Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-line (AF COOL) Procedural Guidance

Personnel Services Delivery (PSD) Guide

The purpose of this PSD guide is to provide guidance and procedures for utilizing the Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AF COOL) Program. This document supports DoD and AF credentialing policies as prescribed by associated instructions.

Applicable to: Enlisted Active Duty (RegAF), Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve (AFR) and United States Space Force (USSF) members.

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Revision History:

Date of Revision (s)	Revision(s)
10 Aug 20	Updates reflect AF policy changes.
1 Jun 18	Initial PSD Guide publication. Must be read on its entirety.

1. INTRODUCTION:

This document provides guidance and procedures necessary for utilizing the AF COOL Program under the direction of AFI 36-2670, *Total Force Development.*

IMPORTANT NOTE: As stated in AFI 36-2670, this PSD Guide establishes specific procedures for implementation of Air Force credentialing policy. Users must comply with guidance contained within this PSD Guide.

2. OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY (OPR):

- Headquarters Air Force Voluntary Education (HAF/A1DLV)

3. TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Enlisted Regular Air Force (RegAF) Airmen
- Enlisted Air National Guard (ANG) Airmen
- Enlisted Air Force Reserve (AFR) Airmen
- Enlisted United States Space Force Personnel (USSF)

4. REFERENCES/RELATED PROCESSES:

- **AFI 36-2670** *Total Force Development,* **25 June 20, and AFGM2020-01, 14 Jul 20**
- *Military Credentialing and Licensing Report - February 2013*
- *Department of Defense COOL*
- *National Defense Authorization Act 2012 Sec 558*
- *National Defense Authorization Act 2015 Sec 551*
- *National Defense Authorization Act 2016 Sec 559*
- *National Defense Authorization Act 2017 Sec 561*

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NOTES:

1. Additional articles are available on the myPers website. To search the myPers knowledge base, type in **'Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line Procedural Guidance'** or**'AFCOOL-PG'** into the '**Search by Keyword**' tool, and then click the [🔍] button.

2. Additional AF COOL resources can be found at the AF COOL social media sites such as Facebook **https://www.facebook.com/USAF.AFCOOL/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel** , LinkedIn **www.linkedin.com/in/air-force-cool-af-cool-b88213132**, and YouTube **https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcgObZY4gTSyYPDj2F3TxqA?view_as=subscriber** for YouTube. Helpful resources are also located at **https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/Public/COOL/Default.aspx**.

3. Each Airman can provide feedback on articles provided in myPers. For improvement recommendations or more information, contact us by clicking the link in the **Footer**.

5. Roles and Responsibilities:

Air Force/A1DLV:
  a. Provides program execution oversight and ensures compliance with policy and guidance.
  b. Works directly with Credentialing Program Office (CPO) for policy review/decisions.
  c. Assists with budget projections.
  d. Works with CPO to resolve issues, when necessary.

The Air Force Credentialing Program Office (CPO):
  a. Provides daily execution of the AF COOL program.
  b. Ensures and enforces program compliance with provided instructions and directives.
  c. Provides input towards reporting requirements.
  d. Liaises with business partner(s) and Career Field Managers to resolve concerns and provides guidance in alignment with Air Force policy.
  e. Provides oversight of skill gap analyses to determine best-fit credentials for each Air Force Specialty Code/ Space Force Rating.
  f. Provides website and system recommendations to HAF/A1DLV.
  g. Maintains working relationships with other military Services' credentialing programs and external credentialing agencies.
  h. Assesses program effectiveness to include cost, level of effort, success rates, and production data metrics and provides reports to Air Force/A1DLV.
  i. Provides oversight of the credentialing payment processes.

Career Field and Unit Leadership:
  a. Encourages member participation at all levels of the member's military life cycle.
  b. Advises and counsels Air and Space professionals on the significance of professional credentialing via feedbacks, roll calls, unit training, or other venues the unit leadership deems appropriate.
  c. Ensures the member has successfully followed all processes when creating a funding request, educational goal, completing exams, and providing grades.
  d. Ensures Air and Space professionals do not attend courses or take exams without verification of payment from the AF COOL CPO Purchasing Agents. Doing so may result in the member being responsible for paying out of pocket.

Airmen:
  a. Ensure approval of funding before taking actions that would obligate the expenditure of funds, to include registering for, scheduling, or partaking in an exam or study materials.
  b. Ensure requests are submitted no sooner than 30 calendar days and no later than 60 calendar days in advance. Members will also ensure that all requests are submitted prior to 180 days of their separation or retirement date and will **provide all results prior to out-processing from their local education office and beginning terminal leave. Members who are within 180 days will pay out of pocket for books and exams and provide proof of passing results, an itemized invoice of books and exams purchased, and a valid PayPal link for reimbursement.**

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c. Notify CPO of any changes in credentialing exam(s) testing dates, training material and/ or locations approved and accepted by the member.

d. Provide proof of completion to the AF COOL CPO in the form of a grade report, certification, or licensure within 30 days of completion. Email results to **CCAF.DEAO. AFCOOL@US.AF.MIL**.

Funding:

a. Funding is authorized for multiple credentials in an Air and Space professional's Air Force Specialty Code and selected by the Airman. Funding will also be provided for one non-AFSC related certification (which will be repaid if failed) and one credential related to a completed degree, bachelor or higher.

b. Funding includes the initial credentialing exam (or series of exams if the selected credential has more than one exam), books or other credentialing expenses and related exam fees such as application for administrative fees.

c. **Funding will be provided as long as Airmen have not reached their $4500 lifetime cap. AF COOL will not pay for study materials, other than books, which will be limited to $500 per educational goal.**

d. Members within **180** days of separation or retirement must self-fund their credential cost and they will be reimbursed by the AF COOL program after proof of completion.

Note: This provision is effective 25 Dec 20—180 days after the publication date of AFI36-2670.)

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6. **AF COOL Process:**

   a. **Creating an educational goal: https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/Public/Resources.aspx**

   b. **Creating a funding request: https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/Public/Resources.aspx**

   c. **Supporting Documents:** It is the member's responsibility to research the requirements for the credential, not AF COOL's. Review the credential summary and eligibility requirements to ensure you meet any pre- requisites prior to selection. Review the exam(s) necessary to complete the credential. Review the credentialing agency's homepage and the resources page to locate program information (i.e., pre-requisite details, testing centers, and pricing details) and any other items the credentialing agency requires prior to payment (i.e., application process). Ensure you upload any required supporting documentation (files must be under 4MBs and one of the following file types: .pdf, .xls, .slsx, .doc, or .docx), such as:

   - Applications
   - Pre-requisite certifications
   - FAA Form 8610-2 (FAA Tickets to test) or CCAF-awarded Certificate of Eligibility
   - Books – MS Word document with ISBN, Title, and web link for each book per the vendor's site
   - Login Information – <u>If payment must be made via student login, please provide login and password to AF COOL on a MS Word document</u>
   - Exam Cost – Invoice or quote from the vendor; screen shot or active link to the vendor's site is also acceptable
   - AF COOL Credentialing Provider Approval Template

Completing the AF COOL goal: Take the exam(s) and follow up with the AF COOL CPO to report your scores and close out your educational goal. Upload a copy of the credentialing results, pass or fail, under the member's educational goal in the supporting documents section. Send an email of your exam completion to **CCAF.DEAO.AFCOOL@US.AF.MIL** after you have tested. Once the AF COOL CPO receives your grades, it will notify you that your educational goal has been completed and send you a voluntary End-of-Course Survey. This survey will be used to assist the AF COOL Program in providing a better service for future applicants. For further support, please contact the AF COOL CPO at DSN 749-5119, COMM (334) 649-5119 or **CCAF.DEAO.AFCOOL@US.AF.MIL**.

Table 1. Step-by-Step procedures for the AF COOL Process. This table provides a detailed understanding of the individual processes for this program.

STEP	ACTION OWNER	NARRATIVE
1	Member	**Finds the credential they are eligible for**. Selects credential or license in AFVEC that is AF COOL eligible and for which he/she meets the requirements. Member will select the green arrow that says "Make this my educational goal". E-7s and above are also eligible for Leadership and Management Certifications regardless of their AFSC.
2	Supervisor	Reviews and ensures the member meets eligibility requirements, and approves. See "Section D" for requirements.
3	Member	**Creates Funding Request.** Member uploads supporting documents under the educational goal such as a price quote or applications that have to be manually sent in with payments. Member creates separate funding request in AFVEC for books and exam(s), and then the supervisor concurs or disapproves.
4	AF COOL CPO	**Pays for credential.** CPO reviews funding request for correct payment and supporting documents and sends to the Purchasing Agents. The Purchasing Agents will make the payment to the vendor and/or the testing provider and email the member that they are clear to proceed with testing and/or preparatory courses.
5	Member	**Tests and provides results of certification**. Member takes test, provides grade report and/or a copy of the certification within 30 days of completion to the CPO. CPO will close out goal and mark it as complete.

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7. AF COOL Basic Eligibility Requirements:

    a.   Current Passing Physical Fitness Assessment

    b.   No Unfavorable Information File on record

    c.   Not on a Control Roster

    d.   No Referral Enlisted Performance Report on record

    e.   Must be enlisted with a minimum of an awarded 5-skill level in the Primary AFSC.

    f.   ANG and AFR members must be on U.S. Title 10 or Title 32(502)f active duty orders (ANG and AFR orders must be uploaded to the member's Digital File Folder and the Activated End Date of the orders updated in the Personnel Data section of in the Air Force Automated Education Management System by the member's base education office.)

    g.   Credential must be completed prior to out-processing and while member is on active status (exception are members within 180 who pay out of pocket and submit results for reimbursement via PayPal.)

8. **Criteria Waivers, Eligibility Determinations (ED) and Exceptions To Policy (ETP)**

   a. **Criteria Waivers:** The AF COOL Program allows members who have no credentials assigned to their AFSC/Rating to select a credential from the Leadership and Management section regardless of the member's grade. There are no other Criteria Waivers.

   b. **Eligibility Determinations (ED).** An ED is the formal process by which approval authorities review circumstances that place doubt on an otherwise qualified applicant's suitability. EDs include:

   • Skill level determinations

   • Pay grade determinations

   • AFSC/Rating determinations

   • Credentialing Agency minimal requirement determinations

   • Financial eligibility determinations

   c. **Exceptions to Policy (ETP).** ETPs are exceptions to a standard Air Force or Department of Defense publication or an approved policy memorandum. ETPs are rare. Consider an ETP when an Air and Space professional's need may go unmet and/or a compelling/ sufficient mitigating circumstance exists to clearly justify an ETP.

9. Marketing, Advertising and Public Affairs Programs

a. **Social Medial:** The AF COOL program utilizes social media venues such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube to market and socialize the program.

b. **Advertising:** The AF COOL program has utilized resources such as Infographics, business cards, brochures, display booths, and senior leader endorsements to promote the program to the military and civilian client workforce.

c. **Public Affairs:** The AF COOL program has utilized external agencies such as the Air Force Sergeants Association's magazine, business partner webpages and social media sites to promote the program to the military and civilian client workforce.

d. **External Partner Branding Endorsements**: The AF COOL program does not endorse or promote the businesses provided on our site or social media links. Each external partner is individually responsible for their processes and requirements to provide resources at Air Force or Space Force Installations.

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