contract of Commitment

All employees who are granted financial assistance and/or non-financial support for training and education by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer will enter into a formal contract the conditions of which are stated below.

Conditions

- (a) The continuance of facilities and assistance shall be granted only if the Assessor is satisfied that the employee has made satisfactory progress in the studies. If the Assessor decides that the employee has not made satisfactory progress either by irregular attendance at college, failure to attain pass grades or insufficient application to the course of study, and there are no extenuating circumstances, the facilities granted may be withdrawn, and the refund of such proportion of the financial assistance granted as may be determined by the Assessor in the particular case, may be required. If the employee withdraws from a course or fails to sit an examination without permission from the Assessor, the Assessor will also reclaim the cost of registration, course and examination fees. Failure to progress satisfactorily may result in the termination of the employee's contract.
- (b) Where facilities or assistance are granted, the Assessor may make it a condition of the granting of such facilities that the employee shall undertake to remain in service for a specified period provided there is a post available for which the qualification is required. The Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer's specified period being a minimum of twenty-four months from the date of each payment made by the Board in support of the course of study.
- (c) Where an employee leaves the Joint Board, or withdraws from the course, before completing the whole or defined part of the qualification, then repayment in full of the financial assistance for the agreed course fee and all associated fees will be required to be paid by the employee, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

The amount reclaimed will have regard to the period of service which the employee has completed following each payment made by the Board in support of the course of study.

- (d) An employee will not receive financial assistance or non-financial support with a course of training and education if the employee has not signed Sections 2 and 5 of the Contract of Commitment.
- (e) The Assessor or delegated officer will authorise by signature the granting of financial assistance or non-financial support to an employee through use of the Contract of Commitment, and will not authorise the agreed assistance and/or support if the Contract has not been signed by the employee.

4 AUTHORISATION – to be completed by Assessor or Delegated Officer

Authorised by

Designation Date

5 APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS RELATING TO APPROVAL AND ASSISTANCE WITH TRAINING AND EDUCATION AS SPECIFIED IN THE LOTHIAN VALUATION JOINT BOARD'S TRAINING & EDUCATION POLICY.

Applicant's Signature Date