Professional Development Procedure - Professional/General Employee Schemes

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the Professional Development Policy by setting out the conditions and principles for the centrally coordinated professional development schemes targeted to Charles Sturt University's professional/general employees, specifically:

a. study leave, and
b. postgraduate study support.

Scope

(2) This procedure applies to professional/general employees, subject to the eligibility requirements stated for each scheme.

(3) Eligible employees may apply for one or both schemes described in this procedure, in addition to any other professional development support scheme that they are eligible for.

(4) The First Nations employees study support scheme is also available to First Nations Australian professional employees, see the Professional Development Procedure - First Nations Employee Schemes.

Section 2 - Policy

(5) Refer to the Professional Development Policy.

Section 3 - Procedure

Part A - Study leave

Scheme details

(6) The study leave scheme provides paid leave for eligible employees to carry out the requirements of a course of study. It is designed to encourage and support professional/general employees to undertake tertiary studies on a part-time basis in order to enhance their opportunities for career progression and professional development.

Eligibility

(7) The study leave support scheme is available to professional/general employees who:

a. currently hold a full or part-time continuing or fixed-term appointment,
b. have completed probation, and

c. have satisfactory performance.

Approved courses of study

(8) Study leave applies to part-time studies delivered in any mode, e.g. self-paced, online or on-campus.

(9) To be approved, the course or nominated subjects must be:

a. relevant to the employee's current appointment, or
b. if supported by their manager, demonstrably relevant to the employee's career development or potential employment within the University.

Applications for study leave

(10) Study leave must be applied for through the Division of People and Culture website and must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor and the appropriate delegated officer.

Study leave entitlement

(11) The maximum entitlement for study leave is four hours per week for the duration of the academic session, where:

a. full-time employees are eligible to apply for up to 4 hours per week,
b. part-time employees are eligible to apply for a proportional amount of the maximum entitlement, based on their employment fraction at the time, and
c. if study is self-paced, the amount of approved study leave is based on the number of weeks and volume of learning in the normal academic session for an equivalent course or subject.

(12) If an employee reduces their study load per session or undertakes less than the standard part-time load of their course, they must inform their manager who will review their approved amount of study leave.

Use of study leave

(13) Study leave may be used for private study, research, travel and attendance at compulsory lectures and practical classes held during work hours, or intensive schools. Study leave is not intended to cover short staff development activities that are conducted in-house or externally.

(14) Study leave will normally be taken as a weekly allocation and cannot be carried over or accrued, except where an employee has approval to use their study leave entitlement for an intensive school. In such cases, the total number of hours over the academic session must not exceed the maximum entitlement.

(15) In addition to the study leave entitlement, employees may also apply for special leave to attend and travel to/from examinations.

Conditions

(16) The following conditions apply to study leave:

a. Approval of study leave is subject to the convenience and needs of the University, the work area's operating requirements and the individual making satisfactory progress with their studies. An employee who has been officially advised that their performance is unsatisfactory is not eligible for study leave and any previously approved study leave may be discontinued until the performance is deemed to be satisfactory.
b. The course of study must be agreed to as part of the employee's current employee development and review scheme plan.

c. If an employee fails a subject, study leave will not be approved for the purpose of repeating the subject and the employee must be able to demonstrate why further study leave should be approved for any other subjects in their course of study.
d. Specific periods of study leave approved in each academic session must be re-negotiated at the commencement of each new session and if course and/or work requirements change.
e. Employees must provide a copy of their admission/enrolment details and results for previous subjects in the course of study:
    i. with their initial application and each ongoing application for study leave, and
    ii. when requested by their manager or supervisor.
f. Where an agreement cannot be reached between the employee and their manager in relation to the approved amount of study leave, the relevant delegated officer will determine the final amount of approved study leave.

(17) An employee may seek further support from their Division of People and Culture business partner where:

a. an application for study time was not approved, or
b. the amount of study time approved is insufficient for the employee to meet course requirements.

Responsibility of managers

(18) Managers must ensure that they:

a. monitor progress and arrange regular progress meetings with their employees throughout the course of study, and
b. make an equitable assessment and manage the study leave allocations within their teams, taking into consideration the study load of each individual and the operational requirements of each work area.

Part B - Postgraduate study support scheme

Scheme details

(19) The professional/general postgraduate study support scheme provides a 25% rebate on subject fees to professional/general employees enrolled in full-fee postgraduate studies at the University. It is designed to encourage and support professional/general employees to undertake postgraduate studies to enhance their opportunities for career progression and professional development.

Eligibility

(20) The postgraduate study support scheme is open to all professional/general employees of the University who:

a. hold a full-time or part-time continuing appointment,
b. have completed at least 12 months' service at the University,
c. have satisfactorily passed probation and their performance is deemed to be satisfactory, and
d. are accepted as a full-fee paying student in a Charles Sturt University postgraduate course that is related to their current position.

Approved courses of study

(21) Postgraduate study support may be approved for Charles Sturt University courses where the course can be demonstrated to relate directly to the employee’s current position within the University. Approved courses include:

a. one or more single subjects at postgraduate level,

b. a graduate certificate,
c. a graduate diploma,
d. a master's degree course (by coursework or research), and
e. a doctoral degree.

(22) The scheme does not provide financial support for:

a. study that is not directly related to the employee's current position,
b. undergraduate study,
c. Commonwealth supported student places (i.e. HECS-HELP),
d. study of subjects delivered by the University's industry partners, or
e. study through other universities.

Applications for postgraduate study support

(23) Applications for postgraduate study support must:

a. be submitted to the employee's manager using the relevant forms on the Division of People and Culture website,
b. include a copy of the offer of admission to a full-fee paying place in a University postgraduate course, and
c. include a completed residual benefit tax declaration.

(24) The approval process for an application requires:

a. a statement from the employee's manager about support for the application, with reference to:
    i. the direct relevance of the course or subject(s) to the employee's current position,
    ii. the potential for enhancing individual performance/capability for the employee's current position, and
    iii. the potential for enhancing the capability of the organisational unit and/or University.
b. approval from the organisational unit's delegated officer,
c. confirmation of eligibility for the scheme from the Executive Director, People and Culture, and
d. submission to Accounts Receivable, Division of Finance for processing.

(25) Copies of the application and approvals must be kept by the supporting organisational unit and the Division of People and Culture.

(26) If financial support has not been approved, the delegated officer or nominee must give the unsuccessful applicant:

a. timely advice to allow them to consider alternatives,
b. the reasons for non-approval, and
c. information on how to request a review of the decision.

Renewal of financial support

(27) To continue receiving the rebate in postgraduate fees, the employee must complete the postgraduate study support scheme renewal form and submit it no later than four weeks before the start of the next academic session.

a. The Executive Director, People and Culture reviews and confirms the completed renewal of financial support.
b. The Division of People and Culture keeps a record of the endorsed application and forwards a copy to the Division of Finance.

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Conditions

(28) The following conditions apply to the postgraduate study scheme:

a. The employee must pay in advance the full fee due for the academic session.
b. The Division of Finance will rebate 25% of the subject fee after the census date. The date of the rebate is at the discretion of the Manager, Revenue and Payables.
c. Approval of financial support for the employee's postgraduate study at the University remains in force for the duration of the course or the subject(s) (unless the employee leaves the University's employment), subject to the submission of a renewal of financial support form each session, see clause 27.
d. If the employee takes leave of absence or withdraws from the course or subject(s), they must notify:
    i. their manager and delegated officer,
    ii. the Division of People and Culture, and
    iii. the Manager, Revenue and Payables.
e. If the employee enrols in a different, full-fee paying place in a postgraduate course or single subject at the University, they must re-apply for the postgraduate study support scheme.
f. If the employee leaves the University's employment, they will be required to reimburse the University for any rebated fees for the current session.
g. Employees must provide a copy of their results to their manager and report on their academic progress and professional development outcomes at Employee Development and Review Scheme meetings.

(29) An employee may seek further support from their Division of People and Culture business partner where an application for postgraduate study support was not approved.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(30) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(31) For the purpose of this procedure:

a. Professional/general employee – has the same meaning as defined in the Enterprise Agreement.
b. Tertiary education – means any type of education pursued beyond the high school level with a tertiary education provider, such as a university, TAFE or vocational college. This includes diplomas, undergraduate and graduate certificates, and associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

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