

# SANS/AFCOOL Benefits Announcement & Process Flow

Updated 9 December 2025

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## Process Flow:

Great news for **Active Duty** Enlisted Airmen and Guardians! Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AFCOOL) pays up to \$4,500 Lifetime for Industry Certifications. Funding for preparatory courses is capped at \$2,000 per credential goal + \$500 for Material + Exam cost.

AFCOOL website: <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/af-cool/how-to-apply>

To meet the spirit of this career development program, SANS agreed to reduce our OnDemand course prices to match the full value of one's AFCOOL benefits. Participants can now purchase a SANS course + Courseware Materials (up to \$8,780 value) and associated GIAC bundled Exam (\$999) for only \$3,499. This is a savings of up to \$6,280. This offer is valid through 31 DEC 2026. **Please forward this message to others as appropriate.**

GIAC (SANS certification body) has **46 approved certifications** listed on AFCOOL's website. Search by "GIAC" (<https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/af-cool/search>). If you don't see the one you want, submit a request directly to Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC) for the added certification.

**Registration Instructions:** To utilize your AFCOOL benefit with SANS, please follow these 3 steps:

1. Create a SANS Portal account using your Air Force email address at <https://www.sans.org/account/create>
  - If you already have a SANS Portal account using your AF email address, please log onto your account.
  - If you already have a SANS Portal account using your personal email address, please log onto that account and change the email address to your AF email address. This can be changed back to your personal email address once your course is paid.
2. Register online at the following link: <https://www.sans.org/ondemand/>
  - Register for both the SANS Course and bundle in the associated GIAC Exam.
  - AFCOOL requires you to take and pass the official certification exam within 180 days.
3. Choose "call in credit card" as the payment method. When you reach the end of the process the system will generate an invoice. Send your invoice to [AFCool@sans.org](mailto:AFCool@sans.org) and we will adjust the course down to the AFCOOL rate. We will then return the discounted invoice back to you to submit to AFCOOL.

### **A few notes to keep in mind:**

- **Per AFCOOL Guidelines:** the member must take and pass the official certification exam, or they will owe the government for all funds provided for the education goal.
- If you use other sources to pay for SANS Course, you can use AFCOOL can pay for the associated GIAC exam. For instance, if your squadron pays for your training but not your exam, you can use AFCOOL to pay for the exam.
- Please read page 2 of this document for qualification requirements.

Thanks for all you do to keep America safe. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out!

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## **AFCOOL Qualifications:**

Please refer to (<https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/af-cool/how-to-apply>) or contact AFCOOL directly. The AFCOOL Program Manager provided me the following bullet points:

### **Service Member:**

- *BOTTOM LINE: the member must take and pass the official certification exam, or they will owe the government for all funds provided for the education goal.*
- *The service member selects the certification (education goal) that they want to pursue from our approved list.*
- *Next, the service member creates a funding request based on the supporting document (vendor invoice or quote) that they upload to the education goal in our system.*
- *The funding request has a length of 120 days, and the member is required to complete the certification (pass the exam and earn the certification) within that 120-day timeframe.*
- *The service member needs to provide us the prep course certificate, official exam results and actual certification (often referred to as the wall certificate) or license via our secure messaging system. We will validate the documents and update the grade as appropriate.*
- *We cannot accept the prep course certificate as proof that they earned the actual certification. We can file that document on their record, but we cannot update a grade or close the goal based on completing a prep course.*
- *Any service member that fails the exam and/or fails to provide the required documents by the end of the 120-day funding request window will have their record flagged for recoupment of all funds provided on their behalf.*

### **Training & Education Providers:**

- *Service members are not required to complete a prep course when using the AFCOOL program. The requirement is to complete the official certification exam through the credentialing agency and become certified.*
- *AFCOOL funding for prep courses is provided as a refresher before the member takes the exam. It is not designed to provide the member required training and/or required hours to qualify for an exam.*
- *Vendors that receive AFCOOL funding have been vetted and approved and should be the organization providing the agreed upon service (study material, prep course or exam) and not out sourcing to another entity.*
- *Vendors are not required or even allowed to post grades in AI Portal.*
- *AFCOOL related payments are not currently made through the AI Portal. AFCOOL's Purchasing Agent team reach out to the vendor via phone or email to make AFCOOL related payments.*
- *The service member will create their required AFCOOL funding request(s) based on the vendor invoice or quote provided.*

Thank you,

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