**Fee Support Policy for TU Dublin Employees**

**TU Dublin Policy**

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# 1. Document Control Summary

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# 

# 2. Introduction / Context

This document outlines the policy for staff of the Technological University Dublin (hereafter referred to as “TU Dublin” and/or “the University”) to apply for fee support to pursue a professional qualification outside of TU Dublin.

# 3. Purpose

In support of our TU Dublin’s Strategic Plan, the Fee Support initiative aims to foster individual talent and support staff to explore their abilities and reach their full potential. Fee Support provides transformational educational opportunities to develop a body of high caliber employees who can contribute to the delivery of our strategic objectives.

# 4. Scope

* 1. Fee support may be granted for a staff member who is undertaking a professional part-time qualification that is aligned to the strategic goals of TU Dublin. The qualification must be related to their role, career development and has been identified through the Performance Management and Development System.
  2. The Head of School/Service will need to outline how the qualification will be beneficial to the role and overall employment of the staff member.
  3. All staff who hold an employment contract that will run for at least twelve months from the date of programme commencement may apply for fee support.
  4. A staff member on Career Breaks will not be eligible to apply for fee support. Staff who have been approved for Fee Support and subsequently take a Career Break, lose their fee support approval for the period of the career break.
  5. Fee support covers registration and tuition fees only. Fee support does not cover membership of Professional Bodies, Clubs or Associations.
  6. Fee support does not cover travel and subsistence for attendance at programmes.

# 5. Policy Details

### 5.1 Policy Overview

1. All applicants are required to complete a Performance Management & Development System (PMDS) meeting to ensure the development is aligned with local strategic goals and is identified as part of the individual’s Performance Development Plan (PDP). The applicant’s PDP meeting must be submitted to People Development on or before the closing date, together with the application form.
2. A staff member in receipt of Fee Support must complete a PDP meeting on an annual basis for the duration of their support to ensure progress is supported and the learning is transferred to the wider team.
3. Late applications will not be accepted.
4. Retrospective applications will not be accepted.

# 6. Policy Details

### 6.1 Application Evaluation

#### 6.1.1 New Applications

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria and fee support will be prioritised as follows:

1. For the pursuit of qualifications to develop competencies that will lead to increased effectiveness in the current role and discipline, and for future career development.
2. Where the qualification being pursued is key to the future development of the university, as follows:
   * + - * Will enable talent management and develop the skills, knowledge and behaviors needed to deliver our strategic objectives.
         * Will enhance management capability to develop and align the skills, knowledge, and behaviors to deliver the strategic objectives of the university and to contribute effectively to the future direction of the university.
         * Will enhance pedagogical capacity and the academic portfolio of the university in terms of increasing the numbers of staff with PhDs and Professional Doctorates in line with university targets.
         * Will enhance the capability of individual staff members to contribute to the strategic direction of our university.

1. Where the proposed programme of study is clearly aligned to the current Faculty/School/Services Team Development Plan and will contribute to achieving the University strategic intent.
2. For academic staff, where there is evidence of achievements in research and/or scholarly activity and industry engagement. For Professional Management & Support Services staff, where there is evidence of contributions to developments in their own role or in TU Dublin. Applicants should show evidence that their development will lead to conference papers, national/international networks; participation on internal or external Working Groups; participation on internal or external Committees; new innovations or continuous improvements introduced in their area of work.
3. Applications from Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers appointed on or after 1st March 2006 will only be considered where they have met the conditions of the policy Requirement for Newly Appointed Academic staff to obtain a Teaching Qualification. All newly appointed academic staff must be able to demonstrate that they have expressed an interest in or have applied to complete a 30 ECTS Module within the first three years of joining the University that will lead to the award of a PG. Certificate in Third Level Teaching & Learning (see [Academic Employees Obtaining a Teaching & Learning Qualification in TU Dublin HRP014](https://www.tudublin.ie/media/website/policies-and-forms/human-resources/Academic-Staff-Obtaining-a-Learning-and-Teaching-Qualification-HRP014.pdf)).

#### 6.1.2 Continuing Applications

1. Progress will be monitored for continuing applications through PMDS at the annual review meeting. The context for the review will be:

* Progress on the academic programme plus an assessment of contribution and knowledge transfer to their role and the university.
* At the time of application, the staff member will be required to document the process by which the University or Faculty will provide an annual review/assessment of progress.
* Evidence of the applicant’s satisfactory progress/achievements on the programme in the previous year/s. The assessment of progress will be based on a report from the Institute, University, Faculty or Programme in question which includes a review of a Programme Panel Report or a review of actual examination results. This must be included with the Continuation of Funding Application Form FS2 Form [here](https://www.tudublin.ie/for-staff/human-resources/people-development/how-to-apply/application-forms/).

1. Academic staff should also provide evidence of achievements in research and/or scholarly activity and industry engagement. This should include evidence of contribution/dissemination of research and scholarship to the Faculty/School because of participation on this programme of study (e.g. conference papers, performances, exhibitions, new teaching areas or methodologies, in-house research presentations) or evidence of research activity.
2. Professional Management & Support Services staff are required to provide evidence of contributions to developments in their own role or in TU Dublin and other activity (e.g. conference papers, national/international networks; participation on internal or external Working Groups; participation on internal or external Committees; new innovations or continuous improvements introduced in area of work).

### 6.2 Conditions for Granting Fee Support

1. The amount of fee support to be granted will be determined by the Evaluation Panel. Operating within a fixed budget may necessitate that only a percentage of the fee can be supported. Fee support will be capped at a **maximum of €6,000 annually per person** to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funding. This determination will be in the context of a fixed budget and the number of applications received. The evaluation panel aims to achieve a fair and equitable distribution of funding. Any resulting shortfall in funding must be met by the individual applicant.
2. The level of support granted will be dependent on the number of successful applications, i.e. the level of support may fluctuate from year to year, for both new and continuing applicants.
3. A staff member will receive support once during their employment, for one programme of study.
4. Fee support will not be approved for repeat module(s) or year(s) of a course. Exceptional circumstances may be considered on appeal to the Head of People Development.
5. The maximum number of years for which fee support will be granted will be limited for post-graduate qualifications as follows:
   * Programmes leading to Master’s qualifications up to a maximum of three years.
   * Programmes leading to Doctoral qualifications up to a maximum of six years.
6. The University reserves the right to suspend fee support without notice in the event of a budgetary force majeure situation that impacts on the overall budgetary allocation.

### 6.3 Conditions Regarding Fees

1. Fees will be paid on successful completion of each year/semester of the programme and on submission of receipts for fees paid. This condition may be waived in special cases of financial hardship and an advance of fees can be requested. These requests must be approved by your Dean/Head of School/VP/Line Manager.
2. Submission of a certified statement that fee support for the same programme is not being provided by any other employer or source, or if so, documentary evidence of the amount of support being received from alternate sources.
3. Fees for second and subsequent years/semesters will be subject to submission of a completed application form for each renewal and evidence of satisfactory progress (ref. Section 6.2 above).
4. All Staff in receipt of Fee Support who resigns from the University during the course/programme for which Fees have paid or within two years of competition (except for those staff who are retiring), shall be liable to repay the fees for that year on the following basis:
5. In the case of eligible staff who are employed on a fixed term basis and are in receipt of fee support the following will apply:
   * Where the university does not renew the contract of a staff, fee support will be discontinued, and the university will not seek re-imbursement in respect of previous payments.
   * In circumstances where the university is willing to renew the contract of a staff member, an individual who chooses not to accept the offer will be liable for re-imbursement as per the above table.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leaving Date** | **Refund** |
| During the programme or within 12 months of completing course | 100% |
| Within 12 – 24 months of completing course | 50% |

### 6.4 Evaluation Panel

1. Membership of the Evaluation Panel will be drawn from senior management across the university. The panel will comprise of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 members with representatives from PMSS Staff, Academic Staff and People Development.
2. The Evaluation Panels will be gender balanced in line with university policy.
3. The Panel will meet to evaluate all applications as soon as possible. The panel’s decision will be communicated in writing to all applicants no later than July.
4. On receipt of applications, the Evaluation Panel will determine a top line distribution of the funds between Academic and Professional Management & Support Services staff. The allocation to Professional Management Services applications should be no less than 15% of the total applications in any given year provided there are sufficient suitable applications to draw down that amount.
5. In reviewing the applications, the Evaluation Panel will assess applications against the criteria outlined for new and continuing applications (sections 6.1 and 6.2).
6. The Evaluation Panel will determine the amount of fees to be supported (section 6.2)
7. The Evaluation Panel will submit their report and recommendations to the Chief Human Resources Officer. People Development will notify applicants of the outcome of their application and will process payments in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 6.3 above.

**6.5 Appeals**

* 1. In the case where an application to the TU Dublin wide competition is unsuccessful, the applicant may seek a review of the decision by making an appeal in writing to the Head of People Development within 10 days of receipt of the decision. The grounds for an appeal must be based one of the following:
  + A challenge to the rationale of the decision by the panel.
  + Alleged process and/or procedural flaw.

1. The decision will be reviewed by the TU Dublin Fee Support Appeals Panel and their decision will be conveyed in writing to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) or delegate.
2. Membership of the TU Dublin Fee Support Appeals Panel will be drawn from senior management across the university who are not members of the original Evaluation Panel. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, the Appeals Panel cannot include members of the School/Faculty/Services of the applicant.
3. In line with university policy the Appeals Panel will be gender balanced.
4. The TU Dublin Appeals Panel will submit a report of their recommendations to the CHRO. The CHRO or delegate will then advise the application of the outcome of the appeal.

### 6.6 Post Qualification

1. On completion of the programme and receipt of the advanced qualification, the staff member must update their academic qualification record by submitting original copies of their transcript to Human Resources, where a copy will be taken and the original returned.
2. Academic staff will be required to maintain and regularly update their profile.
3. A staff member who has been supported by the University to successfully complete PhDs are subsequently required to participate in the training of Research Supervisors and/or supervise or co-supervise research students, as appropriate. Any training or additional support required to undertake this role will be provided through the Services of Research & Innovation.
4. A staff member who has been supported to successfully complete qualifications below PhD level will be expected to give feedback or report on their research findings etc. at appropriate fora e.g. team/School/Faculty/Services meetings.
5. All staff who have been supported will be expected to make a significant contribution to continuous improvements in their own area of work and may be called upon to assist in projects or other work-related activity aligned with the qualification for which they have been supported.

### 6.7 Acceptance

A staff member that has been approved for Fee Support will be required to sign a Declaration of Compliance form to indicate agreement with all the above conditions before any fee support is paid.

**7.**  **Related Documents**

* + [Fee Support Application Form for new applicants (FS01)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tudublin.ie%2Fmedia%2Fwebsite%2Ffor-staff%2Fhuman-resources%2Fpeople-dev%2Fprof-dev%2Fdocuments%2FFee-Support-Application-Form---New-Applications-Form-FS1-2023.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
  + [Fee Support Application Form for continuation of Funding (FS02)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tudublin.ie%2Fmedia%2Fwebsite%2Ffor-staff%2Fhuman-resources%2Fpeople-dev%2Fprof-dev%2Fdocuments%2FFee-Support-Application-Form---Continuation-of-Funding-Form-FS2----2023.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
  + [Application Form for Payment of Approved Funding (FS03)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tudublin.ie%2Fmedia%2Fwebsite%2Fpolicies-and-forms%2Fhuman-resources%2FFee-Support-Application-Form-for-Payment-of-Approved-Funding-(2).docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
  + [Fee Waiver Application Form](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tudublin.ie%2Fmedia%2Fwebsite%2Fpolicies-and-forms%2Fhuman-resources%2FTU-Dublin-Fee-Waiver-Application-Form---May-2019-(2).xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
  + Study and Exam Leave Application Form
  + [Fee Support Procedure for TU Dublin Employees](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tudublin.ie%2Fmedia%2Fwebsite%2Ffor-staff%2Fhuman-resources%2Fpeople-dev%2Fprof-dev%2Fdocuments%2FFee-Support-Procedure-for-TU-Dublin-Employees.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

# 8. Conclusions

The Fee Support initiative aims to foster individual talent and support staff to explore their abilities and reach their full potential. Fee Support provides transformational educational opportunities to develop a body of high caliber employees who can contribute to the delivery of our strategic objectives.

This policy has been subject to an Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment. It takes account of the University’s responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of employees. The policy also takes account of the University’s commitments to sustainability and climate action. It specifically addresses the following relevant Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 4, Quality Education; SDG 5, Gender Equality; SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth; and SDG 10, Reduced Inequalities*.*

# 9. Document Management

### 9.1 Version Control

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| **VERSION NUMBER** | **VERSION DESCRIPTIN /**  **CHANGES MADE** | **AUTHOR** | **DATE** |
| *Draft 2* | *Initial draft* | *Head of People Development* | *28.03.2024* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

### 9.2 Document Approval

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **VERSION NUMBER** | **APPROVAL DATE** | **APPROVED BY (NAME AND ROLE)** |
| *2* | *May 2024* | *HR Policy Team and VP People, Organisation and Culture* |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

### 9.3 Document Ownership

This document is owned by the Head of People Development.

### 9.4 Document Review

This document should be reviewed at least once every 3 years to ensure that it is still fit for purpose. This review should be triggered by the document owner and will be undertaken by the HR Policy Team (HRPT).

### 9.5 Document Storage

This document will be stored on the common personnel (Human Resources) drive. This policy document will be accessible on the HR website under the Policies/Forms tab by all staff.

### 9.6 Document Classification

This document is a policy and is classified as ‘TU Public’.