

Financial Assistance for Staff Studying at UTS Vice-Chancellor's Directive

Abstract

Centrally funded financial assistance may be provided to staff studying at UTS. This directive covers eligibility for and level of financial assistance, the conditions applicable and how to apply.

Dates	Directive or amendment approved	01/09/2008
	Directive or amendment takes effect	01/09/2008
	Directive is due for review (up to five years)	09/2013
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor	
Implementation Officer	Manager, Staff Services	
Relevant to	All staff	
Related documents	Financial Assistance for Staff to Undertake Further Study — Guidelines (PDF 94kb) Study time (restricted access: Staff Connect) Study Time for Support Staff Vice-Chancellor's Directive Study Time for Professional Staff Procedures (PDF 165kb)	
Legislation	Australian Taxation Law (see ATO website)	
File number	90/380	
Superseded documents	Financial Assistance for Staff Studying at UTS Policy	

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1. Purpose

UTS supports and encourages the development of its staff. One of the University's key objectives is to develop an environment of ongoing individual, team and organisation learning. As part of this strategy, UTS maintains a central fund that provides financial assistance to staff studying award courses at UTS.

This directive outlines the conditions under which this assistance is granted. To complement this strategy, individual work areas may wish to provide financial support

to staff in areas that fall outside this directive, ie support for staff studying at institutions other than UTS or to supplement the financial assistance provided for in this directive. This directive should be read in conjunction with the guidelines on [Financial Assistance for Staff to Undertake Further Study](#) (PDF 94kb), which includes the provisions for staff studying outside UTS.

2. Scope

All full-time, part-time and sessional / part-year staff appointed:

- (a) for an indefinite period
- (b) on a fixed-term contract in excess of 12 months, or
- (c) on successive fixed-term contracts (excluding casual employment) without a break in employment, with continuous service in excess of 12 months

are eligible to apply for financial assistance under this directive.

However, for the higher level of support offered to some staff undertaking higher research degrees (refer below) it is expected that the expertise they gain from the course would be of significant benefit to the University during the life of their contract. This means that staff on fixed-term contracts will need to have sufficient service remaining on their contracts to contribute to the faculty/centre's research profile into the future.

Casual staff are not eligible for financial assistance under this directive. However, longstanding casual academics may be eligible for financial support to complete the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, Teaching and Learning, if this is deemed to be of benefit to the University. Such requests must be endorsed by the faculty and the Institute of Interactive Media and Learning.

Staff who commence employment after already commencing an award course at UTS will be eligible for financial assistance for that semester provided they commenced employment within one month of the census date.

3. Directive principles

3.1 All staff

Upon successful completion of the semester, staff are able to claim reimbursement of their course fees up to a maximum of \$1000 per semester (autumn, winter, spring or summer) with a maximum of \$2000 being reimbursed in any one academic year. For full-year subjects staff may apply to be reimbursed at the end of each semester. In the case of courses attracting HECS, staff will be paid the equivalent of the upfront HECS liability to the maximum amount as specified above. Also, payment is made regardless of whether the staff member chooses to defer payment of HECS.

Eligible staff are not required to pay the student union service fee as the University pays for all such staff to be members of the Union. Staff are liable for all other fees.

3.2 Staff undertaking research higher degrees

As part of UTS's strategy to develop and enhance its academic research profile, staff whose positions contribute directly to a faculty or centre's academic research will be supported to develop their research skills through the completion of relevant higher degrees by research.

These staff will occupy UTS-sponsored research degree places rather than government-funded HECS exempt places. Such places will attract a 40 per cent discount on fees as part of the program of research degree merit scholarships. UTS will sponsor the remaining 60 per cent of fees for eligible staff who must demonstrate their direct contribution to the University's academic research profile and, in the case of staff on fixed-term contracts, their capacity to continue to contribute (refer to section 2, Scope, above).

Staff will be eligible for sponsorship only for the maximum period of candidature for the degree they are undertaking. Continued sponsorship after this period will be at the discretion of the University. Staff undertaking research higher degrees who are not eligible for this level of support may still apply for the financial assistance (up to \$2000 per academic year) which is available to other staff.

(Special arrangements exist for staff employed prior to 1 January 1997 and who commenced their UTS studies prior to this date. For further information refer to the Human Resources Unit.)

4. Directive statements

4.1 The effect of leave without pay and absence on exchange/secondment on a staff member's entitlement to financial assistance

Staff who take more than one month's leave without pay (excluding parental and sick leave without pay) will not be entitled to financial assistance for the semester(s) in which leave without pay falls unless exceptional circumstances prevail. An example of an exceptional circumstance would be where a staff member with more than five years service takes six months leave without pay for the express purpose of completing an award course which has a thesis component and is directly related to the staff member's job. The mutual benefits to UTS and the staff member would be significant enough to warrant financial support.

4.2 How to apply for financial assistance

Staff should apply for financial assistance and have their courses approved prior to commencing a course. Fresh approval needs to be obtained at the start of each semester. Staff new to UTS should have their courses approved for financial assistance as soon as possible after commencing employment. Once formal approval is granted, reimbursement of fees can be claimed upon successful completion of the semester and sponsorship for higher research degrees confirmed prior to enrolment.

4.3 Reimbursement and sponsorship of fees

Staff (other than those being sponsored to undertake higher research degrees) will be able to claim their entitlement to financial assistance upon the successful completion of the semester. Tax may or may not be payable depending upon the circumstances (refer to the guidelines on [Financial Assistance for Staff to Undertake Further Study](#) (PDF 94kb), which outlines the conditions under which tax is payable).

Assistance will be paid at the end of each semester regardless of whether the staff member chooses to pay the HECS up front or defer payment. Staff undertaking full-year subjects may be reimbursed at the end of the semester subject to the appropriate grading or satisfactory progress report being sighted. Sponsored staff undertaking higher research degrees will not be invoiced for this portion of their fees.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Authority to approve financial assistance for eligible staff rests with the appropriate Dean/Director (or equivalent) who will rely on the recommendation of the supervisor/manager of the staff member's work area.

Supervisors are responsible for:

- (a) recommending the relevance of the course proposed, ie whether the course will:
 - assist the staff member's professional and/or career development
 - meet the University's capability needs
 - develop capabilities relevant to the higher education sector
- (b) confirming that staff members are enrolled in the course and subject(s) indicated on their applications for financial assistance.

Authority to approve continued sponsorship of higher research degrees beyond the maximum period of candidature rests with the Director, Human Resources or nominee.

6. Version control and change history

Date	Version	Approved by, resolution no.	Amendment
24/04/1997	1	Council	
14/11/2001	2	Council	Clarification of financial assistance for staff undertaking research higher degrees.
18/06/2008	2	Council, COU/08-3/51	Rescinded by Council effective from the date of issue of a Vice-Chancellor's operational directive.
08/2008	3	Vice-Chancellor	Renamed as a directive, title changes and reformatting.