

Policy:

Study Support

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Audience: Employees

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Policy Sub-category: Human
Resources

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1 OBJECTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University's Objects are defined in Section 5 of its Act of Parliament:

The Objects of the University are:

- (a) the provision of university education, within a context of Catholic faith and values; and
- (b) the provision of an excellent standard of -
 - i. teaching, scholarship and research;
 - ii. training for the professions; and
 - iii. pastoral care for its students.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1** To encourage employees to undertake further education to enhance their professional and career development and maximise their contribution to the achievement of the University's objectives.
- 2.2** This policy outlines the study support arrangements available to employees to access study leave and financial assistance for study.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1** This policy applies to all academic and professional employees employed on a continuing basis or a fixed-term contract of 12 months or more.

4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1** The University is committed to lifelong learning and encourages employees to continuously develop their knowledge, skills and effectiveness through professional growth and development.
- 4.2** The University provides study support to eligible employees to undertake an approved program of study on a part-time basis, that is directly related to an employee's current position or career progression, and benefits both the University and the employee.
- 4.3** An approved program of study includes courses that will lead to a recognised qualification either from a University, TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation.
- 4.4** The study support available includes:
 - 4.4.1 Study Leave to attend and travel to classes and exams, complete assessments or private study; and
 - 4.4.2 Financial Assistance for Study to assist with the payment of fees (via reimbursement) for employees who successfully complete an approved course at *The University of Notre Dame Australia*.
- 4.5** Employees should discuss with their manager their professional and career development goals as part of the Performance Development process, including their plans to undertake further education and to apply for study support.
- 4.6** Study support must be approved prior to the commencement of the course to be eligible for study leave or financial assistance for study. Retrospective approval will not be granted.
- 4.7** Employee's study progress will be monitored as part of the Performance Development process and further study support will be subject to:
 - 4.7.1 the employee providing evidence of successful progress with studies; and
 - 4.7.2 satisfactory performance of duties.

5 STUDY LEAVE

- 5.1 Employees employed on a full-time or part-time 0.5 FTE or greater basis are eligible to apply for study leave.
- 5.2 Eligible employees may apply for study leave of up to 4 hours per week (or pro rata for part-time employees) to attend and travel to classes, complete assessments, or undertake private study for a course that has been approved for study support.
- 5.3 Study leave is only available during the weeks the course (including exams) is being conducted.
- 5.4 Alternatively, subject to the approval of their manager, employees may apply to use their study leave in a block(s) of up to 10 days per year to study intensively.
- 5.5 Employees may also apply for an additional half day of study leave for each exam.
- 5.6 Study leave is not cumulative and may only be used within the study period approved.
- 5.7 Where classes are available outside normal working hours, employees are expected to attend them in their own time.
- 5.8 Study leave for repeat courses will only be granted if the employee has not previously been granted study leave for that course.
- 5.9 Additional time off to support study may be taken as annual leave, however, is subject to operational requirements and the approval of their manager.
- 5.10 The timing of when study leave is taken will be agreed between the employee and their manager and is subject to operational requirements.
- 5.11 Employees are to record their periods of study leave by completing leave applications in PeopleSoft.
- 5.12 Employees who discontinue a course for which study leave has been granted must immediately advise their manager and People and Culture. Utilisation of study leave for the discontinued course ceases immediately on withdrawal.

6 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR STUDY

- 6.1 Employees employed on a full-time or part-time 0.5 FTE or greater basis are eligible to apply for financial assistance for study for up to 2 courses per year.
- 6.2 Employees employed on a fraction less than part-time 0.5 FTE are eligible to apply for financial assistance for study for up to 1 course per year.
- 6.3 Eligible employees who successfully complete a course at *The University of Notre Dame Australia* that has been approved for study support may apply for financial assistance to reimburse course fees.
- 6.4 Employees undertaking a course¹ in one of the following foundational programs of strategic importance to the University are eligible for a full reimbursement of their course fees:
 - 6.4.1 Graduate Certificate in Aboriginal Studies
 - 6.4.2 Graduate Certificate in Business
 - 6.4.3 Graduate Certificate in Catholic Leadership
 - 6.4.4 Graduate Certificate in Health Professional Education
 - 6.4.5 Graduate Certificate of Learning & Teaching for Higher Education
 - 6.4.6 Graduate Certificate in Liberal Arts (Philosophy & Theology)
 - 6.4.7 Graduate Certificate in Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- 6.5 For all other courses completed at *The University of Notre Dame Australia*, employees are eligible for a partial reimbursement of course fees of up to a maximum of \$1,000 per semester.

¹ Subject to their availability.

- 6.6** Professional employees studying at other Universities, TAFEs or Registered Training Organisations will be eligible for partial reimbursement of fees up to a maximum of \$1,000 per semester for up to 3 semesters per year.
- 6.7** Financial assistance for study will be paid as a full or partial reimbursement of course fees at the successful completion of a course.
- 6.8** Financial assistance for study is available whether an employee chooses to pay the course fees upfront or defer the payment by incurring a commonwealth debt.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Employees are responsible for:

- 7.1.1 discussing their performance development goals and aspirations with their manager and taking advantage of opportunities for development, such as study support;
- 7.1.2 recording periods of study leave in PeopleSoft;
- 7.1.3 ensuring all study support applications are made in accordance with this Policy.

7.2 Managers are responsible for:

- 7.2.1 facilitating performance development conversations, reviewing study progress and aligning development plans to support employees to achieve professional and career development goals, which are aligned to the strategic objectives and needs of the University;
- 7.2.2 determining whether a course is directly related to an employee's current position or career progression, and benefits both the University and the employee;
- 7.2.3 ensuring all study support applications are assessed and managed in accordance with this Policy;
- 7.2.4 confirming that employees are enrolled in the program and course(s) indicated on their application for study support.

7.3 People and Culture is responsible for:

- 7.3.1 providing advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy;
- 7.3.2 monitoring and reporting on participation in study support;
- 7.3.3 processing financial assistance for study reimbursements.

8 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 8.1** *The University of Notre Dame Australia Staff Enterprise Agreement 2018 – 2021*
- 8.2** *Procedure: Study Support*
- 8.3** *Policy: Leave*

9 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- 9.1 Approved program of study** means courses that will lead to a recognised award/qualification either from a University, TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation.
- 9.2 Course** means an individual course of study or subject within a program.
- 9.3 Program** means a program of study, comprised of a series of courses, which leads to the conferral of an award/qualification.
- 9.4 Successful completion of a course** means attaining a minimum of a pass grade.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	08/01/2007	Vice Chancellor	Policy created.

2	22/11/2022	Vice Chancellor	Replaces the Staff Enrolment and Study Time Policy. Updates and simplifies policy, eligibility criteria, updates the weekly study time available to match the Enterprise Agreement provision, changes from a fee remission process to reimbursement on successful completion and takes a strategic approach our investment in study support by categorising UNDA programs eligible for full and partial fee reimbursement.
3	7/11/2023	Acting PVC People and Culture	Minor amendment – provision of partial reimbursement of fees for professional staff studying at another university, TAFE or RTO (new clause 6.6).
4	29/2/24	Acting Chief People Officer	Minor amendment –clause 4.6 amended to allow greater flexibility in timeframe for submitting applications for financial assistance.