

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Staff Tuition Fees Policy

Eligibility

1. All categories of staff (except honorary staff and student assistants – see Note 1) under contract of employment with the University are entitled, subject to (a) meeting all of the criteria below and (b) obtaining permission from the Head of their College or nominee (see Note 2), for full or part payment of their tuition fees from the relevant Staff Tuition Fee account for one of the University's programmes of study that leads to a qualification (see Note 3) or for one course taken as Individual Subject Study. Any such support, where approved, shall only be in regard to programmes or courses offered by the University of Aberdeen.

Criteria

2. To qualify for a contribution towards tuition fees, members of staff must:-
 - (i) normally have been employed by the University for at least 12 months (see Note 4);
 - and (ii) receive confirmation from their Head of School (a) that the content of the programme or course for which a member of staff wishes to register had been identified as part of a training needs analysis for the member of staff and would enhance the member of staff's capacity to perform his or her current or planned future duties within the University; and (b) that it would be in the institutional interest for the member of staff to attend the programme or course concerned (see Note 5);
 - and (iii) not have previously received support with tuition fees (subject to 6 and 7 below);
 - and (iv) accept that they may be required to repay part of any assistance received with tuition fees if their employment with the University is terminated (a) before completing the normal period of study or (b) within 18 months of having completed the normal period of study, for a programme or course (see Note 6).

Level of Assistance with Tuition Fees

3. The maximum assistance from the Staff Tuition Fee account shall be either the prevailing rate of standard part-time tuition fee (home or overseas, as appropriate) for standard fee courses/programmes or the standard home/EU part-time fee for full-cost courses/programmes (where both home and overseas students pay the same fee), as appropriate. In both cases, the level of assistance will be irrespective of the percentage full-time equivalent of the employment contract.
4. In the case of full-cost courses/programmes, the balance of the fee shall be the personal responsibility of the member of staff, although Heads of School have discretion to pay the balance (or a contribution) from funds under their control.

Registration for more than one course or programme

5. Where a member of staff has had, or was having, their tuition fees paid in respect of their registration for a research programme of study and, subsequently, wished to register, in addition, for a taught course(s), they would be personally liable for the fees for any such taught course unless attendance on the taught course(s) was approved, by their Head of School, under Research Regulation 7: in the latter case, the taught course(s) would form part of the student's approved curriculum and a proportion of the total fee with respect to the research programme would be automatically attributed to the School providing the course(s) concerned, based on the credit value of the course(s) concerned.
6. Where a member of staff has had their tuition fees paid from the Staff Tuition Fee account for a course or courses taken as an Individual Subject Study student and subsequently wished to register for a programme of study that leads to a qualification (e.g. a research degree), the tuition fees for the latter would be paid from the Staff Tuition Fee account provided that the member of staff fulfils the criteria in paragraphs 2(i), (ii) and (iv).

7. Where a member of staff has had their tuition fees paid from the Staff Tuition Fee account for a course taken as an Individual Subject Study student and subsequently wished to register for another course as an Individual Subject Study student, **there should be no automatic expectation that the member of staff** would receive a contribution towards their tuition fees for the second (or subsequent) course. It would be for their Head of School to decide whether or not to recommend to the Head of College (or nominee) that the member of staff should qualify for a contribution towards their tuition fees for the second (or subsequent) course, having regard to the criteria indicated in paragraph 2(ii) above.

Dependents' eligibility for fees support

8. The spouses/partners and children of full-time academic staff who are recruited from outside the EU who wish to register as students within three years of arrival in the UK and who would therefore normally be liable for full-cost fees shall be eligible, at the discretion of the Head of the relevant College, as part of the member of staff's recruitment package, for assistance from the Staff Tuition Fee account for the difference between the home and overseas rate of fee (where different) irrespective of whether they register as full-time or part-time students. The home/EU rate fee will be the personal responsibility of the individual concerned.

Application procedure

9. Staff wishing to seek approval for full or part payment of their tuition fees from the relevant Staff Tuition Fee account should complete the relevant form (available at www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/stafftuitionfeesapplication-2) and submit it to their Head of School.

Appeal procedure

10. Staff who wish to appeal against the outcome of an application for assistance with tuition fees should raise the matter with their Head of School in the first instance, in accordance with the procedures and timescales set out in the relevant staff grievance procedure.

Notes

1. Honorary staff include NHS-employed staff who have University Honorary status.
2. It shall be for Heads of College to determine whether they wish to delegate responsibility for approving applications for fees support, e.g. to Heads of School.
3. Where a programme has defined pathways leading to more than one qualification e.g. Certificate, Diploma and Master's Degree, and where a member of staff progresses from one such programme to the higher programme, they shall be deemed as one programme for the purposes of entitlement to fees being paid from the Staff Tuition Fee account, provided that there is no interruption in registration between the different programmes and provided that the lower-level qualification has not been awarded. Similarly, the Access Certificate followed immediately by a first degree is regarded as one programme for this purpose.
4. Research Assistants/Fellows who are required by their Head of School to register for a research degree on appointment are exempt from the 12-month eligibility criterion.
5. Staff who do not hold a first degree and who wish to register part-time for an undergraduate degree programme are exempt from the requirement that their attendance on such a programme would enhance the member of staff's capacity to perform his or her current or planned future duties within the University on the basis that there is a strong argument that such study will generally enhance an employee's performance: such staff will automatically be entitled to fees support, subject to satisfying the other criteria in paragraph 2.
6. Entitlement to payment of tuition fees for a member of staff or their dependents shall cease on termination of a member of staff's employment with the University. Staff who resign from their post or who are dismissed before completion of the normal period of study for a programme or course for which they or their dependents have received assistance with tuition fees shall be required to re-pay the assistance received in full. Staff who resign from their post or who are dismissed within 18 months of completion of the normal duration of study for a programme or course for which they or their dependents have received assistance with tuition fees shall be required to re-pay the assistance received in proportion to the number of completed months of employment after the end of the normal duration of study for the programme or course: for example, a member of staff whose employment with the University was terminated due to resignation or dismissal after 13 months of completing the normal duration of study for a programme or course would be required to re-pay 5/18 of the assistance received. Heads of College have the discretion to reduce or waive the requirement for re-payment on an individual basis in exceptional circumstances. Staff on fixed term contracts that are not renewed before the member of staff either completes their programme or course or within 18 months of having completed a programme or course shall not be liable for repayment of any assistance received with tuition fees.