

# **QUT**

## **Study Assistance Scheme**



**Last Updated Jan-08**

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# Contents

1. Outline of Scheme
2. Who is eligible for Study Assistance?
3. Benefits of the Study Assistance Scheme – Category A, B & C
4. How do I apply?
5. Guidelines for Reimbursement of Study Fees
6. How do I claim Reimbursement of Study Fees?
7. How do I apply for Study Leave?

**QUT's Study Assistance Scheme is designed to encourage personal and professional development of staff and to benefit the university as a whole.**

**Ensure you have read the Study Assistance Scheme policy (refer MOPP Chapter B Section 12.3) prior to lodging an Application for Course Approval.**

## 1. Outline of Scheme

[back to top](#)

- Study Assistance is available for courses leading to a recognised secondary or tertiary level qualification;
- Financial assistance and leave to attend classes and examinations may be granted to eligible staff members enrolled in an approved course;
- Staff need to pay their fees upfront each semester and claim reimbursement upon successful completion at the end of each semester (*see Reimbursement of fees section for further information*);
- Study Assistance may also be available for a short course not necessarily leading to a qualification, if the course is offered by an approved educational institution or examining body (HR Department can advise on the eligibility of short courses for study assistance);
- Approval is given by the authorising officer - the head of school/ department/ independent section (or dean/ head of division where the staff member is not located in a school/ department/ independent section).

## 2. Who is eligible for Study Assistance?

[back to top](#)

### Eligible staff include:

- all ongoing full-time;
- ongoing part-time;
- fixed-term full-time staff and fixed-term part-time (who are not casual professional staff members);
- employed for a total of at least 12 months or who have a 12-month contract;
- who have not deferred their course fees to HECS/PELS through the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

### 3. Benefits of the Study Assistance Scheme - Category A, B & C

[back to top](#)

The level of study assistance benefits staff may receive is dependent upon how relevant the course is to your job. **All fees must be paid up-front each semester to be entitled to Study Assistance Reimbursement.**

The categories of study assistance and the corresponding benefits are as follows:

#### **CATEGORY A**

**Category A** is for staff who are required to enrol in a course as a condition of their employment. This condition must be stated in your written offer of employment.

**Reimbursement entitlements:** staff can claim reimbursement of compulsory course fees such as course fees, tuition fees, student union fees, field excursion fees and limited production costs of their thesis (typing, printing and binding). These fees can be claimed only if paid up front by the staff member.

**Leave entitlements:** see below for entitlements and please be aware that all leave is approved at the discretion of the staff member's manager/supervisor.

- a) **Leave to attend classes:** up to eight hours leave on full pay per week to attend classes
- b) **Compulsory Residential Schools:** up to 20 days leave on full pay per year to attend compulsory residential schools. Costs of attendance at compulsory residential schools, including accommodation and meal expenses incurred whilst travelling to and from the school and during the school may be reimbursed up to a certain limit.

#### **CATEGORY B**

**Category B** is for staff enrolled in a course that provides training relevant to their job or anticipated future duties. At least 50 per cent of an undergraduate course or 75 per cent of a postgraduate course or second degree relates to the staff member's duties.

**Reimbursement entitlements:** staff can claim reimbursement of compulsory course fees such as course fees, tuition fees, student union fees, field excursion fees and limited production costs of their thesis (typing, printing and binding). These fees can be claimed only if paid up front by the staff member.

**Leave entitlements:** see below for entitlements and please be aware that all leave is approved at the discretion of the staff member's manager/supervisor.

- a) **Leave to attend classes:** up to eight hours leave on full pay per week to attend classes
- b) **Compulsory Residential Schools:** up to 15 days leave on full pay per year to attend compulsory residential schools. Only limited meal and accommodation expenses incurred whilst travelling to and from the school can be reimbursed (all leave is approved at the discretion of the staff member's manager/supervisor).

## **CATEGORY C**

**Category C** is for staff enrolled in a course not related to their job, but relevant to other jobs in QUT and useful for professional development.

**Reimbursement entitlements:** staff can claim reimbursement of compulsory equipment fees and tuition fees for secondary school studies. **Student Guild Fees are no longer compulsory**, should the staff member wish to pay these they will not be reimbursed under the Study Assistance Scheme.

**Leave entitlements:** see below for entitlements and please be aware that all leave is approved at the discretion of the staff member's manager/supervisor.

- a) **Leave to attend classes:** up to five hours leave on full pay per week to attend classes
- b) **Compulsory Residential Schools:** up to five days leave on full pay per year to attend compulsory residential schools and **note that staff cannot be reimbursed** for travel, accommodation and meal costs of attendance at compulsory residential schools.

## **4. How do I apply?**

[back to top](#)

- Download an **Application for Course Approval** form from the HR Department's website [www.hrd.qut.edu.au/benefits/reward/studyassistance.jsp](http://www.hrd.qut.edu.au/benefits/reward/studyassistance.jsp)
- Instructions on how to complete the form are detailed in the downloaded form on page 1
- Arrange a meeting with your Head of School/Department or Independent Section and seek approval for the application. Ask that this approval be in writing and attached to your application
- The authorising officer will also recommend the category your planned course of study should receive for purposes of calculating financial and leave benefits under the Scheme. This recommendation is based on criteria outlined in the Study Assistance Scheme policy (refer MOPP Chapter B Section 12.3)
- After gaining support, forward the original form to the Human Resources Department. Forward the carbon copy to the appropriate officer within your Faculty/School/Department or Independent Section. **Ensure you keep a copy of your signed Application for Approval Form and relevant documentation**
- The authorising officer will formally advise you of the outcome of your application by letter or email.

## **5. Guidelines for Reimbursement of Study Fees**

[back to top](#)

- **Staff need to pay their fees upfront each semester** and claim reimbursement upon successful completion at the end of each semester
- Eligible staff who elect to defer their fees to HECS/PELS through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) **will not be eligible for reimbursement** through the Study Assistance Scheme for the period of deferment.
- Part-time staff receive **pro rata benefits**, such as pro rata reimbursement of course fees, calculated according to the proportion of full-time hours that they work. However, part-time staff are expected to attend classes and examinations outside their rostered work hours
- See How do I claim for Reimbursement of Study Fees Section for further information

## 6. How do I claim for Reimbursement of Study Fees?

[back to top](#)

Please view the [Step-by-Step Guide on how to Claim Reimbursement of Study Fees.pdf](#)

**You can claim full reimbursement of your fees if:**

- You have paid up front;
- You successfully complete the semester you are claiming. If you do not successfully complete all subjects of study, you will be reimbursed pro-rata for the subjects successfully completed; and
- You have not deferred fees to HECS/PELS

Reimbursement Item	Documentary Evidence Required
<b>Course Fees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original, plus one photocopy of <b>statement of account and receipts</b> for fees paid.</li> <li>• Original, plus one photocopy of <b>statement of results for the semester(s)</b> corresponding to the fees claimed.</li> <li>• <b>Statement from the course supervisor</b> indicating that progress in the course was satisfactory for the semester(s) corresponding to the fees claimed.</li> </ul>
<b>Thesis Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Original receipts</b> for the costs claimed and statement of satisfactory progress.</li> </ul>
<b>Compulsory Residential School costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original, plus one copy of <b>receipts for the costs claimed.</b></li> <li>• <b>Letters or notices from the institution</b> where the studies were undertaken, indicating that attendance at the residential school is compulsory and that the claimant actually attended the residential school</li> </ul>

## 7. How do I apply for Study Leave?

[back to top](#)

- To attend classes; and**
- Compulsory residential school**

Separate applications for time off to attend classes and compulsory residential schools must be made.

- Complete an [Application for Leave to Attend Classes and Compulsory Residential School Form](#)
- Ensure this form is authorised by your Dean or Head of Division/School/Department or Independent Section
- Take a copy of the completed form for your records
- Send the original form to the Human Resources Department by Internal mail to Level 2, 126 Margaret Street

### c) Leave for examinations and/or study for examinations

- Leave on full pay to attend examinations is available for units of an approved course. Examination leave also includes the mornings of days in which examinations are held in the afternoon as well as the time spent travelling to and from the examination centre.
- Application for leave is made via the link from the HR Dept website to StaffConnect <http://www.hrd.qut.edu.au/toolkit/hrforms/allstaff.jsp>. The relevant unit code (Recreation or TOIL) should be shown on the application form.
- Part-time staff should arrange work rosters around examination periods. Only if this is not possible can an application for leave to attend examinations be made. Each case will be assessed on its merits.
- Examination leave is not available for take home examinations except where the duration of the exam is 24 hours or less. In these circumstances staff may apply for half a day's leave on full pay.

#### *Study leave for examinations*

- Leave to study for examinations is available on a pro rata basis to full-time staff members and on-going part-time staff members. At the option of the staff member, leave shall be either without pay or deducted from the staff member's recreation leave entitlement on a half day or full day debit basis.
- Leave is available to a maximum of two working days per unit in any one year, and to a maximum of 8 working days in any one year for all units undertaken as part of an approved course of study. Granting of leave is subject to the operational convenience of the area and is restricted to a period just prior to the date of examination.
- **Note: Academic staff** are not required to apply for leave to the Human Resources Department

[back to top](#)

## Questions?

**For questions regarding Study Assistance Scheme Policy advice, please contact:**

### **Human Resources Department**

Ph: 3138 4120

Fax: 3138 4184

Email: [c.vangilst@qut.edu.au](mailto:c.vangilst@qut.edu.au)

Location: Level 2, 126 Margaret Street