1. **Purpose**

1.1. The purpose of the Post Entry Qualification (PEQ) scheme is to help employees who wish to pursue recognised work-related qualifications or higher and further education courses relevant to their work or personal development. The employee performance appraisal review (PAR) provides the opportunity for a discussion between the employee and their appraiser on the rationale for the proposed course and for monitoring progress.

1.2. Royal Holloway encourages learning and professional development for all employees. The College supports employees who wish to undertake degree or doctorate programmes, professional qualifications or other nationally approved vocational qualifications that are related to their area of work. Individual modules must be credit-bearing and lead to a qualification.

2. **Criteria**

2.1. The Post Entry Qualification policy applies where there is a need to complete a programme of part-time study leading to qualification. This will enable the individual to increase effectiveness in their current or future duties and/or further their continuous professional development. The qualification or course should be nationally recognised and appropriate to the individual's academic ability. The need will have been identified and recorded through the PAR and the course agreed by the Head of Department.

2.2. The decision to sponsor a member of staff is at the discretion of the College. It will take account of the requirements and impact of the employee's attendance on the service.

2.3. In order to be eligible for PEQ contribution, evidence must be provided to show that the module(s) contribute towards the completion of a full qualification. For example, a course prospectus or webpage.
2.4. The support provided under PEQ covers up to 50% of the qualification fees. This includes fees for part-time, evening, day or block release, correspondence or distance-learning courses, and examination fees for not more than one attempt at each part of the examination. Employees will be expected to meet the costs of textbooks, travel and admission fees for professional bodies unless the Head of Department agrees that the department will pay these costs.

2.5. PEQ contribution will only be granted for one qualification undertaken within an academic year.

3. Eligibility

3.1. The PEQ contribution is available to employees who have a contract of employment for a period exceeding the duration of the course. Emeritus and casual contracts are not eligible to apply.

3.2. Employees on fixed term contracts are eligible for PEQ contribution if their employment contract exceeds the duration of their qualification by a 12 month period.

3.3. Employees applying for support under the PEQ policy must have obtained the minimum entrance requirements of the accrediting body concerned. The Head of Department or Research Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the course leads to an approved qualification or degree from a recognised professional or educational body.

3.4. Qualifying service is a year in post before an application for PEQ contribution can be made.

3.5. Employees in receipt of an award or grant to cover the fees for the qualification they are undertaking should not apply for financial support from PEQ as their fees should be paid from the grant award.
4. **Financial conditions**

4.1. You can apply to Organisation Development for up to 50% of the course fees.

4.2. The PEQ guidelines are revised annually and therefore you should not assume automatic commitment to continued levels of funding. New and continuing PEQ applicants must apply for support under PEQ for each year of study. This must be done with sufficient time before payment is required by the course provider (see decision timetable below).

4.3. All PEQ contributions are agreed subject to pro-rata considerations of employment. Employees working part time at Royal Holloway will receive a PEQ contribution calculated on a pro rata basis (based on the number of contracted hours worked).

5. **Repayment of PEQ funding**

5.1. Employees, who voluntarily leave Royal Holloway’s employment (i.e. resign) at any time between starting the course and 24 months after completion or do not complete the course will be asked to repay the course fees as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of fees to be paid</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>If a course is not completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>If you leave within 6 months of completing the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>If you leave within 7-12 months of completing the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>If you leave within 13-18 months of completing the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>If you leave within 19-24 months of completing the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>If you leave after 24 months of completing/dropping out of the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 The date of completion is the date of final certification.

5.3 Where staff leave the College due to redundancy or early ill health retirement, no repayment of fees will be expected.

5.4 Exemptions from repayment of costs will be granted to members of staff who leave the College to take up another post in the higher education sector in the UK.
5.5 Where a course of study is a requirement of the post (e.g. a statutory requirement), the College does not require the member of staff to enter into a bond to re-pay the costs. Applications to attend mandatory courses should be made using the ‘Application form for external courses, conferences and workshops’.

6. **Study leave and course attendance**

6.1 Study leave is at the discretion of the Head of Department or Supervisor. The amount of study leave should be determined in light of examination, assessment and study methods. Heads of Department should ensure that decisions regarding study leave are impartial and fair. **A maximum is eight days per annum.**

6.2 Individuals may be asked to provide evidence of course attendance by the Head of Department or Supervisor and if progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory.

7. **Decision making process**

7.1 Employees who wish to take post entry qualification must complete the Post Entry Qualification application form before the course begins. Funding will not be offered retrospectively for courses that have already started.

7.2 The Faculty Dean or Head of Department has absolute discretion whether or not to support an application in the light of the operational needs of the department.

7.3 Employees wanting to apply for PEQ contributions should ensure that their application has been completed, authorised by their Head of Department and submitted to Organisation Development before the key dates highlighted below. Applications without the appropriate authorisation will not be considered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of receipt</th>
<th>Decisions made by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between June and last working day in <strong>August</strong></td>
<td>Decisions made by the second week of <strong>September</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between September and last working day in <strong>November</strong></td>
<td>Decisions made by the second week of <strong>December</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between December and last working day in <strong>February</strong></td>
<td>Decisions made by the second week of <strong>March</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between March and last working day in <strong>May</strong></td>
<td>Decisions made by the second week of <strong>June</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4. Applications submitted any later than these dates may not be considered until the next decision date. Funding is limited and not all applications can be successful.

8. **Other information**

8.1. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the information supplied in relation to PEQ will be used for the administration, management and monitoring of the PEQ and for no other purposes.

8.2. If you have any questions, please contact the Organisation Development team in Human Resources at orgdev@rhul.ac.uk or 01784 414620.