



Financial Support for Further and Higher Education Policy

1 Introduction

The University is committed to providing staff with both the development necessary to perform their current work effectively along with opportunities to develop further skills to support future known duties and career development. Courses of work-related Further and Higher Education (FE and HE) are a valuable means of developing staff expertise and professionalism. This document describes the support available from Staff Learning & Development for staff undertaking such courses of study. Where a member of staff wishes to apply for support to attend a short work-related non-qualification course they should refer to the separate provisions of the External Training Support Scheme.

2 Scope

This policy is applicable to permanent and fixed-term members of staff.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of managers to review requests for funding and, in the event of approval, work with the member of staff to provide appropriate financial support, time off and opportunities to embed their learning.

It is the responsibility of staff to seek the approval of their manager prior to making an application for funding. In the event that funding is approved, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to adhere to the principles of this policy whilst undertaking the course.

4 Conditions for Approval of Applications

Applications for financial support for FE/HE courses should be made to Staff Learning & Development on the standard online application form, approved by the individual's manager in all cases.

Financial support will only be granted for payment of **course and mandatory exam fees**. Support is not available for travel and subsistence, membership of professional bodies, or text books.

The scheme does not provide funding for essential qualifications as it is expected that these will be funded by the employing area.

Applicants must show that the course of study:

- is relevant to the current and future needs of the University,
- will improve the current and future effectiveness of the applicant,
- is good value for money and cannot be funded by any other internal source,
- cannot be provided internally.

Applicants must also show the course of study:

- is related to the applicant's normal work at the University,
or
- is linked to the applicant's future known employment at the University,
or
- is in line with internal career aspirations which have been agreed with their line manager, for example agreed through the PDR process and will be supported by additional development opportunities in order to embed and practice the new learning.

Managers will sign a declaration to this effect on the application form.

Where the proposed course of study leads to a specialist professional qualification e.g. Finance or IT qualifications, Staff Learning & Development may consult the relevant University functional area on issues around suitability and relevance to the role of the individual.

Applications for funding must be received in advance of the course. Applications made retrospectively will not be considered.

5 Level of Funding

Staff Learning & Development will contribute 50% of course fees for approved applications up to a maximum of £1,000 per person per year. It is expected that the employing area will make a contribution towards the outstanding amount.

Staff Learning & Development will not fund more than one course per individual per year (or a maximum of 60 credits for Open University degrees).

6 Conditions of Funding

In all approved cases the applicant must sign a repayment undertaking to facilitate the refunding of all or part of course fees to the University in the following circumstances:

- the withdrawal from a course by the applicant without the agreement of their line manager and any consultation with Staff Learning and Development,
- attendance or progress on the course is deemed as unsatisfactory,
- the applicant fails to sit the necessary examinations with no valid reason (the applicant will have the opportunity to discuss the reason they have been unable to sit the examination with a member of the SLD team before any action is taken),
- the applicant fails to pass the requisite examinations,
- the applicant leaves the University through resignation or termination (including the termination of a fixed-term contract) by the University within 24 months after the successful completion of study.

Repayment Table

- If the applicant leaves the University
 - prior to the completion of study or within 6 months of completion - 100% of fees

- Within 1 year	50%
- Between 1 and 2 years	25%

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| - More than 2 years | 0% |
| - Failure to complete | Individual Review with SLD |
| - Failure to show progress | Individual Review with SLD |

Repayment will be via a deduction from their final salary payment and where applicable, any remaining balance by direct payment to the University bank account or by cheque within 30 days of leaving.

Any paid time off for attending courses is regarded as part of normal working duties and staff must inform their manager if they are absent from the course for whatever reason.

The continuance of assistance, whether for a second or succeeding stage of study will be approved if the member of staff has passed the appropriate examination or has otherwise made satisfactory progress.

7 Levels of Study

These guidelines will typically apply to staff undertaking professional qualifications and vocationally oriented degrees. Support to study for a PHD by research does not fall within the scope of the scheme. It would be expected that this will be supported where relevant from within the individual's employing area.

8 Support for Studying University of Manchester Courses.

Staff applying to study for a qualification with the University are normally entitled to a 50% fee remission. Such staff can also apply to Staff Learning & Development for financial support for 50% of the remaining course fees (up to £1000 annual limit). The remaining 25% funding will need to be made up by their employing area or through a personal contribution.

9 Time Off for Exams/Attendance at Mandatory Teaching Sessions

If the course mode of attendance requires a day or half day release from the workplace, staff are allowed paid time off to attend. This also applies to any other mandatory teaching sessions that form part of the course – for example attendance at Open University Residential Schools or attendance at other course

residential. In approving applications managers must note and make arrangements to facilitate this. Staff are allowed paid time off to take any examination or any other final form of assessment to complete the course of study – it is recommended that staff be allowed paid time off for revision equivalent to the length of the exam.

10 Allowances for Study Time

Courses vary considerably in their content, delivery methods and demands on people's time in terms of personal research and assessment. Individuals undertaking approved courses of study should negotiate a reasonable time allowance with their manager on time to be taken in work, or time off in lieu, to undertake assessment and course related work. Such allocations of time must take account of normal work commitments and should be planned so as to minimise impact on normal service/work delivery. A maximum of 4 days is allowed for a course of study lasting one full academic year. Time allowances for study for courses of shorter duration should be treated on a pro rata basis.

11 On-Going Progress and Evaluation of Impact

All approved applicants will take part in on-going evaluation throughout the programme of study. This will involve the completion of on-line evaluations for both the applicant and their manager. Staff Learning and Development will also contact the learning provider to monitor progress.

12 Further Information

Any questions about the scheme or the status of particular applications should be directed to Staff Learning & Development.

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