
Study Assistance Guidelines for Staff Members Enrolling in Tertiary Study

Human Resources Policy Group

1. Purpose

The Victoria University of Wellington ('the University') supports and encourages staff members in the achievement of formal qualifications related to enhancing the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their current or future roles at the University. Staff are eligible to apply for study assistance and the University has the discretion to approve a request where it advances appropriate development for the staff member and overall organisational performance. Study assistance may be comprised of a contribution to the tuition fee and/or leave to attend classes and examinations.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information about staff eligibility for study assistance, which supports the [Staff Development Policy](#).

2. Organisational Scope

The Study Assistance Guidelines are University-wide guidelines, which apply to all permanent staff members, and those employed on a fixed-term contract of greater than 12 months.

3. Definitions

Development Plan/Career Development Plan:	A Development Plan/Career Development Plan is a statement agreed at least annually between a staff member and their Manager, which sets out the directions for a staff member's development, identifies the resources that are to be allocated for that development, and the timeframe for development.
Manager:	A Manager is any person who has full Human Resource responsibilities for direct reports, which includes: the Senior Leadership Team; Heads of School; Central Service Unit Directors; Central Service Unit associate Directors/Managers; Directors of Institutes and Centres; School Managers; and Faculty Managers.
Tuition Fee:	Tuition fee component of course fees not including compulsory levies or other charges.
Compulsory Levies:	Include Student Services Levy and Student Assistance Levy.
Other Charges:	Include miscellaneous administration fees and course materials charges.

4. Guidelines

4.1 Eligibility for Study Assistance

- a. Staff members undertaking approved Victoria University of Wellington study may apply for study assistance provided that:
 - (i) They meet the New Zealand Government criteria for domestic fees rates;
 - (ii) They are permanent staff members, or employed on a fixed-term contract of greater than 12 months;
 - (iii) They have made satisfactory progress in any previous trimesters when the University has provided study assistance; and
 - (iv) The amount of study being undertaken is consonant with their ability to carry out paid duties.
- b. Staff members employed on fractional appointments may apply to receive study assistance on a pro-rata basis.
- c. Staff members on any form of leave without pay are not entitled to receive study assistance.
- d. Staff members commencing leave without pay part way through a period of study should receive any contribution to the tuition fee pro-rata for the period of the time worked over the full period of study.
- e. The staff member's manager must approve requests for study assistance.

4.2 Approved Study Assistance

- a. Where study is work related and supports the staff member's development plan, up to the full tuition fee may be granted.
- b. Where study is not directly work related, a proportion of the tuition fee may be granted, provided the staff member does not already possess a University degree or equivalent tertiary qualification. This approval will be at the discretion of the staff member's manager.
- c. Staff members will not normally be eligible for study assistance for more than one course per trimester.
- d. General staff members will not normally be eligible for study assistance for a PhD.

4.3 Leave to Attend Classes and Examinations

- a. Study leave may be granted within the provisions of the staff member's employment agreement.
- b. Staff members may be granted up to two hours leave per week to attend classes which take place during their normal hours of work. Less than full-time staff members may be granted up to one hour leave per week. Where necessary, leave in excess of these hours may be granted but that time must be made up, as agreed with the staff member's manager.
- c. Where general staff members are completing research degrees that do not include a class component, the staff member and their manager will negotiate reasonable paid study leave, within the scope of 4.1.a.
- d. Staff members will be entitled to paid leave for half a day to complete an examination.

4.4 Study at Other Tertiary Institutions

- a. Staff members who enrol in programmes at other Universities, where Victoria University of Wellington offers the same programme, will not normally be eligible for study assistance.
- b. A staff member's manager may agree to provide full or partial study assistance to enable that staff member to obtain relevant qualifications, from another tertiary institution if that qualification is not available at Victoria University of Wellington, or where it was agreed at the time of appointment that the staff member could complete a programme of study already commenced. The guidelines outlined above will apply.
- c. See 4.6 for special provisions for academic staff members enrolled for the PhD.

4.5 Payment of Tuition Fee

- a. Approved study assistance up to the full tuition fee will be paid from the relevant cost centre prior to commencement of the course by the staff member. This does not include compulsory levies or other charges which must be paid for by the staff member her/himself.
- b. Where the staff member withdraws from or fails a course undertaken with study assistance, the tuition fee paid will be reimbursed to the University by the staff member.
- c. Where the staff member leaves the employment of the University part way through a course undertaken with study assistance, a proportion of the tuition fee paid, based on the time not employed by the University during the period of study, will be reimbursed to the University by the staff member prior to the last day of employment.
- d. Staff members enrolling in research degrees with approved study assistance may have the annual tuition fee of the qualification paid up front from the relevant cost centre.
- e. Evidence of satisfactory progress by staff members undertaking research degrees must be provided to the University or reimbursement of the annual tuition fee will be required.

4.6 Special Provisions for Academic Staff Members Enrolled for the PhD

- a. Staff members who meet the criteria for PhD candidature may enrol for a PhD at Victoria University of Wellington with the permission of their Head of School.
- b. Where a staff member wishes to enrol for a PhD at another institution, the staff member's Head of School may agree to provide full or partial study assistance.
- c. The full tuition fee may be granted on an annual basis for staff members enrolling in a PhD.
- d. Tutors and Senior Tutors will not normally be eligible for study assistance to undertake PhD study.

5. References

[Academic Staff Collective Agreement](#)

[General Staff Collective Agreement](#)

[Staff Development Policy](#)

[Fees Statute \[relevant year\]](#)

Previous version: [Study Assistance Guidelines for Staff Members Enrolling in Tertiary Study](#)

6. Contact Person

Note: Please contact your Manager or your Human Resources Manager/ Human Resources Advisor if you have any questions about this guideline.

The following person may be approached in relation to these Guidelines:

Manager, Organisational Development

Ext: 6356