

STAFF ENROLMENT AND STUDY TIME POLICY

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The University is committed to workplace excellence. In order to achieve workplace excellence, the University recognises that staff development through study, either towards academic qualifications or work related professional development, is integral to an employee's effectiveness and satisfaction in the workplace.
- 1.2 To promote staff development through study, the University provides assistance by way of study time and fee remission to eligible employees who choose to undertake academic studies where that study is of direct benefit to the University.
- 1.3 The conditions set out in this Staff Enrolment and Study Time Policy may be altered by the Vice Chancellor at any time. Employees are subject to the conditions of this Policy as amended. Commitments in an employee's individual contract will not be altered by any changes to the conditions in the Policy without the consent of the employee involved.

2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Staff Enrolment and Study Time Policy is designed to encourage employees to enhance their professional development and qualifications by undertaking academic study at the University where that study is relevant and of benefit to the position occupied or likely to be occupied by that employee.
- 2.2 To encourage employees to undertake further study, the University provides assistance to eligible employees of:
 - i) Up to three (3) hours away from duties per week for the purpose of Study Time; and/or
 - ii) Fee tuition assistance ('Fee Remission') towards units taken at the University for the purpose of completing undergraduate or post graduate higher degrees or for professional development only.
- 2.3 For the purpose of this Policy, the following terms apply:

Study Time means time off with pay each week in accordance with clauses 6.1 and 6.2 for the purpose of doing one or more of the activities set out in clause 6.5 and is limited to a maximum of three (3) hours per week.

Manager means Dean, Executive Director or a delegate of a Dean or Executive Director who is responsible for supervising the duties of employees.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1 Study Time and Fee Remission are available to all General and Academic Employees who hold full time or fractional appointments of not less than 0.5 and have, in all cases, completed their probation period.
- 3.2 Unless otherwise agreed, employees are not entitled to Study Time or Fee Remission unless they have completed their six (6) month probation period, for General Employees, and twelve (12) month probation period for Academic Employees.
- 3.3 Except for the provisions relating to academic employees undertaking the Graduate Certificate of University Teaching sessional or fractional employees of 0.5 or less are not entitled to Study Time or Fee Remission.
- 3.4 Except for the requirement in clause 3.1 that employees have, in all cases, completed their probation period, an employee is not required to have served for any further continuous period before being eligible for Study Time or Fee Remission.
- 3.5 An employee's entitlement to take Study Time or enroll in a unit for which they intend to receive a Fee Remission is subject in all cases to an employee first obtaining approval from their Dean, Executive Director or Manager and the Staffing Office in accordance with this Policy.

4. APPROVAL FOR STUDY TIME AND FEE REMISSION

- 4.1 A decision by the Staffing Office to approve an employee's application for Study Time or Fee Remission under this Policy will be determined by the following considerations:
- i) The relevance of the course of study to the position occupied or likely to be occupied by the employee in the course of normal employment progression, or likely to be occupied following a period of staff development;
 - ii) The benefit to the University of the employee undertaking the study;
 - iii) The staffing needs of the University.
- 4.2 In the event the Staffing Office decides not to approve Study Time or Fee Remission, the Staffing Office shall notify the employee in writing of its decision.

5. APPROVED COURSES

- 5.1 For the purpose of this Policy the term **Approved Course** means:
- i) Undergraduate, postgraduate or higher degree, research degree or individual units taken for professional development at the University of Notre Dame Australia;
 - ii) Undergraduate, postgraduate and higher research degree or diploma and post graduate diploma courses at other universities, or nationally accredited courses;

- iii) Associate diploma, certificate and post-certificate courses through TAFE, or nationally accredited courses;
 - iv) School Certificate, Higher School Certificate and Certificate or Diploma Entrance through TAFE, or nationally accredited courses;
 - v) Approved basic literacy and numeracy programs including any bridging or special program for the purpose of sitting Entrance exams;
 - vi) Approved English language courses and skills development programs for people of non English speaking background.
- 5.2 Approved Courses may be undertaken by:
- i) Coursework through face to face instruction;
 - ii) For higher degrees, through research with approved supervisor;
 - iii) Distance education; or
 - iv) Web based education.

6. STUDY TIME

Entitlement

- 6.1 Eligible full time employees enrolled in an Approved Course are entitled to a maximum of three (3) hours Study Time per week throughout the semester in which the Approved Course is conducted. For the purpose of Study Time, a reference to semester includes winter and summer terms.
- 6.2 Eligible fractional employees are entitled to a proportion of the maximum three (3) hours per week for full-time employees based on their fraction. For example, an eligible employee holding a 0.5 fractional appointment would be entitled to 1.5 hours Study Time per week.
- 6.3 Academic employees are entitled to Study Time provided that the use of Study Time does not impinge on their required teaching workload. Academic employees may only take Study Time where the time is taken outside their nominated teaching and consultation hours.
- 6.4 Study Time is a weekly entitlement. Subject to the exception provided for in clause 6.11, the hours an employee is entitled to each week are not cumulative and cannot be accrued. So that an employee who is entitled to Study Time but does not take that Study Time in any one week forgoes that weekly entitlement.

Purpose of Study Time

- 6.5 **Study Time** means time off with pay from work duties. Study Time is limited to Approved Courses and is only available for the purpose of doing one or more of the following during normal working hours:
- i) To attend lectures, tutorials or practical classes as required by the timetable of the University or other educational institution attended;

- ii) For necessary travel time to attend lectures, tutorials or practical classes as required by the timetable of the University or other educational institution attended;
 - iii) To attend compulsory examinations associated with the approved course of study taken;
 - iv) To attend residential schools which are a compulsory part of an approved external course;
 - v) For research and private study associated with examination preparation;
- 6.6 Where classes are available outside normal working hours, employees are expected to attend them in their own time.
- 6.7 Study Time is only available to eligible employees during semester time (including summer and winter terms) and up until the employee has completed the examination with respect to their Approved Course.
- 6.8 An employee's entitlement to Study Time is not cumulative.

Study Time Conditional on Division or School Convenience

- 6.9 In all cases, the granting of Study Time must be convenient to the employee's Office or School and is subject to approval by the employee's Dean, Executive Director or Manager.

Variation of Working Hours

- 6.10 Generally, an employee is not entitled to any Study Time greater than the maximum Study Time provided for in clauses 6.1 and 6.2. Where an employee needs additional time, the employee must discuss this with their Dean, Executive Director or Manager.
- 6.11 The Dean, Executive Director or Manager may approve the taking of additional Study Time provided the taking of additional Study Time does not inconvenience the employee's Department or School and the employee makes up the additional time in the following ways:
- i) By agreeing to forgoing Study Time in subsequent weeks, provided those weeks are weeks in which the employee would have had available Study Time (e.g. within semester time);
 - ii) By agreeing to forgoing Study Time in advance provided those weeks are weeks in which the employee would have had available Study Time (e.g. within semester time);
 - iii) By working additional hours outside the employee's normal working hours.
- 6.12 Where an employee requires additional Study Time and it is not possible or practicable for the employee to make up the additional time in accordance with the provisions set out in clause 6.11, an employee may, subject to the approval of

their Dean, Executive Director or Manager take Annual Leave or Leave Without Pay or a combination of both to offset the additional leave required.

- 6.13 Where a Dean, Executive Director or Manager approves the taking of additional Study Time in accordance with clauses 6.11 and 6.12 above, the approval and the arrangement for making up the additional Study Time must be evidenced in writing and signed by the employee and their Dean, Executive Director or Manager.
- 6.14 Where an unexpected event occurs that requires an employee to stay at the University and complete work urgently, then the employee must postpone or cancel their Study Time in order to meet the requirements of their work unit. Subject to agreement by their Dean, Executive Director or Manager, the employee may be permitted to take their Study Time at a later time in the week to attend a repeat class or undertake private study for the purpose only of catching up on the forgone Study Time.

Additional Study Time to attend Examination

- 6.15 Where an employee must attend an examination in relation to a unit taken in an Approved Course and the return travel time and time to sit the examination exceeds the maximum amount of Study Time per week, then the employee shall be given up to half a day off with pay from work for the purpose of travelling and sitting the examination.

Study Time Conditional on Satisfactory Progress

- 6.16 An employee's entitlement to Study Time is, in all cases, subject to the employee making satisfactory progress with their studies. For an employee to make satisfactory progress, an employee must gain at least a pass in every unit for which Study Time applies.

6.16.1 Employees are expected, as far as practicable, to undertake an equal amount of formal study in their own time.

Study Time for Failed Units

- 6.17 Where an employee fails a unit in their Approved Course and the employee has taken Study Time in relation to the study of that unit, then subject to clause 6.18 ii) below the employee will not be entitled to any further Study Time for the purpose of repeating that unit at a later time.
- 6.18 Study Time is only available for repeating a failed unit if:
- i) No prior Study Time has been taken for the unit; or
 - ii) The employee can show to the satisfaction of their Dean, Executive Director or Manager that the reasons for not passing the unit at first attempt were outside of his/her control.
- 6.18.1 In determining whether an employee's reason for failing was outside his or her control, their Dean, Executive Director or Manager will take into consideration whether the employee's work load has prevented them from making satisfactory progress in the unit.

7. NOTICE WHERE EMPLOYEE DISCONTINUES STUDY

- 7.1 Where an employee discontinues an Approved Course or a unit in an Approved Course and that employee has taken Study Time in relation to that unit or course, the employee must notify their Dean, Executive Director or Manager immediately.

8. HOW TO APPLY FOR STUDY TIME

- 8.1 Any Study Time taken must first be approved by an employee's Dean, Executive Director or Manager and the Staffing Office.
- 8.2 Where an employee intends to take Study Time, it is expected that the employee discuss their application with their Dean, Executive Director or Manager no later than three (3) weeks prior to the commencement of the unit to which the Study Time is to apply.
- 8.3 Once the application has been discussed, an employee must submit to their Dean, Executive Director or Manager no later than three (3) weeks prior to the commencement of the unit the following:
- Proof of course enrolment, subjects taken, and the total hours per week required for class attendance (or research in the case of higher degrees by research); and
 - A completed Application for Study Time Form indicating the total amount of Study Time per week the employee is entitled to.
- 8.4 An employee's Dean, Executive Director or Manager must sign the Application for Study Time Form and forward it as soon as possible to the Staffing Office for processing and final approval.
- 8.5 In the event that the employee's Application for Study Time is not approved, the Staffing Office shall notify the employee in writing of its decision.

9. FEE REMISSION

- 9.1 An employee's entitlement to Fee Remission in accordance with this Policy is at all times at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor and may be altered at any time.
- 9.2 For the purpose of this section, **Fee Remission** means payment by the University of tuition fees relating to the particular unit studies including Higher Education Contribution Scheme fees (HECS), full fees, extension fees and/or VET.

Eligible Employees Entitlement to Fee Remission

- 9.3. Eligible Employees who enroll in Academic Degrees at the University will be entitled to full Fee Remission for two standard semester length units per year.
- 9.4. Eligible employees who enrol in Post Graduate Higher Research Degrees at the University will be entitled to Fee Remission for that Degree of an amount to the equivalent of two post graduate course work units in the discipline to which they are enrolled per year.

- 9.5. An employee's entitlement to Fee Remission applies to units studied in University semester and winter or summer terms.
- 9.6. Employees who are encouraged to undertake units for the purposes of vocational training including, but not limited to, Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Certificate of Theology may be entitled to Fee Remission for those units in accordance with clause 9.3 above, but will not be entitled to any additional Fee Remission for the purpose of undertaking those units.
- 9.7. An eligible employee's entitlement to Fee Remission is limited to two standard semester length units per year or in the case of Post Graduate Higher Research Degrees, a Fee Remission for that Degree of an amount to the equivalent to two standard semester length units per year.
- 9.8. Where an employee enrolls in two standard semester length units in a semester that employee may claim Fee Remission in relation to both those units provided that the employee has not claimed any Fee Remission for any other units studied that year and does not claim any further entitlement to Fee Remission for any other units taken in that year.
- 9.9. Any entitlement to Fee Remission under clauses 9.3 or 9.4 will be subject to approval by the Staffing Office.

Graduate Certificate in University Teaching - Fee Remission for sessional, fractional and full-time employees

- 9.10. Generally, fractional employees holding appointments of less than 0.5 are not entitled to Fee Remission for any units undertaken at the University. However, to encourage academic employees to enhance their teaching skills, academic employees of lesser fraction will be entitled to Fee Remission for one standard semester length unit per semester when they enrol in units towards completing the Graduate Certificate in University Teaching only.
- 9.11. Academic employees holding sessional appointments may apply to the Provost for Fee Remission for one standard semester length unit per semester towards completing the Graduate Certificate in University Teaching. In deciding whether to approve the Fee Remission, the Provost will take into account advice from the School that the employee is a current teacher who is expected to benefit from participation in the Graduate Certificate in University Teaching and is likely to be of ongoing value to the University.
- 9.12. Sessional appointments and fractional of less than 0.5 appointments will not be entitled to Study Time for the purpose of undertaking a Graduate Certificate in University Teaching.

Entitlement to Fee Remission Limited to Approved Course at the University of Notre Dame Australia

- 9.13 An eligible employee is only entitled to Fee Remission for units enrolled in Approved Courses at The University of Notre Dame Australia.

9.14 No Fee Remission or any other fee assistance shall apply to units taken in Approved Courses at any other University, Academic institution, College or School or to any units taken by employees on a cross institutional enrolment basis.

9.15 Subject to clause 9.8, where an employee enrolls in more than one standard semester length unit per semester at the University, the employee will be liable for the costs of any additional units taken.

Approval Conditional on Relevance of Course and satisfactory progress

9.16 An employee's entitlement to Fee Remission in accordance with clause 9.3 or 9.4 above is not limited to units enrolled in for the purpose of completing an Undergraduate or Post Graduate Degree at the University. An employee may claim the Fee Remission for enrollment in a unit in an Approved Course where the purpose of studying that unit is for professional development only.

9.17 An employee's entitlement to a Fee Remission is not automatic and is subject always to approval by the Staffing Office. Approval will be determined by the following considerations:

- The relevance of the course of study to the position occupied or likely to be occupied by the applicant in the course of normal employment progression, or likely to be occupied following a period of staff development and the value to the University;
- The employee's satisfactory progress in previous units in which Fee Remission has been claimed; and
- The staffing needs of the University.

9.18 An employee's entitlement to Fee Remission is, in all cases, subject to the employee making satisfactory progress with their studies. For an employee to make satisfactory progress, an employee must gain at least a pass in every unit for which the Fee Remission applies.

9.19 Employees are expected, as far as practicable, to undertake an equal amount of formal study in their own time.

Fee Remission for Failed Units

9.20 Where an employee fails a unit in their Approved Course and the employee has been entitled to a Fee Remission in relation to the study of that unit, then subject to clause 9.21 ii) below, the employee will not be entitled to any further Fee Remission for the purpose of repeating that unit at a later time.

9.21 Fee Remission is only available for a failed unit if:

- i) No prior Fee Remission has been taken for the unit; or
- ii) The employee can show to the satisfaction of their Dean, Executive Director or Manager that the reasons for not passing the unit at first attempt were outside of his/her control.

9.21.1 In determining whether an employee's reason for failing was outside his or her control the Dean, Executive Director or Manager will take into consideration whether the employee's workload has prevented them from making satisfactory progress in the unit.

Employees Contribution

9.22 While the University will meet the cost of an eligible employee's academic fees in accordance with clauses 9.3 and 9.4 above, an employee will be liable for any Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) under existing taxation legislation that may apply to the unit fee.

9.23 The amount of FBT payable by an employee in relation to any unit or course for which an employee intends to claim a Fee Remission from the University may be varied from time to time by the Australian Taxation Office. Employees considering enrolling in degrees at the University for which they intend to claim a Fee Remission are under an obligation to discuss their liability for FBT with the Accountant in the Finance Office before enrolling in any such course.

9.24 Employees eligible for Fee Remission are not exempt from paying at enrolment the normal compulsory subscriptions required by all students of the University.

Cost Recovery

9.25 An employee's entitlement to a Fee Remission for any unit(s) studied at the University is conditional on the continued employment of that employee at the University. A person's entitlement to Fee Remission ceases upon that person leaving the employ of the University.

9.26 Where an employee is undertaking a unit to which they have claimed Fee Remission towards and that employee leaves the employ of the University before completing the unit, the employee may continue that unit to completion. However, the employee's entitlement to continue the unit will be conditional on the employee paying to the University an amount equivalent to the cost of the unit fee calculated on a pro rata basis from the date of termination until the date the semester ends for that unit.

9.27 If an employee withdraws from an enrolled unit after the Higher Education Contribution Scheme or other relevant cut off dates applicable for each semester, whether because the employee leaves the employment of the University or is unable or unwilling to complete the unit, the employee may be required to pay to the University the amount equivalent to the cost of the unit fee calculated on a pro rata basis from the date of withdrawal until the date the semester ends for that unit.

9.28 Where an employee can satisfy the Staffing Office that special circumstances exist such as illness, family circumstances or University workload which prevented the employee from continuing their studies in a unit for which a Fee Remission was claimed, the University may agree in writing to waive the requirement in clause 9.27 above for the employee to pay to the University an amount equivalent to the cost of the unit fee. However, where the University agrees to waive the requirement in clause 9.27, the employee will not be entitled to any further Fee Remission for the purpose of repeating that unit at a later time.

- 9.29 It is a requirement of any employee enrolled in a unit in which they are receiving a Fee Remission to advise the Dean of the School responsible for their study and the Staffing Office immediately of any changes to his or her enrolment.
- 9.30 Where an employee withdraws from an enrolled unit for which they have claimed Fee Remission or has left the employ of the University but wishes to remain enrolled in a unit for which they have claimed a Fee Remission towards and the University requires that employee to pay an amount equivalent to the cost of the unit fee in accordance with clause 9.26 or 9.27, the University may recover that amount by way of a deduction from the employee's salary or any other termination payments due to that employee.

Procedure for Claiming Fee Remission

- 9.31 An employee's entitlement to Fee Remission under clauses 9.3 and 9.4 is subject to approval by the Staffing Office.
- 9.32 An employee's entitlement to a Fee Remission is subject to the employee gaining admission to the unit or Approved Course in which they intend to claim a Fee Remission.
- 9.33 Prior to seeking approval for Fee Remission as required under clause 9.31 above, an employee must first complete an Application for Admission Form to study at the University and submit this to the Admissions Office, Prospective Students.
- 9.34 Once an employee has received an offer for admission to the University, the employee shall submit to the Staffing Office no later than three (3) weeks prior to the commencement of the unit the following:
- A completed Application for Unit Enrolment for Staff Members (Unit Enrolment Form) signed by the Dean of the School responsible for the Degree for approval by the Staffing Office.
 - A copy of the employee's offer for admission.
- 9.35 In the event that the employee's Application for Unit Enrolment is not approved, the Staffing Office shall notify the employee in writing of its decision.

10. TRAINEESHIPS

- 10.1 Where an employee is employed by the University as a trainee and specific requirements for study are attached to their appointment, study time will be approved according to the provisions of this scheme and/or the applicable industrial award or agreement.
- 10.2 The continuing employment of a trainee shall be subject to satisfactory service as well as to satisfactory progress in the course undertaken by the trainee.

11. REVIEW OF STUDY PROGRESS

- 11.1 The progress of each employee undertaking an Approved Course or unit of study to which any of the entitlements under this Policy applies will be reviewed at the end of each semester by the employee's Dean, Executive Director or Manager.
- 11.2 Where an employee has not made satisfactory progress in the Approved Course or unit of study to which any of the entitlements under this Policy apply or has not abided by the conditions contained in this Policy, the Staffing Office reserves the right to discontinue the employee's entitlements under this Policy.

For Further information on the provisions of this policy, please contact the Staffing Office, the Admissions Office or the Prospective Students Office.

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Responsible Officers:	Jane Erickson, Drafting Sarah Chaney & Celia Hammond, Review Helene Bourgeois, Tracking & Process
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Related Forms:	Application for Unit Enrolment for Staff Members Form Application for Staff Study Time Form