

AIR UNIVERSITY



AIR FORCE CREDENTIALING OPPORTUNITIES ON-LINE HANDBOOK 2025

Forward

Air University is a dynamic organization serving more than 295,000 registered students. As the DoD leader in voluntary education, it is your greatest resource towards fulfilling your professional development goals. Additionally, you have many other resources, such as career counselors, education counselors, and mentors in and outside of your Department of the Air Force specialty to help you develop an individualized career pathway that aligns with your personal values, benefits your career, and prepares you for when you transition from Service. The Air Force Credentialing Opportunities Online (AFCOOL) program has been designed to be an integral part of that pathway.

Consider that a welder is not work ready until they have passed an American Welding Society (AWS) certification, a person with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing is not a Registered Nurse until they pass their National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) exam, and a person with a Juris Doctorate is not a lawyer until they have passed their state's bar exam. The concept of certification and licensure is not new and has been an essential part of work readiness for centuries.

When you develop your career pathway you can blend both academic and professional industry recognized credentials into a tailored workforce solution. AFCOOL is your source for obtaining and funding voluntary industry recognized credentials, certifications, and licensures.

This handbook has been written to provide clear guidance on how to access and use your AFCOOL benefits, while remaining in compliance with DoDI 1322.33, *DoD Credentialing Programs* (published 13 October 2021), and DoDI 1322.33_DAFI 36-2683, *Voluntary Credentialing Programs* (published 8 July 2025). Further it outlines the roles and responsibilities of various entities including individual supervisors, the Education and Training Sections and you, the Service member.

The AFCOOL staff strive to respond to Service members' concerns and to remain engaged in continuous process improvement to increase program efficacy and customer service.

This handbook is designed to be a valuable resource as you pursue your professional development goals. Wishing you every success in this meaningful journey.

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Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL) Summary of Changes

The following substantive changes were implemented for this version (v3.0, published 8 July 2025) from the AFCOOL Handbook (v2.0, published March 2024).

1. Implemented cap for preparatory courses to \$2,000.
2. Service members separating or retiring must have their funding requests approved by AFCOOL at least 120 days prior to their DOS.
3. Service members separating or retiring must have their grades and other credential documentation submitted to AFCOOL NLT 60 days prior to DOS.
4. Supervisor roles and responsibilities updated and clarified.
5. Service member responsibilities updated and clarified.
6. Role of the Education & Training Section explained.
7. Self-paced preparatory courses are limited to 180 days.
8. The Exception to Policy process is explained in greater detail.
9. Extensions will not exceed 90 days.
10. Change in funding request dates.
11. Number of Non-Primary Specialty Code credentials can obtain is updated to two (2).
12. Recoupment process clarified.
13. DoD Credential Standards updated.
14. Notes, Critical Points, Cautions, and Warnings have been added to emphasize known issues and concerns Service members, supervisors, and education offices should be aware of prior to an AFCOOL goal is pursued.

Caution—Important advisory information, not adhering to recommendation may lead to delays or negative impact the Service member.

Critical—A required action or consideration necessary for the successful use of AFCOOL. Failure to address could hinder participation or approval.

Note—Considerations derived from lessons learned, insight essential for informed decision-making and smooth program utilization.

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Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL)

Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

AFCOOL enables eligible Air Force and Space Force Service members to earn and maintain professional certifications, enhancing their career prospects both during and after military service. The AFCOOL Credentialing Program Office (CPO) oversees and executes the program for the Department of the Air Force (DAF).

It is important to understand the difference between the three types of credentials.

Certification is awarded by a non-governmental certification body based on the individual demonstrating, through the examination process, they have acquired the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job.

Licensure is like a certification, however, does not necessarily have a specific required program of study. Many licenses do require a degree or training typically not provided by the licensing body. Further, they are granted by a government entity and required to practice or perform a job within a profession.

Academic Certificates and Degrees are earned by the completion of education or training generally at a higher education institution (often a college or university). These are not funded by AFCOOL.

1.2. Program Overview

AFCOOL provides enlisted Service members with a lifetime cap of \$4500 to pursue credentials in three categories: unlimited primary specialty code, two not related to their primary specialty code, and recertification of AFCOOL funded credentials.

1.3. Governing Policy and Guidance.

DODI 1322.33, DoD Credentialing Programs, 13 October 2021.

DODI 1322.33_DAFI36-2683, Voluntary Credentialing Programs, 8 July 2025.

Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL) Handbook, June 2025.

Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL)

Section 2: Eligibility and Responsibilities

2.1. General Eligibility

2.1.1. Requirements for Enlisted DAF Service Members

- A. Be an enlisted Service member on active duty for the duration of the AFCOOL funding request.
- B. Funding will not be provided under the following duty statuses:
 - 1. Separated
 - 2. Retired
 - 3. Commissioned

In such cases, funding will immediately cease, the remaining funding cap will be removed, and the Service member will be responsible for reimbursing any funds received for uncompleted credential goals.

Warning: In some cases, recoupment may be in a lump sum payment due to the Service member's remaining time in service.

- C. Possess at least a 5-skill level in their Primary Specialty Code.
- D. Must not have any outstanding issues:
 - 1. Unfavorable Information File
 - 2. A referral Enlisted Performance Brief
 - 3. On a control roster
 - 4. Failed or overdue physical fitness assessment or continuous fitness assessment study

Note: These factors must be resolved prior to consideration for approval.

Note: Some certifications require practical exam exercises, including tasks that may be physical in nature (e.g., lifting, pulling, pushing, etc.). Be aware of these requirements prior to applying to AFCOOL for funding.

Caution: A Service member's inability to complete an AFCOOL goal due to a profile status does not automatically qualify as grounds for a waiver of recoupment.

2.1.2 Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Members

- A. Air Reserve Component (ARC) enlisted Service members on Title 10 or Title 32 orders are eligible to receive AFCOOL funding for the duration of their active-duty orders.
- B. Reserve Component-enlisted Service members must be on active-duty orders when their funding requests are approved and funded. A copy of the activation orders must be loaded into the Service member's AFAEMS record.
- C. Grades must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the release date of the active-duty orders.
- D. Service members on Title 32 orders must be eligible for Title 10 benefits or operating under Title 10 authority.

2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.2.1. Service Member

- A. Follow Program Procedures. Review DoDI 1322.33_DAFI36-2683, *Voluntary Credentialing Programs*, and this handbook.
 - **Note:** To ensure you meet all requirements, Service members are strongly encouraged to visit the AFCOOL website and review the specific certification details. The credentialing agency links provide access to each vendor's prerequisites and other information needed for successful certification.
- B. Complete Virtual Benefits Training in AFVEC and ensure all student record information is accurate and updated to include the current supervisor.
- C. Request funding no greater than 60 days prior or no less than 30 days prior to the start date on the funding request.

Warning: Service members will be required to reimburse for unsuccessful completion of the license or certification and be responsible to pay all costs associated with that goal (preparatory course, exam, study materials).

- D. Understand Vendor's Policies prior to requesting funds to include refund policies.

Caution: Some vendors have non-refundable policies regardless of justification. Service members will not be granted a waiver of reimbursement based solely on a vendor's refusal to provide a refund.

- E. Following the completion of preparatory courses and exams, Service members must provide source documentation to the AFCOOL CPO for goal completion.

2.2.2. Supervisor

- A. Supervisors should ensure their subordinates are not pressured or persuaded to utilize their AFCOOL benefit for the purpose of DAF mission needs.

Note: There are multiple vendors available for many of the certifications. Service members should conduct adequate research for a program that provides the best value for their individual needs high quality training resources are available to Service members, including free options and lower-cost alternatives that are comparable to more expensive vendors. The AFCOOL site offers a wealth of free training resources and should be explored.

- B. Approve or disapprove all credentialing requests within the suspense. Funding requests must be signed at least 30 days prior to the start date on the funding request; failure to do so will result in automatic deletion of the request.
- C. If necessary, deny requests if the following circumstances are deemed likely to hinder the Service member's successful completion of the requested credential.
 1. Upgrade training
 2. Temporary duty
 3. Permanent change of station
 4. Professional military education
 5. College courses
 6. Any other factor that could affect the Service member's ability to successfully complete the exam(s)

Caution: Failed or overdue physical fitness assessment or continuous fitness assessment study must be resolved before requests for AFCOOL funding can be approved.

2.2.3. Education and Training Sections (E&TS)

- A. Maintain knowledge of associated directives pertaining to the AFCOOL Program.
- B. Provide career planning assistance, including identifying certifications that enhance both current and future career opportunities.
- C. Submit CCAF Student Action Requests for CCAF degree applicable certifications. Refer to the *CCAF Advisor Handbook* for specific guidance.

D. Dates

- a. Course dates are not to be updated/changed on the funding request.
- b. Date of Separation (DOS). Provide assistance to ARC enlisted Service members on Title 10 or Title 32 orders by updating their DOS and uploading orders, as needed.

- E. Coordination with the AFCOOL CPO must be completed prior to creating funding requests on behalf of Service members.

Note: All funding requests are processed based on the course start date and order received.

F. Out Processing Actions.

- a. Permanent Change of Station. Clear to out-process with an open education goal and funding request(s).
- b. Separation, Retirement or Commissioning. Do not clear for out-processing if Service member has an open AFCOOL goal. The E&TS should add a note in the virtual out-processing system indicating the Service member must work with the AFCOOL CPO to be cleared.

Critical: Service members are required to resolve their AFCOOL goal completion prior to final out-processing the base. AFCOOL goals will remain open during a Service member's out-processing unless the AFCOOL CPO has validated the request for closure. For assistance, contact the AFCOOL CPO through AFAEMS/AFVEC messages.

Note: Providing early notice of outstanding financial obligations enables Service members to better manage potential financial impact, depending on disbursement method (lump sum or payment plan).

- G. While it is not prohibited for Service members to pursue an AFCOOL goal concurrently with participation in SkillBridge, it is strongly discouraged due to the potential for conflicting commitments.

- H. The E&TS should direct Service members with issues and concerns to the AFCOOL CPO via the AFVEC message system.

Note: Messages from the E&TS are prioritized over other received messages to address questions not readily available in the handbook or issues that require a timely response. This action will not advance a Service member's application for funding requests ahead of other requests received.

Critical: The message system groups conversations by the original message date, keeping replies and follow-ups linked in "message chains" rather than as separate emails. New responses stay within the existing chain, at the original message date.

- I. When to direct Service members to the AFCOOL Program Office.
 - 1) The Service member receives messages regarding reimbursement actions.

Note: The AFCOOL CPO reviews the record and messages prior to initiating reimbursement action.
 - 2) The system is blocking the Service member from creating an AFCOOL goal or funding request.
 - 3) If an AFCOOL goal or funding request is no longer required. **Do not delete.**

Note: Request should be submitted via AFAEMS message from the Service member. AFCOOL CPO is responsible for closing the goal.
 - 4) Modification of funding request dates are requested.
 - 5) Grade/Completion Updates. **Not an E&TS responsibility.**
- J. E&TSs should not monitor AFCOOL vendors attempting to solicit or offer courses on base and should ensure a legal review has been completed and a formal agreement established. The E&TS is not responsible for establishing or overseeing any AFCOOL programs on base. All vendors supporting the AFCOOL program must be registered and approved within the Academic Institution Portal (AI Portal). AFCOOL is available to participate in virtual Education Fairs by request.

2.2.4. AFCOOL CPO.

- A. Serve as the Service member's primary POC for AFCOOL goals, funding requests, issues, and concerns.
- B. Assist E&TS staff and Service members as development advisors in promoting the AFCOOL Program and website.
- C. Provide individualized/group training to E&TS via Teams, upon request.

Note: The AFCOOL CPO actively monitors E&TS action to ensure effective execution of the program. When trends indicate areas where performance can be improved, the CPO offers targeted training to increase knowledge and address any recurring issues.
- D. Maintain working relationships with credentialing vendors. Liaise between vendors and career field managers to resolve concerns and provide guidance that aligns with DAF policy.
- E. Verify and provide a recommendation on all exception to policies (ETP) pertaining to the AFCOOL Program.
- F. Will "resolve" all AFVEC message pertaining to AFCOOL goals within AFVEC. Message are completed in the order received.
- G. Makes every effort to respond to messages as quickly as possible, with the goal of a 24–48-hour response time. However, backlogs could delay the response time to greater than 30 days

Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL) Section 3: Program Overview

3.1. Program Categories.

- A. Service members may pursue AFCOOL funding from the following three (3) categories:
 - a. Unlimited credentials from the approved list on the AFCOOL website for their primary AFSC, career series, USSF career field.
 - b. Two credentials not related to their primary AFSC, career series, or USSF career field. These can include, but are not limited to, Leadership/Management credentials and those related to any academic degree documented in AFAEMS. For degrees not listed in AFAEMS, degrees will be updated per guidance in DAFI 36-2678.
 - Exception:** Private Pilot License - Airplane Single Engine (ASE) will only be funded as a primary AFSC-related credential.
 - c. Recertification for previously funded AFCOOL credentials, may be funded to maintain certification not to exceed the \$4,500 lifetime cap.

3.2. Training Requirement.

- A. Service members are required to take the Virtual Benefits Training in AFVEC prior to submitting a funding request for an AFCOOL goal.

3.3. Creating an AFCOOL Goal.

- A. The Service member will create an AFCOOL goal in AFVEC prior to submitting any funding requests.

Note: All necessary supporting documents must be included.

3.4. Requesting Funding.

- A. AFCOOL funding approval is required *prior* to incurring any certification-related expenses. Service members will be personally liable for any costs incurred without prior approval. Government funds may not be obligated, and preparatory courses or exams may not commence until a funding request is approved. Funding requests must be submitted no greater than 60 days prior or no less than 30 days prior to the course/exam start date on the funding request.
- B. Funding requests are processed and approved based on funding request start date. Funding requests will not be advanced in priority for processing/approval to satisfy requirements for Senior Rater Endorsement, Enlisted Performance Reports, award packages, etc.
- C. All exams, preparatory courses, study materials, and fees must be requested by the Service members when creating the funding request.

Note: Service members should notify the AFCOOL CPO via AFVEC message, if unable to enroll in or complete the credentialing exam and/or when there is a change in the Service member's Service obligation.

- D. Following the creation of each funding request, the Service members supervisor has 7 calendar days to approve, or the system will auto delete the funding requests.
- E. Service members will notify AFCOOL CPO of any changes to an AFCOOL goal (e.g., credentialing exam(s) testing dates and/or locations approved and accepted by the Service member) via AFVEC message.

Warning: Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of future funding and reimbursement of AFCOOL funds.

- F. Self-paced preparatory courses, (courses without set beginning/end dates) regardless of vendors policy, are limited to no more than 180 days.
- G. Within 120 days of Separation or Retirement. Service members separating or retiring within 120 days from separation or retirement are ineligible to participate in AFCOOL.
- H. Service members out-processing for retirement or separation must provide proof of satisfactory completion 60 days prior to the DOS.
- I. If Service member has a pending reimbursement action for either MilTA or AFCOOL, funding for a new AFCOOL goal will not be approved until reimbursement has been initiated.

3.5. Certification Completion Responsibilities.

- A. Service members must complete the credential fully and report this to the AFCOOL CPO.

Note: Documentation will include the license (temporary is acceptable) or certification, successful exam results (or score reports), and preparatory course completion certificate (if applicable) that includes first and last name, within 30 days of the funding request end date to the AFCOOL CPO via AFVEC.

- B. Completion documentation will be submitted using the following process:
 1. Upload documents to the AFCOOL goal and send a message via AFVEC to the AFCOOL CPO.
 2. Send an AFVEC message to the AFCOOL CPO with the documents attached.

Note: Only the AFCOOL CPO possesses the authority to enter or modify completion grades and AFCOOL goals on behalf of the Service member.

- C. Failure to report completion results within the window will result in reimbursement actions.

Caution: Not providing documentation to close the credentialing goal may prevent a Service member from applying for MilTA funding or future AFCOOL credentialing funding.

- D. Reimbursement actions will include all funds issued for the exam(s) to include preparatory course, study materials, and fees related to the AFCOOL goal.

Warning: Completion of a preparatory course does not constitute earning the certification and will not satisfy the requirement to close the credential goal.

- E. Service member will not receive funding for subsequent attempts for the same certification even if the Service member reimburses for the AFCOOL goal.
- F. Failure of an exam will not exclude Service member from receiving funding for a new AFCOOL goal.

3.6. Failed Exams.

- A. If a Service member fails an exam and plans to retest to avoid reimbursement action, they must notify the AFCOOL CPO via AFVEC messenger of their intent to self-fund a second exam. This notification should include proof of payment for the retest.

Note: The Service member is liable for any expenses relating to re-take the exam.

Note: The Service member should not initiate voluntary reimbursement actions in AFVEC if they will be retaking the exam. If the self-funded re-take is set for outside the original funding window, an ETP will be required for an extension.

Warning: If reimbursement action is initiated in AFVEC, AFCOOL cannot stop the action once it is processed.

3.7. Authorized / Unauthorized Uses.

3.7.1. Authorized Uses.

- A. Service members may choose to pursue multiple credentials from the approved list on the AFCOOL website for their Primary Air Force Specialty Code, career series, or USSF career field.

Note: Multiple credentials cannot be bundled under one credential goal.

Note: The AFCOOL website displays all Department of Defense (DoD) approved credentials, regardless of AFCOOL funding eligibility. Credentials approved for AFCOOL funding are identified by an “AFCOOL Eligible” or “AFCOOL Leadership” badge.

- B. Funding includes the credentialing exam (or series of exams if credential has more than one exam), preparatory courses, manuals, study guides and materials, textbooks, processing fees, and test fees and related fees up to the lifetime cap of \$4500.
- C. Preparatory courses are limited to a maximum of \$2,000 per credential goal, provided the Service member does not exceed the \$4,500 lifetime cap.
- D. Study materials are limited to a maximum of \$500 per credential goal, provided the Service member does not exceed the \$4,500 lifetime cap.
- E. Recertification for previously funded AFCOOL credentials, provided the lifetime cap of \$4500 has not been exhausted.

Note: Recertification funding will not be approved to pay for additional courses, late fees, Continuing Education Units (CEU), Professional Development Units (PDU), or conferences required to maintain the certification.

- F. Option is available to Earn up to two credentials unrelated to the Service member’s primary specialty code, career series, or USSF career field and may include Leadership/Management and degree-related certifications.

Note: The Private Pilot License – Airplane Single Engine (ASE) will be funded exclusively as a primary AFSC-related credential for the Remote Pilot career field (1U1X1).

Note: Degree-related certifications must be AFCOOL approved and align with the Service member's degree indicated in the Service member’s AFVEC/AFAEMS record.

3.7.2. Unauthorized Uses.

- A. Certifications that serve as prerequisites for positions within the DAF, or are required to perform a specific military occupation, duty position, or specialty-coded billet.
- B. Hardware items such as laptops, tool kits, network server kits, equipment rental, fuel, personal protective equipment, etc.

- C. Prerequisite type fees required for the professional certification or license such as drug testing, physicals, etc.
- D. Recurring or automatic subscription for preparatory courses and study materials; only the initial, one-time expense required to access materials or course is eligible for inclusion in the funding request.
- E. Academic degrees and fees for membership in non-mandatory professional societies or associations.
- F. Failed exams; Service members who fail an exam must seek other funding methods for re-examination fees.
- G. Continuing education units, professional education units, and professional development units will not be approved.

Caution: Many licenses and certifications have some form of continuing education requirement. Be aware of these requirements prior to applying for AFCOOL funding.

- H. Attendance of conferences, workshops, etc., required to maintain a credential or for the recertification/renewal of credentials.

Caution: Some licenses and certifications may have conference attendance requirements. Be aware of these requirements prior to applying for AFCOOL funding.

- I. Travel, hotel expenses, per diem, airfare, etc.

3.8. Exceptions to Policy (ETP).

- A. Service members seeking ETPs for recoupment or other policy related issues due to unique circumstances must submit via AFVEC.
- B. Justification for ETP should be provided.
- C. Supporting documentation such as a Commander's indorsement letter, doctor's memo (PII redacted), vendor's memo/email, or credentialing agency records, should be included with the request.

Note: If applicable, provide documentation showing that you have made all reasonable efforts to obtain a refund from the vendor and that those efforts have been exhausted.

- D. An ETP is required for any extensions to time allowed on the funding requests (e.g. time to test, extension of self-paced courses). The Service member is required to provide justification and/or proof of scheduled exam if applicable, in the Support Documents of the ETP, even if outside the original funding request window.

3.9. Recoupments/Reimbursement Actions.

- A. AFCOOL CPO will initiate reimbursement action for Service members who report unsatisfactory or missing grades. Ultimately it is the Service member's responsibility for ensuring grades are received by required deadlines.
 - a. Unsatisfactory grades are considered a failure as defined by the credentialing agency.

- b. Missing grades are defined as required documents not received and updated in the Service member's AFVEC record by the 30th day following the end of the course date listed on the approved funding request.
- B. Service members will have no more than 30 days to respond to any notification of reimbursement. After 30 days, AFCOOL CPO will initiate reimbursement actions to recoup all funding used for the credentialing goal.
- C. Refunds will not be given for grade changes from unsatisfactory/missing to satisfactory after the 30-day period.
- D. Failure to inform the AFCOOL CPO of an inability to enroll, complete an exam, or update a funding request will result in reimbursement actions.
- E. Reimbursement will not be required for Wounded Warriors who are discharged due to conditions related to their Wounded Warrior designation prior to completing the credentials. Documentation to the AFCOOL CPO of enrollment in program and discharge is required.

Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL) Section 4: AFVEC User Guide

4.1. Create an AFCOOL Goal.

A. Complete: Virtual Benefits Training.

- a. Location: Main AFVEC page, Virtual Benefits Training (right).

Title	Created	Completed
Virtual Active Duty MILTA Benefits Training	05/03/2018	
AF COOL Virtual Training,	10/05/2020	04/20/2021

2 total

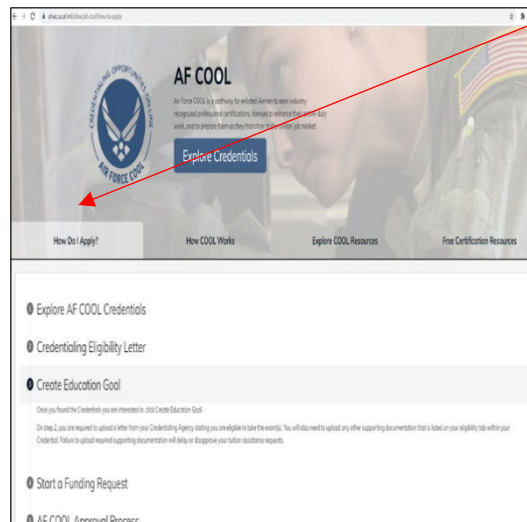
- Login Data
- Supervisor
- Education Record
- Funding Requests
- Education Goals
- Education Levels
- SkillBridge Applications
- Virtual Benefits Training
- CCAF Action Requests
- Counseling Notes
- Student Documents
- Formal Training
- Professional Military Education
- Scheduled Tests
- Test Scores

B. Create AFCOOL goal. In AFVEC

a. Select: Education Goal

- i. Location: Main AFVEC page, Education Goals (right)

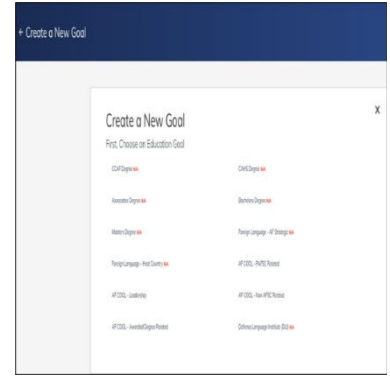
b. Select: Create Education Goal



- Login Data
- Supervisor
- Education Record
- Funding Requests
- Education Goals
- Education Levels
- SkillBridge Applications
- Virtual Benefits Training
- CCAF Action Requests
- Counseling Notes
- Student Documents
- Formal Training
- Professional Military Education
- Scheduled Tests
- Test Scores

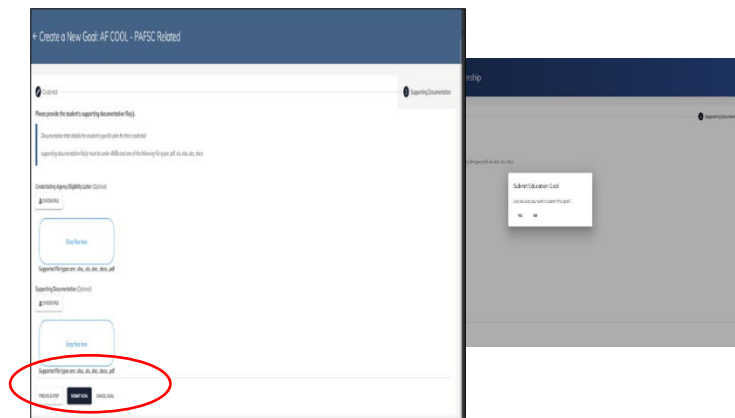
- C. Select: Type: AFCOOL education goal, completing all * fields
 - A) If the goal being pursued is marked as “N/A”, click on the title and it will state the reason. Once complete with the listed requirement(s), proceed with submitting the Education Goal.
- D. Select: Certification.
- E. Select: Funding types (study material, preparatory course, exam)

- F. Upload Vendor’s Bill/Invoice/Quote.
 - A. Upload any additional supporting documentation
 - B. Select: Submit Goal



Note: Contact vendor for assistance. Screenshots in a PDF document are acceptable.

Note: Must include account login information if the Purchasing Agent will need to login into the Service member’s account to make payment.

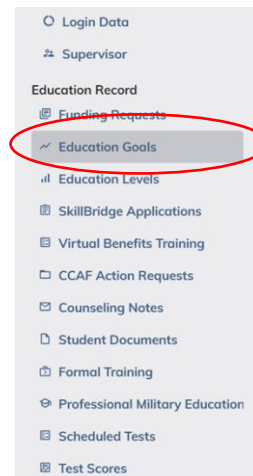


- G. Supervisor receives notice of impending AFCOOL goal for approval.

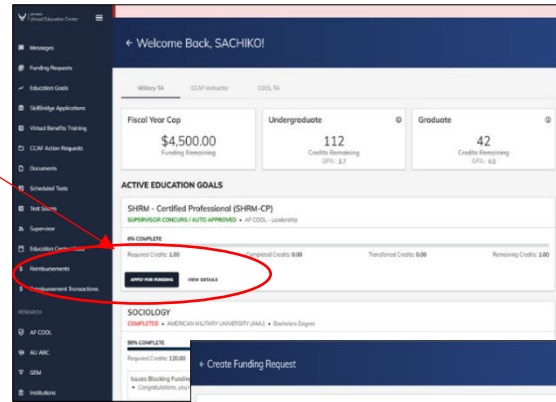
Note: You will not be able to create the funding request until your goal is approved by your supervisor.

4.2. Create a Funding Request.

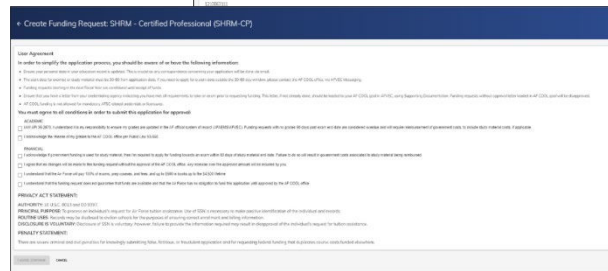
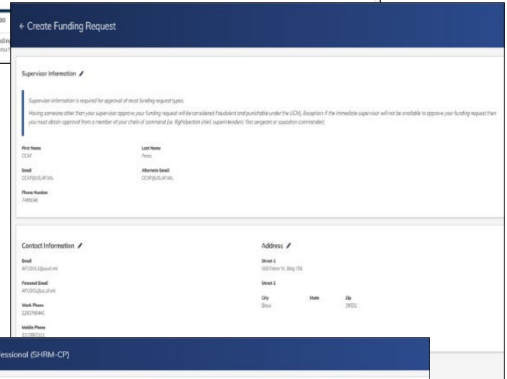
- A. Select: Education Goal in AFVEC



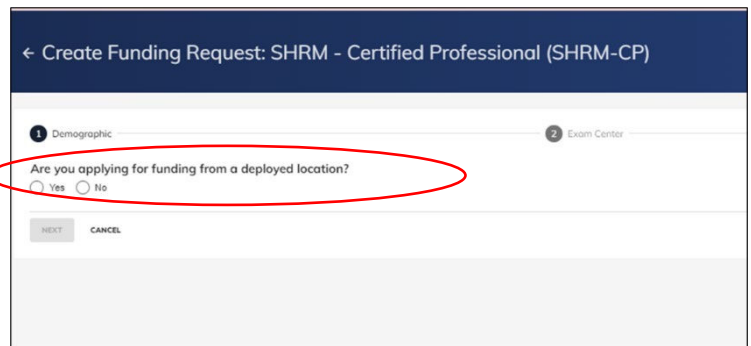
- B. Select: approved AFCOOL goal
- C. Select: Apply for Funding



- D. Verify Supervisor
 - a. Click "Verify and Proceed"
- E. Read and agree to the User Agreement



- F. Indicate if applying from a deployed location

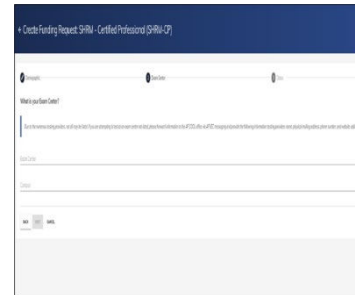


- G. Identify Vendor: Under "Exam Center" enter the training vendor's name exactly as they are listed on our AFCOOL webpage

Note: The training vendor will be providing training services and/or will be the agency proctoring the exam. This is who receives AFCOOL funding on your behalf. You will not enter the actual testing center or testing location where the exam will be completed.

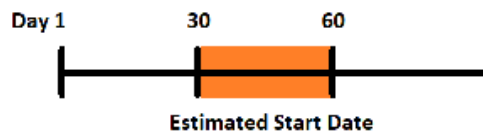
Example: If the CPO purchases an exam voucher from CompTIA on your behalf, you will enter "CompTIA" in the exam center field as they are the vendor receiving funding.

Note: If the vendor's name is not in the system, the vendor handbook can be found on the website.



- a. Under "Campus" select the training vendor's name and "Main Campus".
- b. Use the calendar icon to select the anticipated start date of the certification, preparatory course, or exam.

Note: Ensure funding requests are submitted to the CPO not later than 30 days and not earlier than 60 days prior to the anticipated exam or training start date. A funding request cannot be submitted to the CPO until it has been approved by the Service member's supervisor.



Note: The orange area denotes the 30-day date range where the estimated start date must fall.

- c. Generate funding requests in the following order, using the invoice/cart screenshot as the source document.
 1. Study Materials
 2. Preparatory Course
 3. Exam

Note: Each AFCOOL goal has credits assigned to it based on how many exams are required. Once the exam funding request is created, the system shows those credits as "used" and the education goal will have a message in the record stating the goal does not have enough remaining credits to issue funding. This prevents the Service member from creating any additional funding requests. Create desired funding requests in the order mentioned above to avoid any issues.

Note: Funding requests submitted must align with the supporting document provided. The Service member's supervisor approves or disapproves each funding request created.

- d. The CPO processes the funding request(s). The Service member must check their AFVEC account and messages daily to see if additional documentation or information is needed.
- e. The Purchasing Agent makes the required payment by contacting the vendor directly or logging into the Service member's account (dependent on supporting documentation provided and validated by the CPO). Please note the total amount of the funding request(s) may need to be adjusted by the Purchasing Agent due to any additional processing fees, price changes or shipping charges.

4.3. Supporting Documents.

- A. General Requirements. All AFCOOL goals require supporting documentation, the type of certification and the vendor chosen will dictate which documentation will be needed. Consider what the Purchasing Agent will need to make the payment on your behalf and provide a detailed invoice that includes the vendor contact info with payment instructions or a cart screenshot with your account login information (see **table 6.3.1**).

Note: Detailed instructions to assist the Purchasing Agent with navigating the website and making the payment is recommended.

Note: The CPO will communicate with you via AFVEC messaging when your education goal requires additional supporting documentation.

4.3.1. Supporting Documents Table.

Note: In addition to the required documents for industry recognized credentials, many credentials also require login information if the Purchasing Agent is required to login to your account to pay for the item(s) in your cart.

Note: For Project Management Institute (PMI) related certification requirements, **see Attachment 1.**

Note: If your credential is not listed in the table below, upload of the invoice, at minimum, will be required.

Certification	Certification Agency	Invoice	Approval to Test	PearsonVue Login	Agency Login	Medical Clearance	Additional Questions
Associate Professional in Human Resources (aPHR)	Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI)	X			X		
Associate Safety Professional (ASP)	Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP)	X					X
Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)	Project Management Institute (PMI)	X	X	X	X		
Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)	International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium, Inc. (ISC)131	X					X

Table continues on next page

Certification	Certification Agency	Invoice	Approval to Test	PearsonVue Login	Agency Login	Medical Clearance	Additional Questions
Certified Dental Technician- Ceramics	National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology (NBC)	X					X
Certified Dental Technician- Crown and Bridge	National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology (NBC)	X					X
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium, Inc. (ISC) ²	X					X
Certified Safety Professional (CSP)	Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP)	X					X
GIAC Certified Penetration Tester (GPEN)	Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC)	X			X		
GIAC Information Security Fundamentals (GISF)	Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC)	X			X		
GIAC Security Essentials Certification (GSEC)	Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC)	X			X		
GIAC Security Essentials Certification (GSEC)	Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC)	X			X		
Mechanic (Airframe & Powerplant)	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	X	X				
National Council Licensure Examination for Practical/Vocational Nurses (NCLEX-PN)	National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN)	X		X			X
Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC)	American Medical Certification Association (AMCA)	X			X		X
PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)	Project Management Institute (PMI)	X			X		
Private Pilot, Airplane Single Engine (ASE) Rating	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	X				X	
Professional in Human Resources (PHR)	Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI)	X			X		
Project Management Professional (PMP)	Project Management Institute (PMI)	X	X	X	X		
Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)	Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI)	X			X		
SHRM - Certified Professional (SHRM-CP)	Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)	X			X		X
SHRM - Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP)	Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)	X			X		X

4.4. Submitting Documents Upon Completion.

- A. Required certification documents:
 - a. Preparatory course certificate (if applicable)
 - b. Official exam results/score report – Name must be included (if applicable)
 - c. Certification or License
- B. Upload to AFCOOL Goal Supporting Documents
- C. Message AFCOOL CPO via AFVEC for retrieval and update of your record

Note: Some AFCOOL goals require additional documents to update the grade and complete the AFCOOL goal. Follow AFCOOL CPO's guidance if additional documents are requested.

Example: The Airframe & Powerplant Mechanic goal requires the Service member to provide the written knowledge test reports, the completed 8610-2, preparatory course certificate, and the A&P license.

4.5. Recertification Funding Request.


- A. **Do not create a new education goal.** Follow guidance stated on the original closed AFCOOL goal for submitting a recertification funding request.
 - 1) Upload: Supporting document to the original completed AFCOOL goal
 - Note:** Supporting document uploaded must be a vendor invoice or a cart screenshot with your account login information included.
 - 2) Select: Recertification (document type)
 - 3) Select: Issue Funding button
 - 4) Create: Recertification funding request

Note: Ensure it aligns with the supporting document you provided.

4.6. Exceptions to Policy Request.

- A. The E&TS will assist in making a Service member eligible in AFVEC to initiate an ETP.
- B. Request Section: Should identify what exactly the Service member is requesting (e.g., Requesting an extension to test).
- C. Justification Section: Should identify the policy associated with the Request Sections (e.g., DAFI 36-2683, Section 4.3, Sections 7, paragraph a).
 - Note:** Request and justification sections are limited to 1000 characters.
- D. Supporting Documents:
 - 1) Memorandum for Record required – Provide details and supporting information for the ETP
 - 2) Proof of scheduled exam (required for all extension requests)
 - 3) Other supporting documents to be considered for decision (if applicable)
- E. Request will be Routed to:
 - 1) Service member's supervisor listed in AFVEC for situational awareness
 - 2) E&TS for their recommendation

- 3) AFCOOL CPO for review to determine if the request is sufficiently supported and provide a recommendation
 - 4) Air Staff (HAF/A1DLV) for final decision
- F. System Notifications (4 Options). Notice of final decisions will be sent via AFVEC messenger. Comments will be included for all decisions.
- 1) Request needs additional information
 - 2) Approved
 - 3) Approve with Modifications
 - 4) Denied
- G. Monitor ETP progress by selecting “ETP Process” from the left-side menu within the ETP request section.



The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for 'Exception To Policy Requests'. It features a table with the following data:

Zone	Status	Date Submitted	Last Updated
AF COOL	Pending Supervision Review	06/12/2025	06/12/2025

A red arrow points from the text 'AF COOL' in the table to the 'AF COOL' entry in the table.

Glossary of Terms.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AF/A1D—Air Force/Directorate of Force Development
AFAEMS—Air Force Automated Education Management System
AFCOOL—Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line
AFSC—Air Force Specialty Code
ANG—Air National Guard
ARC—Air Reserve Component (Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve)
ARPC—Air Reserve Personnel Center
AFRC—Air Force Reserve Command
AFVEC—Air Force Virtual Education Center
AU—Air University
CCAF—Community College of the Air Force
CB—Credentialing Body
CEU—Continuing Education Units
COOL—Credentialing Opportunities On-Line
CPO—Credentialing Program Office
DAF—Department of the Air Force
DAFI—Department of the Air Force Instruction
DOS—Date of Separation
DoD—Department of Defense
DoDI—Department of Defense Instruction
E&TS—Education and Training Section
HAF—Headquarters Air Force
MiITA—Military Tuition Assistance
MOC—Military Occupational Code
PDU—Professional Development Units
PAFSC—Primary Air Force Specialty Code
SDI—Special Duty Identifier
SNCO—Senior Noncommissioned Officer
USAF—United States Air Force
USMAP—United States Military Apprenticeship Program
USSF—United States Space Force
VA WEAM—Veterans Affairs Web Enabled Approved Management System

Terms

Activated End Date—Is the last date that active-duty orders for AF Reserve or Air National Guard members are in force.

Caution—Important advisory information, not adhering to recommendation may lead to delays or negative impact the Service member.

Certificate—A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program. Certificates can be awarded at any level of post-secondary education and include awards below the associate's degree level.

Certification—A credential awarded by a certification body based on an individual demonstrating through an examination process that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job. Certifications have a time-limit and recertification process.

Credential—A piece of any record that details qualification, competence, or authority issued to an individual by a third party with a relevant or de facto authority or assumed competence to do so. Examples: certifications, licenses, degrees, and certificates.

Credentialing—The process by which an entity, authorized and qualified to do so, grants formal recognition to, or records the recognition status of individuals that meet predetermined and standardized criteria.

Credentialing Opportunities On-line Program—The vehicle for the award of civilian-recognized certification. The intent is to expand the professionalism of Air Force and Space Force Professionals while serving and to prepare them for entry into civilian jobs upon separation/retirement from the Service.

Credentialing Program Office—Within the AFCOOL Program, they handle the funding requests and ensures all required documentation to approval of funding is provided.

Critical—A required action or consideration necessary for the successful use of AFCOOL. Failure to address could hinder participation or approval.

Date of Separation—Date established by law and/or policy for the termination of active or reserve duty.

Educational Certificate—A credential awarded by an educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework and test or other performance evaluations. Certificates of attendance or participation in short-term training (e.g., 1 day) are not within the scope of educational certificates.

Exam—A formal test of a person's knowledge or proficiency in a particular subject or skill.

Exam Grade Due Date—The AFAEMS automatically generates a 120-day suspense for any funding request. Means you have 120 days from the start of the funding request to submit successful exam results to the AFCOOL CPO via AFVEC message.

Expenses—Expenses for classroom instruction, hands-on training (and associated materials), manuals, study guides and materials, textbooks, processing fees, and test fees and related fees. Any future changes to legislative language will be adopted accordingly.

Funding Request—Are submissions in the AFVEC/AFAEMS requesting funds for a preparatory course, study materials, exam(s), and/or fees. These are processed and approved by the AFCOOL CPO and paid for by the Purchasing department.

License/Licensure—Awarded by a government agency that constitutes legal authority to do a specific job. Licenses are based on a combination of degree or certificate attainment, certifications, assessments, or work experience; are time-limited; and must be renewed periodically.

Note—Considerations derived from lessons learned, insight essential for informed decision-making and smooth program utilization.

Preparatory Course—A training course meant to prepare the Service member for a certification exam(s).

Purchasing Agent—A department within the AFCOOL Program that handles purchasing of Service member-requested training products from an AFCOOL approved training vendor.

Receipt—A legal document evidencing a buyer has purchased and taken possession of goods and/or services.

Reimbursement/Recoupment—Recovery of all funding from a Service member due to unsuccessfully completion of an AFCOOL goal.

SkillBridge Program—DoD program directed by law to provide eligible Service members of the armed forces with job training and employment skills training, including apprenticeships and internships, to help prepare such Service members for employment in the civilian sector.

Study Materials—Books, electronic media, or interactive programs that prepare Service members for a certification exam.

Vendor—An institution/business that specializes in offering training products leading to a professional civilian industry-recognized certification.

Warning—High-impact issues demanding immediate attention. Ignoring may result in serious consequences, including financial penalties such as reimbursement action.

Wounded Warrior—Is a combat-wounded, ill, or injured Airman/Guardian awarded a 9W series Reporting Identifier for combat-related injuries or illness as reflected in the Military Personnel Data System.

References.

DoDI 1322.33, DoD Credentialing Programs, 13 October 2021

DoDI 1322.33_DAFI36-2683, Voluntary Credentialing Programs, 8 July 2025

CCAF Advisor Handbook 2022-2024

Attachment 1

PMI Program Guidance (e.g., CAPM and PMP)

Published 10 June 2021

Department of the Air Force Service members are required to submit the following documents when pursuing Project Management Institute (PMI) related certification.

1. An itemized invoice for your preparatory course.

Note: AFCOOL funds cannot be used to pay for a preparatory course to provide required training, CEUs or PDUs to qualify for an exam. Preparatory course AFCOOL funding is intended to provide refresher training before completing the required credentialing exam.

2. PMI username and password

Note: for Purchasing Agents to purchase the exam, preparatory course and study materials directly through PMI.

Note: AFCOOL CPO adheres to guidance from the Air Force Audit Agency for required documentation, for all credentials that require agency approval authorization or approval to test (e.g., PMP, FAA A&P, LPN, etc.).

3. PMI approval to test (PMI Dashboard screenshot must include your name, eligibility dates, and the pay for exam button - application approval).

Note: You will obtain your PMI ATT from your PMI account.

Note: The approval to test assures the government verifies the Service member's qualifications and is qualified to test. Without approval from PMI to take the exam, the AFCOOL CPO will not release AFCOOL funds to support the AFCOOL goal.

Note: Consider the free resources to gain the hours needed to take the PMI related exam (see Resource link of AF COOL webpage).

4. Eligibility Information in AFVEC.

CAPM: <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/af-cool/credential/4005>

PMP: <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/af-cool/credential/2741>

Note: Review the criteria below to determine if the CAPM or PMP is the appropriate certification for you.

The following graphic is taken from the PMI Content Outlines for CAPM and PMP

Educational Background	Project Management Experience	Project Management Education	CAPM/PMP
Secondary diploma (high school diploma/global equivalent)	None	23 contact hours of formal education	CAPM
OR			
Secondary degree (high school diploma, associate's degree or global equivalent)	Minimum five years/60 months unique non-overlapping professional project management experience*	35 contact hours of formal education unless you are an active CAPM holder	PMP
OR			
Four-year degree (bachelor's degree or global equivalent)	Minimum three years/36 months unique non-overlapping professional project management experience*	35 contact hours of formal education unless you are an active CAPM holder	PMP
OR			
Bachelor's or post-graduate degree from a GAC accredited program (bachelor's degree or master's or global equivalent)	Minimum two years/24 months unique non-overlapping professional project management experience*	35 contact hours of formal education unless you are an active CAPM holder	PMP

*Leading and directing the project as identified with the tasks, knowledge, and skills specific in the Project Management Professional Examination Content Outline.

Attachment 2

National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

All Service members pursuing an NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) certification need to answer the following questions prior to approval of any funding requests by the AFCOOL Credentialing Program Office. Responses can be uploaded to Service members supporting documents in AFVEC, by the Education Center or sent through AFVEC message to AFCOOL.

- A. Are you seeking licensure/registration in the United States or United States territories?
- B. Which licensure/registration are you seeking?
- C. Have you ever taken the NCLEX exam before?
- D. Have you ever taken an NCLEX exam to qualify for the same license?
- E. Have you ever taken an NCLEX exam to qualify for a different license?
- F. What is your program code?
- G. When did you graduate from your Nursing Program (Month/Year)?
- H. What is your ethnic group?
- I. What Nursing Regulatory Body are you seeking licensure/registration from?
- J. What is your PearsonVue login information: (e.g., username & password)?
- K. Are you testing at home or at a testing facility?
- L. What is the projected date and time of the exam?
- M. What is the name of the testing facility (if not testing at home)?