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Your guide to **Professional** Qualifications and Certification.

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Introduction from Dave, CEO of Three.



Our people matter. It's as simple as that. Their talent, energy, commitment - plus the thousand and one other things they bring to our business - make us who we are. Our goal is to bring out this talent in everyone.

We help Three employees to be as great as they possibly can be. It's not simply about making sure everyone is supported, or has access to the best development and benefits from the experience of their managers and peers. We want our people to live and breathe what it means to be Three.

This guide will give **you.**

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Why have a **Professional** Qualifications and Certifications Process?

We want you to be great in your role at Three and realise your potential.

Three takes its commitment to the development of its people very seriously and in your pursuit of professional qualifications, further education and career progression, we will provide development options and ensure that personal development is at the forefront of our culture so our people are prepared to meet the challenges ahead.

It is important that educational support remains focused towards our business goals and with this in mind each request will be considered on an individual basis to ensure tailoring to suit both the business and the applicant.

How can Three support me?

There are loads of ways that Three can help you with your development. It may be:

Financial.

Course, exam and revision fees.

- Three will fund up to 100% of the course, examination and revision fees up to a maximum of £3,000 per year.
- You should be aware that if the duration of the course is greater than one year, you'll have to apply each year before the start of each new academic year as it is not guaranteed that you will continue to receive sponsorship for an ongoing course or qualification
- Fees will be paid from the Professional Qualification and Certification Policy budget, managed by the Learning Services team. The exact percentage of pre-course sponsorship will be at the discretion of department heads, but will not exceed a total of £3,000 per annum.
- Three will also consider sponsoring ad hoc training events.

Membership subscriptions.

- Three will fund annual subscriptions to the professional body controlling the qualification, together with registration fees where deemed applicable. These costs will be funded from your department budget and should be approved by your line manager. You should claim these costs back through expenses.
- On completion of qualifications, your department will fund ongoing membership of professional bodies as appropriate. These fees should be claimed back through expenses.

Text books and course materials.

- For any development that Three supports and where your sponsorship has been approved, Three will contribute to the cost of recommended core programme texts and materials (on presentation of receipts) up to the value of £125 per annual sponsorship period.
- Core Programme texts and materials will belong to you, but we would welcome you keeping your reference books on site here at Three, so your colleagues can benefit from the reading material.

Travel and sustenance costs.

Three will happily fund travelling and sustenance costs connected to Residential Study Periods that are mandatory and required by the course.

You will not be able to claim any standard travel costs to and from your place of study. However if you incur any exceptional travel costs, these may be reimbursed on a discretionary basis with the prior approval of your Line Manager. These costs can be reimbursed via expenses in line with the Company Expense Policy, and will come from your departmental budget.

There may be other costs involved within a sponsorship. It's always best to speak to Learning Services to check their validity.

Time off for study leave or exams.

- Study time is essential and we strongly endorse the need for it. Talk to your manager to plan the time off to attend the core curriculum prior to the start of the course. Your line manager and Director should have approved the leave in order to minimise any disruption within your team.
- Three may support study leave of up to 2.5 days per exam (up to a maximum of 10 days per annum). This must be discussed and agreed to by your line manager prior to taking paid time off for study leave.
- In addition to this, entitlement to a half day (am or pm) will be given to sit examinations. Should you require any further time off, this time should be taken from your annual holiday entitlement.
- Don't forget you can boost the time off you have available to fulfil your study leave, by requesting to apply for additional holiday through Just Rewards, (during the registration window in March and September).
- Ensure you update your absence through Oracle so there is visibility and your line manager can approve it. Refer to Three's policy for absence to ensure it is a valid request.

Further Educational support is a partnership between you, your line manager and the relevant functions within the People team so embrace any help or direct queries to us both during the application and whilst undertaking the development.

What development is supported by Three?

We have so many experts and professionals working at Three, and so it won't surprise you to know that the breadth of our development requirements reflects this.

Below is an example of the type of development we have supported:

Financial development.

CIMA
ACCA
AAT

Marketing development.

Professional Diploma in Marketing
Diploma in Direct and Digital Marketing
COB Certified E-Commerce Manager

Project Management development.

Prince2
Agile/Scrum
P3O
MSP

Technical IT development.

ISEB/ISTQB Software Testing Agile/Scrum
ISO 27001
ITIL
COBIT
BCS Intermediate Certificate in Solution Development and Architecture
CISCO CCNP Routing and Switching

HR.

CIPD

This list is not exhaustive. If you have any queries about whether a course you would like to be considered for sponsorship is recognised by Three, why not have a chat with your line manager or contact Learning Services who will be happy to help.

Who can apply?

Our Be Three skills are the gateway to technical and professional qualifications and allow us to easily demonstrate our behavioural and business skills qualities. To make the process for each application fair, there is a criterion that must be met prior to approval:

Be Three Skill	Criteria	Manager Evidence Required
Business Savvy	You have been employed by Three for a minimum of 12 months.	Manager is to supply evidence of length of service (this is via approval of the request form)
Deliver	You obtained a minimum grade of Great (previously Meets) in your latest performance review You are not under any disciplinary or performance sanctions	Manager is to supply evidence of length of performance review grade (this is via approval of the request form)
Explore	You can demonstrate ways that you have endeavoured to increase your capability in the subject matter prior to applying for additional training. Demonstrations can be through self-starter learning, shadowing, volunteering etc. Gaining a qualification/certificate is the only remaining feasible option.	Via the request form you will be required to evidence learning avenues you have explored regarding the subject matter to show that you have demonstrated willingness to learn the topic and gain levels of capability. Manager is to supply evidence of capability (this is via approval of the request form)
Engage	Supporting evidence will be required to show the passion and drive of the applicant. Why should Three sponsor you?	

New starters.

It's possible if you've just joined Three, you may have had a discussion with your Recruiter or Hiring Manager about possible sponsorship of a qualification you're already part way through. Your application will still need to go through the process outlined in this policy, so it's unlikely any firm commitment will be made to you during the hiring process.

What it means to Three my manager and **Me.**

Three.

By having a fair, robust and clear policy which supports development in our people we are able to concentrate on helping individuals realise their career potential and support their roles through the appropriate path of education.

My manager.

Through partnering with the employee, line managers have a clear understanding on how they are to support their development through:

- Initial sponsorship.
- Time off for study and exams.
- Travel and subscription budget ownership.
- Financial responsibility for the cost of the course to ensure completion and possible clawback implications.
- This allows the development to be owned by the department.

Me.

Each individual:

- Will be considered on a case by case basis to ensure fairness across the business based on the Be Three skills.
- Understands their responsibility when undertaking their development and plan with their line manager to ensure that both their role and their study are considered fairly.
- Is aware of Three's rights to clawback any monies owing due to the employee leaving or choosing not to continue with their studies as per the policy documentation.

The process and how **we** use it.



What happens if?

I fail to complete a sponsored programme?

- Should you feel you have an important need to put your study on hold for a couple of months, please discuss this with your line manager in the first instance and liaise with Learning Services.
- Should you decide to not to complete a sponsored programme you must inform your line manager and Learning Services in writing within 4 weeks of your intentions and your reasons. You will then be responsible for repaying all sponsorship money spent over the 12 month period leading up to the date of your notification. You will not be responsible for repaying any prepaid courses/exams not attended and cancelled without incurring cancellation charges. However it is your responsibility to cancel these.

I fail my exams.

- Should you fail any exams within a sponsored programme, you will have to pay for your re-sits. Re-sit costs will not be covered by any sponsorship from Three.
- Should you refuse to take the re-sits then you'll be required to repay all sponsorship money spent over the 12 month period (prior to the last exam sat date) back to the company.
- Where exams are re-taken the company may grant a limited amount of discretionary paid leave for the examinations only. You are not entitled to take any paid study leave for re-sits.

My approved Sponsorship is suspended?

Three will reserve the right to temporarily or permanently suspend some or all of any previously agreed sponsorship if you subsequently receive any type of formal warning relating to performance or disciplinary. It's also possible the company may consider suspending your sponsorship if your performance rating fails below Great.

Any suspension of sponsorship will be discussed with you by your line manager and you will be made aware of the reasons.

I change roles at Three?

Opportunities arise all the time in Three so should you change role or move departments during your study period, support will continue under normal circumstances. Make sure your new line manager is informed of the approved study programme as soon as possible and is aware of the policy and the implications it will have on study leave, financial responsibility etc.

Should you move departments and your study is no longer relevant to your new role, it is possible the company will not support future requests for sponsorship for the next academic year.

I decide to leave Three?

Should you leave Three, we reserve the right to claim back any monies owed. Oracle will hold all information regarding the start and end dates of courses undertaken and if an applicant resigns a report will trigger to inform HR of an outstanding debt.

The following payback is in place:

**Within 6 months of completing qualification
(or whilst qualification is undertaken) = 100% of cost**

**Within 12 months of completing qualification
(or whilst qualification is undertaken) = 75% of cost**

**Within 18 months of completing qualification
(or whilst qualification is undertaken) 25% of cost**

- It will be your responsibility to make sure your training provider is aware you are leaving Three and if appropriate, you should cancel any bookings. Three will not make payments for any fees incurred, including cancellation fees, once your notice of resignation has been received.
- If you leave the company due to redundancy, you will not be required to repay any sponsorship, but you will still be responsible for cancelling any course booking etc.
- If you leave the company for involuntary reasons (any type of dismissal other than redundancy), the “payback” terms for fees etc will continue to apply.

Recommendations.

We would ask that you take responsibility for balancing your work and study responsibilities. Our recommendation is that you do not study to take more than 4 exams in any annual period. Obviously there may be exceptional situations which can be considered on a case by case basis.

What do I need to do next?

Now that you have read the policy, it's a good idea to check that all your questions have been answered before you continue with your application.

Learning Services, your HRBP and your line manager will be able to help. Or maybe you know someone who has undertaken development sponsored by Three. Why don't you catch up with them over a coffee to find out what their experience has been like?

If you are ready to proceed with your application, please fill out the Professional Qualification and Certification Request Form and start your learning journey.

Good luck!