Study Assistance Procedure

1 Purpose

To encourage and support University Employees to obtain qualifications through further education.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Employees who hold a continuing, contingent-funded, or fixed-term appointment of more than 12 months' duration.

3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines the process and entitlements for University Employees wishing to undertake an approved program of study.

4 Procedures

4.1 Eligible programs of study

Study assistance is limited to a program of study for the Award of postgraduate qualifications, degrees, diplomas, certificates (including TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation), or other approved qualifications.

The study, or underpinning skills to be develop as part of the study, must be related directly to the Employee's current primary duties and/or likely career progression within the University.

For the Employee to be eligible for assistance, the study must be undertaken at the University of Southern Queensland except where the University does not offer a comparable program. Employees undertaking study at an institution other than the University of Southern Queensland must obtain approval from the Delegate using the approved application form.

Study may be undertaken by on-campus, external or online mode. Decisions about Enrolment will normally emerge from the setting of goals in the performance review process or other Employee development discussions between the Employee and Supervisor.

4.2 Forms of study assistance

Study assistance includes two forms of support for eligible Employees: financial assistance and time release. Where an eligible Employee requests both forms of study assistance, the

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Delegate must approve both forms of assistance. Further Information is available in the relevant knowledge article.

4.2.1 Time release

Employees appointed on a part-time basis will receive time release on a pro rata basis only, as determined by their fraction of appointment.

The maximum study assistance available for time release assistance is six Courses per year per eligible Employee.

Time release is available to the equivalent of two hours per Course per week with a maximum of four hours per week (except during study breaks wherein no time release is available) regardless of the mode of study approved.

The time release must be used for study purposes (e.g. attendance at lectures/tutorials on or off-campus, attendance at residential schools or examinations, private study, or research).

The leave may be accumulated, but not beyond the Study Period of accrual.

The manner in which the leave is to be taken must be determined and approved by the Delegate at the time of application for study assistance.

Time release for study purposes must be taken within the Employee's normal working hours and does not contribute towards any additional hours worked by the Employee (e.g. overtime, time off in lieu).

Employees undertaking a micro-credential/digital badge for credit (e.g. UniSQ Upskill Course) are not eligible for time release.

4.2.2 Financial assistance

The University recognises that many Employees today have a range of personal circumstances and employment arrangements. In recognition of this diversity and to underline the value of further education and qualifications for Employees, all eligible Employees will receive the full rate of financial assistance regardless of their fraction of appointment.

The maximum study assistance available for financial assistance is six Courses per Academic Year per eligible Employee.

Financial assistance consists of a taxable allowance paid through the University payroll upon evidence of successful completion to a maximum of six Courses per year regardless of the fee status or structure, payable on proof of successful completion of the Course/s of study from the institution. No other financial assistance will be provided.

Taxable allowances towards financial assistance for study purposes are available as follows:

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Approved program of study	Level of financial assistance (taxable allowance amount)
Micro-credential/digital badge for credit (e.g. UniSQ Upskill Course)	$300 per successfully completed micro-credential/digital badge for credit (e.g., UniSQ Upskill Course)
Diploma, Certificate or other similar program (TAFE or other RTO)	$625 per successfully completed Course
Undergraduate and CPA programs	$1,500 per successfully completed Course
Postgraduate programs	$1,875 per successfully completed Course

Financial assistance is not available for Higher Degree by Research programs.

Financial assistance may be used towards payment of any expenses associated with completing approved programs of study including Course fees, textbooks and other study materials and/or other associated fees and charges. Financial assistance is not necessarily expected or intended to cover all the costs incurred.

In cases of exceptional financial hardship, an Employee may apply to the Vice-Chancellor for alternative arrangements for financial support.

The cost of financial assistance will be met by the central University study assistance fund administered by the People Portfolio. The ongoing level of assistance is dependent on the annual allocated budget in the central People Portfolio study assistance fund and the quantum of claims and will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine ongoing financial sustainability.

Financial assistance will only apply to Courses where an Employee has personally paid for the Course fee/s and has not received other University funded financial support for their studies, for example, payment by a Scholarship.

Employees should seek professional financial advice in relation to their personal taxation circumstances in regard to the amount claimable as a tax deduction in the relevant tax year. The Employee is responsible for retaining the appropriate documentation to enable them to comply with their personal taxation affairs.

4.3 How to apply for study assistance

Applications for study assistance are to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the Study Period using the approved application form.

Applications must be accompanied by proof of Enrolment in a Course.

An Employee's Supervisor and the Delegate will be required to approve the application.

Applications for study assistance must be approved by the Delegate prior to the commencement

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of the Study Period.

Study assistance approval will not normally be backdated.

In the case where an application for study assistance is not approved, the grounds for refusal will be provided to the applicant by the Delegate and the application forwarded to the People Portfolio for review and archival purposes.

The Chief People Officer will provide written advice of the Decision for new programs of study, including the level of University assistance, to the Employee and the Delegate.

Changes to approved study assistance (e.g. changes to program of study or study assistance requested) are required to be submitted two weeks prior to commencement of the relevant Study Period. Employees are not required to seek ongoing approval when the originally approved program of study and study assistance does not change. Changes to the Courses to be studied or changes to the timing of when Courses will be studied, do not require another approval if the Courses form part of an acceptable Enrolment pattern for the originally approved program of study and are within the guidelines of the originally approved study assistance.

In the event that an Employee with approved study assistance commences in a new position at the University, the Employee will retain the approval until the end of the approved Study Period. Further study assistance will require another application to be approved by the Supervisor and Delegate of the new position/promotion level.

Where an Employee resigns or has their appointment terminated by the University prior to the end of the Semester of study, the Employee will no longer be eligible to receive any form of study assistance.

4.4 How to claim financial assistance

An eligible Employee will receive a taxable allowance paid through the University payroll system up to the agreed financial assistance limit upon the successful completion of the approved Course/s (verified by Supervisor). To receive the taxable allowance, an Employee must submit:

- the approved claim form within 30 days of receipt of official Course/s results; and
- evidence of successful completion (pass) of the approved Course/s.

Employees who have received study assistance are requested to forward a copy of their completed qualification to the People Portfolio for record-keeping purposes.

4.5 Terminology

University Terminology	Equivalent Other Terminology

Unit	Credit Point
Course	Unit
Program	Course

4.6 Delegations

Position	Delegation
Category 4 Delegate	Approve study assistance applications.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer
Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Professional Development Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	15/4/2024
Effective Date	15/4/2024
Review Date	15/4/2029
Relevant Legislation	*Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986* Enterprise Agreement
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register

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Related Policies	
Related Procedures	
Related forms, publications and websites	Study Assistance Application and Claim Form Study Assistance Knowledge Article
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Academic Year A period of time consisting of Semesters and Study Periods that all commence in the same calendar year. Assessment The process of evaluating the extent to which Students have achieved the Learning Outcomes of a Course. Course A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Study Period, in which the Student enrols, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade. Delegate (noun) Delegate (noun) means the officer, Employee or committee of the University to whom, or to which, a delegation of authority has been made under this Policy. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Enrolment The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year. Enterprise Agreement University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026.

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Expenditure

Decreases in economic benefits during the Reporting Period in the form of outflows or depletions of Assets or incurrences of liabilities that result in decreases in equity. This encompasses losses as well as expenses that arise in the ordinary course of business.

Information

Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.

Procedure

An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy.

Scholarship

A Scholarship is Student recognition, typically based on Academic Merit, which provides a financial grant to a Student to undertake or complete a program of study at the University over a nominated period of time, in accordance with the selection criteria. A Scholarship may take the form of periodic payments to the Student or a reduction in specified costs, such as tuition fees for the duration of the Scholarship.

Study Period

The period during which a Course or study unit is offered. Examples of Study Period include, but are not limited to, semesters, trimesters, blocks, intensives and sessions.

University

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Supervisor

Any person responsible for leading the activities of others. In the context of this Procedure, a Supervisor includes Employees at any classification level or title who have responsibilities for leading,

	managing or supervising work teams and/or individual Employees.
Keywords	Study Assistance, Professional Development, Further Education, qualification
Record No	13/448PL

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