

University of Strathclyde

Staff Undertaking Studies at Strathclyde Policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the fee discounts available for University staff undertaking award bearing programmes/study at the University. The policy confirms the eligibility criteria, decision making process and conditions that apply.

As a people-oriented employer, the University is committed to supporting the professional development of staff. The benefits are wide ranging and include:

- Attracting and retaining new and existing staff; and
- Supporting staff to further the strategic aims and objectives of the University.

Applications to study from staff should be made through the normal application procedures for University courses. Decisions to accept staff onto a course of study will be made using criteria applied to all applicants regarding prior learning and/or qualifications.

This policy and procedure does not apply to:

- Academic Professional staff who participate in the 'Strathclyde Programme for Academic practice, Researcher development, and Knowledge Exchange' (SPARK) as part of their professional development and/or a requirement for completion of a probationary period; and/or
- Programmes and short courses offered by other organisations.
- Strathclyde MBA (See guidance below)

Discussion about the proposed application to study should take place with the applicant's line manager prior to submitting the application for admission to determine whether this policy may be relevant.

2. Fees and Funding Assistance

Students on programmes of study of more than one year should be aware that tuition fees are revised annually and may increase in subsequent years of study. Annual increases will generally reflect UK inflation rates and increases to course delivery costs.

In situations where less than 100% fee discount is available, and where the development activity is deemed **essential** to the member of staff carrying out an existing or new function within the department, and this can be evidenced, then the shortfall may be funded in whole or part by the Department and/or member of staff.

The levels of special fee discounts for staff are:

- **Undergraduate Degree**
50% of the published tuition fee rate¹ for the course (The remaining 50% will be funded either in whole or part by the applicant and where appropriate Department)
- **Postgraduate Taught Degree**
100% of the published tuition fee for the course
- **Postgraduate Research Degree**
100% of the published tuition fee for the course
Staff members remain personally liable for thesis submission and any other costs
- **Centre for Lifelong Learning**

¹ As published on the University's website: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/tuitionfees/>

Charged at the Centre's advertised staff concession rate²

- **Strathclyde MBA**

Maximum of 3 places @ 100% of the published fee; Additional places (Set annually by SBS) @ 50% of the published fee.

3. Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for a discounted fee, the following criteria will be met by the member of staff at the commencement of the period of study:

- 3.1 At least 12 months' remaining on their employment contract with the University;
- 3.2 Written confirmation from Head of Department/Service Department that participation in the course at a discounted fee rate will:
 - (i) Provide development which will be of benefit to the employee and the University;
 - (ii) Support and advance the strategic aims of the University;
 - (iii) Be recorded in the ADR form;
 - (iv) Not negatively impact on the employee's ability to undertake their normal work activities (discussions may take place re flexible working options);
- 3.3 The employee has not received a fee discount for studies from the University of Strathclyde in past 5 years
- 3.4 Written confirmation from the employee that their study is not eligible to be paid for by other funding/bursary/grant/award body.
- ³3.5 MBA applicants only –
 - Are required to complete a written submission of no more than 1500 words outlining the personal and professional objectives in studying for the MBA and also how it will benefit the University.
 - Append your CV to your application.
 - Attend a selection interview.
 - Applicants should note that even where they meet the eligibility criteria they may not be offered a fully or part funded place.

The criteria at 3.1 and 3.2 may be waived where the course of study is considered critical to the individual's current role (e.g., Research Assistant studying for award of a PhD or where there is a legal/contractual or other requirement to hold a specific qualification).

Where all of the above these criteria are met, the application should be made as set out below.

4. Application Procedure (See Appendix 1 Application Process Diagram)

- 4.1 The applicant submits a written request to their Line Manager setting out the professional development benefits to both the employee and University. This should be as early as possible prior to intended start date.
- 4.2 If supported by the Line Manager the applicant should submit an application to undertake study through the standard application process and also submit an online [staff fee discount application](#) to the Head of School/Department/Service. If applying for MBA programme you must complete section 5 of the form.
- 4.3 If supported by the applicant's Head of School/Department/Service the application will be sent to the Organisational and Staff Development Manager who will circulate to relevant parties for consideration.

² As published on the CLL's website: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/cll/info/fees/>

³ Applicable only to applicants applying for MBA Programme

- 4.4 Cases will be formally reviewed and determined jointly by:
- The staff member's Head of Department/School/Professional Services Director
 - The Head of Department/School of the area where the course is offered
 - MBA applicants for funded places may be required to attend a selection interview
 - Organisational and Staff Development Manager OSDU
- 4.5 Consideration will be given to a range of issues when deciding whether to award a fee discount, including but not limited to:
- Relevance of the proposed study to current or future role within the University (preference will be given to current role requirements);
 - The likely impact on the employee's ability to undertake their normal work activities. Discussions may take place re flexible working options in advance of any application for fee discount being made;
 - Alignment of the proposal to the strategic aims and objectives of the Faculty or Department and the University; and
 - Whether the programme of study is identified and agreed in the employee's Accountability and Development Review (ADR) process.
- 4.6 All decisions will be final.
- 4.7 Any fee discounts provided are conditional upon the member of staff signing a separate repayment agreement to repay all or part of the fee discount. Further details are outlined in Section 5.

5. Recovery of Subsidised Tuition Fees

Should an employee

- (i) Withdraw from a programme of study during their employment without the University's consent or
 - (ii) Fail to gain the award or qualification sought; or
 - (iii) Leave the University either through voluntary resignation or having been dismissed [for reasons of misconduct], they may be required to repay a percentage of the fee discount provided.
- 5.1 When the employee's employment terminates, repayment of the fee discount is based on the end date of the course (the Date of Award) and/or the employee's termination date, as follows:
- Termination date within the period of study – 100% of fee discount repayable and, if the employee wishes to complete their studies, they will be liable for any future tuition fees;
 - Termination date within 1 year of Date of Award - 100% of fee discount repayable;
 - Termination date within 2 years of the Date of Award - 50% of fee discount repayable.
- 5.2 Any proposal to withdraw from a programme of study attracting a fee discount should be discussed and agreed by the Head of Department prior to withdrawal or deferment and notified to the Organisational and Staff Development Unit. If an employee withdraws from a course without the University's consent and continues to be employed by the University, they may be required to repay up to 100% of the fee discount.

6. SPARK Modules – payment after termination of employment

The Strathclyde Programme for Academic practice, Researcher development, and Knowledge exchange (SPARK) is an in-house professional development programme that provides Masters level modules in a range of areas relevant to the professional development of Academic Professional staff (i.e. the Academic, Research, Teaching, and Knowledge Exchange staff categories). Participation in the programme is a condition of employment contract for some academic professional staff (e.g. under academic probation).

No fees are charged for any member of academic professional staff (full-time or part-time) who is currently employed by the University. Where a member of staff leaves the University prior to completing their programme of study no cost recovery will be made in respect of modules already completed. However, should a departing member of staff wish to complete a course of study under this programme which extends beyond their date of departure, this may be possible but would require the payment of an appropriate fee (currently £600 per module).

7. Student Load

Any staff who are also students are generally excluded from Student Load data used to determine internal resource allocation with the exception of studying for a higher research degree for which Departments will receive FTE load recognition.

JL/HR

Appendix 1

Staff Undertaking Studies at Strathclyde Process Diagram

