



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
ACQUISITION LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY
103 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0103

SFAE

05 May 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Functional Area 51 Officer Military Education Level 4 and Joint Professional Military Education I Qualification

1. References:

a. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, SFAE-CDD memorandum (Department of the Army Acquisition Corps Functional Area 51 Officer Intermediate Qualification Course Waiver Policy and Procedures), 25 February 2014 - hereby superseded.

b. Army Regulation (AR) 350-1 (Army Training and Leader Development).

c. Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3 (Officer Talent Management).

2. Purpose. This memorandum provides guidance to Functional Area 51 (FA51) officers on earning Military Education Level 4 (MEL-4) and Joint Professional Military Education I (JPME I) qualification through completion of Intermediate Level Education (ILE) and/or the Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC). It supersedes reference 1.a.

3. Responsibilities.

a. The Army Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) has responsibility for the oversight and management of this policy.

b. FA51 Officers.

1) Engage with their US Army Human Resources Command Acquisition Management Branch (HRC AMB) talent manager or component Acquisition Career Manager (ACM), whichever is appropriate, and direct supervisor to help make informed decisions about their ILE and/or IQC attendance timeline that balance promotion requirements and mission priorities.

2) Coordinate with their HRC AMB talent manager or component ACM and local Military Personnel Division to ensure their Soldier Talent Profile reflects MEL-4 or JPME I achievement upon successful completion of training.

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4. Course Descriptions.

a. ILE is a military education program designed to prepare new field grade officers for positions of greater responsibility in command and staff positions at the battalion and brigade levels. The ILE Common Core Course is the first part of ILE, focusing on developing officers' abilities to think critically, solve complex problems, and operate effectively within their branches and the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environments. It is a pre-requisite for the Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course (AOWC), which is the credentialing course for field grade officers in the operational Army.

b. IQC. The three-week resident FA51 IQC is the Army Acquisition's follow-on course to the ILE Common Core Course or ILE Distance Learning (DL). Taught by The Army Acquisition School (TAAS) on the campus of the University of Alabama at Huntsville, FA51 IQC develops acquisition leaders capable of leading and managing any acquisition organization at the Lieutenant Colonel/O-5 level and develops a pool of future senior officers trained in innovative leadership and acquisition topics. It serves as the Army Acquisition's credentialing AOWC, providing training in acquisition-related leadership topics not found in the ILE Common Core Course. Together with the ILE Common Core Course, IQC fulfills requirements for MEL-4 qualification.

5. ILE Common Core Options. All FA51 officers must complete ILE and achieve MEL-4 qualification before their LTC/O-5 promotion board to be competitive for selection. They should read the latest MILPER message for specific promotion board requirements. Below are the three ILE Common Core options for FA51 officers, listed in order of the number of available seats (highest to lowest), with a table that summarizes the options:

a. Distance Learning (DL). With the Army's discontinuation of the satellite ILE Program, DL is the primary and most common way for FA51 officers to complete the ILE Common Core Course because there are no seat limitations. ILE DL is a self-paced, remote learning program using Army-provided materials and online resources. Starting on the date of enrollment, FA51 officers have up to 36 months to complete all three phases: Foundation, Application and Integration. Completing the ILE Common Core Course via DL, instead of completing it through one of the other resident options, will not prejudice officers for future promotions and CSL boards. FA51 officers will receive credit for the ILE Common Core Course after they complete ILE DL. They must then attend and complete the FA51 IQC course at TAAS to earn MEL-4 qualification.

b. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS).

(1) For this option, FA51 officers must be accepted into an Army DACM-sponsored NPS program (522, 815, or 816) and apply to the DACM Office's Advanced Civil Schooling program. The Army DACM-sponsored NPS programs are full-time, range in length from 12-18 months, and are conducted in residence at Monterey, California. Once they graduate from a DACM sponsored NPS program, FA 51 officers earn MEL-4 qualification and are not required to attend the FA51 IQC.

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(2) FA51 officers who complete the JPME Naval War College Curriculum at NPS receive MEL-4 and JPME I qualification. They do not need to attend FA51 IQC.

(3) If the officer completes a NPS program that is not sponsored by the DACM Office, they must attend FA51 IQC or request an IQC waiver. For more information about IQC waivers, please see paragraph 6 of this memorandum.

c. Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) or Service School Equivalent. CGSOC is the Army's formal, full-time, 10-month resident education program for senior Captains and Majors, conducted at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. CGSOC consists of two components: the 16-week ILE Common Core Course and the 24-week AOWC. There are only a few seats reserved for FA51 officers at CGSOC. Completion of CGSOC at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas will result in immediate MEL-4/JPME I qualification and eliminates the requirement to attend FA51 IQC.

| ILE COMMON CORE OPTION | DELIVERY METHOD | DURATION | IS THE OFFICER REQUIRED TO ATTEND FA51 IQC UPON GRADUATION FROM THIS ILE OPTION? | QUALIFICATION EARNED |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| DL | Online | Up to 36 months | Yes | Once the officer completes ILE DL and FA51 IQC, they will receive MEL-4 qualification. They do not receive JMPE I qualification. |
| NPS | Resident at Monterey, California | 12-18 months | Maybe | <p>If the officer graduates from an Army DACM sponsored NPS program, they will earn MEL-4 qualification and do not need to attend FA51 IQC.</p> <p>If the officer completes the JPME Naval War College Curriculum at NPS, they will receive MEL-4/JPME I qualification and do not need to attend FA51 IQC.</p> <p>If the officer graduates from an NPS program that is not sponsored by the Army DACM Office, they will earn MEL-4 qualification, but they must still attend FA51 IQC. They may request an IQC waiver.</p> |
| CGSOC or Service School Equivalent | Resident at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas | 10 months | No | Upon graduation from CGSOC, the officer earns MEL-4/JMPE I qualification. |

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6. IQC Waivers. Every two years, the Director, Army Acquisition Corps issues Centralized Selection List (CSL) / Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL) manning guidance that discusses ILE and IQC requirements for FA51 officers. This guidance identifies the approval authority for IQC waivers and outlines the waiver process. Officers interested in requesting an IQC waiver should read the latest CSL/MAPL manning guidance for more information on how to submit a waiver.

7. Effective Date and Implementation: This document is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded.

8. For questions about this memorandum, please contact the Army DACM Office Policy Mailbox at usarmy.belvoir.usaasc.mbx.dacm-policies@army.mil.



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