

Study Support for Staff Policy

Section 1 - Background Information

(1) The University encourages and supports staff to grow and develop by providing those who are undertaking an approved program of study on a part-time basis, access to study time (leave) and financial assistance for study. This demonstrates the University's commitment to the professional and career development of its employees. The study must directly relate to an employee's current position or career progression, and benefits both the University and the employee.

(2) An approved program of study includes courses that will lead to a recognised award/qualification either from a University, TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation.

(3) A program means a program of study, comprised of a series of courses, which leads to the conferral of an award/qualification.

Section 2 - Policy Purpose

(4) This Policy outlines the study support provisions, eligibility requirements and procedural requirements for staff members applying for staff study support.

Section 3 - Eligibility and Application of Policy

Academic Staff

(5) The University provides financial support to continuing and fixed term Academic Staff with an appointment term of six months or more, who successfully complete, on a part-time basis, accredited postgraduate university units / courses undertaken by coursework that are approved by, and relevant to the University. Financial support is in the form of up to 50% reimbursement of unit fees only (pro-rata for part-time and fractional staff), upon the successful completion of each unit or equivalent. This financial support will be paid in the form of salary and subject to income tax. It does not apply to the Student Services Fee and/or other study related costs. Study time and financial assistance will not be granted for incidental units where these units are not directly relevant to a staff member's position or for individual units and/or microcredentials that do not lead to the acquisition of an accredited certificate / diploma / degree as recognised on under the Australian Qualification Framework.

(6) Academic staff and their supervisors should also refer to the [Academic Workload Policy](#) for workload allocation arrangements for doctoral studies.

(7) To support and encourage the wellbeing of staff undertaking work and study, ACU recommends that staff complete no more than one unit per semester/trimester to ensure the staff member can effectively balance work and study.

Professional Staff and Teachers

(8) The University will provide financial assistance to continuing and fixed term Professional Staff and Teachers with an appointment term of six months or more, who successfully complete accredited units/courses for which study time

has been approved in line with this Policy that are relevant to the University and staff member. Financial assistance will be paid to a staff member at the rate of up to 50% of the cost per unit on successful completion of each unit or equivalent (up to a maximum of four units per year; pro-rata for part-time / fractional staff). This financial assistance will be paid in the form of salary and subject to income tax. It does not apply to the Student Services Fee and/or other study related costs. Study time and financial assistance will not be granted for incidental units where these units are not directly relevant to a staff member's position or for individual units and/or microcredentials that do not lead to the acquisition of an accredited certificate / diploma / degree as recognised under the Australian Qualification Framework

Basis of Study Time Grant for Professional Staff and Teachers

(9) Granted study time may be used for, however is not limited to, the following:

- a. attendance at and travel to activities associated with the course of study;
- b. weekly private study; and / or
- c. completion of assessments and attending examinations.

(10) The approval of study time and subsequent taking of study leave is to be managed by the nominated supervisor of the staff member. Arrangements for leave will be discussed between the staff member and their nominated supervisor and are subject to the operational requirements of the work area.

(11) Study time is not cumulative across calendar years.

(12) Study time for units being repeated will only be granted if the staff member has not previously been granted study time for those units. In these circumstances, a staff member may apply for a relevant form of leave (e.g. annual leave) if they seek to take time off.

(13) To support and encourage the wellbeing of staff undertaking work and study, ACU recommends that staff complete no more than one unit/subject per semester to ensure the staff member can effectively balance work and study.

Amount of Study Time Available for Professional Staff and Teachers

(14) ACU recognises that approved courses may be available through different structures e.g. semesters, tri-semester, intensive sessions, open distance education, research, thesis, etc. Therefore, study time may be granted to a maximum of 130 hours per calendar year (pro-rata for part time and fractional staff).

(15) In exceptional circumstances, additional study time can be granted subject to the operational requirements of the work area and nominated supervisor's approval.

(16) A staff member may apply for approval to take a relevant form of leave (eg annual leave) if they seek to take additional time off for study.

(17) Supervisors must ensure that the organisational area can maintain operations during staff absences for study. Study support will not normally be granted if it necessitates the employment of replacement staff.

Section 4 - Procedures

Academic Staff

(18) For an Academic Staff member to be eligible for financial support upon completion of an accredited postgraduate course relevant to the University, prior approval must be obtained. This requires the staff member to complete the [Request for Study Support \(Academic Staff\) form](#) and seek approval from the Head of School or equivalent. Prior to

submitting the form, Academic Staff must also discuss their intention to apply for study support with their supervisor. People and Capability monitor, approve, review and report on all requests for study support to ensure compliance with this policy.

(19) A separate request for study support must be submitted either:

- a. each semester for semester-based units or equivalent;
- b. each year for annually-based units or equivalent; or,
- c. for each intensive session.

(20) Upon successful completion of at least one unit from an accredited postgraduate university program, an academic staff member may apply for reimbursement of up to 50% of the cost per 10 credit point unit (or equivalent) (pro-rata for part-time / fractional staff). A staff member is only entitled to receive reimbursement for up to 20 credit points (or equivalent) per semester, the normal load for a part-time student.

(21) Academic Staff seeking financial support in the form of reimbursement must complete the [Claim for Study Financial Assistance \(Academic Staff\) form](#) through [Service Central](#).

(22) To complete the form, staff will need to provide:

- a. provision of official results indicating successful completion of unit(s) / course; and
- b. evidence of payment of unit fees or evidence of payment towards an accumulated Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt.

(23) To be eligible for financial assistance, staff must have received approval for study support from their Head of School or equivalent.

(24) The [Claim for Study Financial Assistance \(Academic Staff\) form](#) is to be lodged no later than three months after formal advice of the successful completion of the accredited unit(s) / courses.

Professional Staff and Teachers

(25) Staff applying for study time must submit to their nominated supervisor for approval a Request for Study Support and Time (Professional Staff) via [Service Central](#) accompanied by the following:

- a. evidence / confirmation of enrolment; and
- b. current timetable or schedule of study hours.

(26) An application for study time must be approved by the nominated supervisor before study time can be taken by the staff member. Where an application has been declined, the staff member's supervisor will consult with the staff member and provide a reason in writing. People and Capability monitor, approve, review and report on all requests for study support to ensure compliance with this policy.

(27) A separate request for study support and time must be submitted either:

- a. each semester for semester-based units or equivalent;
- b. each year for annually-based units or equivalent; or,
- c. for each intensive session.

(28) Staff wishing to apply for financial assistance in the form of reimbursement must complete a Claim for Study Financial Assistance(Professional Staff) via [Service Central](#) accompanied by the following:

- a. documentary evidence of official results indicating successful completion of unit/s; and
- b. evidence of payment of unit fees or evidence of payment towards an accumulated Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt.

(29) To be eligible for financial assistance, staff must have received approval for study support from their supervisor.

(30) Staff who discontinue a unit or units for which study time has been granted must inform their nominated supervisor within five days of withdrawal from such studies, and People and Capability via [Service Central](#) immediately thereafter. Utilisation of study time for the discontinued unit(s) ceases immediately on withdrawal.

(31) The Claim for Study Financial Assistance (Professional Staff) form is to be lodged no later than three months after formal advice of the successful completion of the accredited unit(s) / courses.

Section 5 - Revisions made to this Policy

(32) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description
21 May 2019	Editorial	Updated form names to be completed for financial support and removed appendices section of policy.
2 June 2021	Editorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated reimbursement rates at 5.2 as per the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2017-2021. • Updated approval process for seeking financial support and removal of reference to Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning.
6 October 2021	Editorial	Clarification that financial assistance also applies to part-time Academic staff.
28 August 2023	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to incorporate Teachers and Professional Staff. • Updated to incorporate provision of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. • Updated Human Resources to People and Capability.

(33) The University will make changes to this Policy from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about the Policy may forward their suggestions to People and Capability.

Section 6 - Further Assistance

(34) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required, staff should visit [Service Central](#).

Section 7 - Associated Information

(35) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	19th July 2024
Review Date	19th July 2029
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	17th July 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Bernardine Lynch ER and Safety Committees and Policy Officer <hr/> People and Capability