

## **MANAGERS' GRADUATE DEGREE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY**

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### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage University managers to pursue career relevant, graduate-level credit-bearing coursework or graduate degree programs by establishing a reimbursement mechanism for certain associated expenses.

### **Policy Statement**

Authorized University managers will receive reimbursement of covered expenses relating to career relevant graduate courses associated with a master's or doctoral degree, provided that the manager receives a final grade of "B" or higher, and the coursework was completed at an eligible institution. Graduate coursework may not interfere with the performance of a manager's assigned duties or conflict with his or her scheduled working hours. This coursework is not eligible for release time. This policy is effective beginning the first semester or special term subsequent to the approval date of the policy, and is not retroactive.

A. Reimbursement Limits: Authorized managers qualifying for reimbursement of covered expenses that complete their graduate coursework at WCU and obtain the required grade level will be eligible for reimbursement at the WCU in-state or out-of-state rate based on their specific residency. Authorized managers qualifying for reimbursement of covered expenses that complete their graduate coursework at another eligible institution and obtain the required grade level will receive reimbursement at the instate rate for WCU graduate courses. Any tuition expenses above the WCU in-

state rate incurred from graduate coursework at another eligible institution are the responsibility of the manager.

B. Conditions of Participation in the Reimbursement Program:

Managers participating in the Graduate Tuition Reimbursement Program are expected to remain in the employ of West Chester University for a minimum period of one (1) year subsequent to the completion of any graduate coursework submitted for reimbursement. If the manager does not meet this condition, any reimbursements made within a year of the manager's date of employment termination are subject to repayment to WCU. Exceptions to this repayment condition are: if the manager is furloughed within that year, is determined to be medically ineligible for continued employment within that year, or becomes deceased within that year.

**Procedures**

A. Pre-Approval Form: A Graduate Course or Program Pre-Approval form must be completed by the manager, endorsed by the department head, and approved by the manager's division head prior to the first day of class. If not pre-approved, the tuition may not be eligible for reimbursement.

B. Out-Service Training Authorization For Graduate Tuition

Reimbursement Form: Must be fully completed by the manager, endorsed by the manager's department head, and approved by the division head for each semester or special term at the time reimbursement is sought.

C. Necessary Attachments to the Out-Service Training Authorization for Graduate Tuition Reimbursement Form: A legible copy of the billing and grade reports for the course or courses taken for which reimbursement is being sought must be attached.

**Definitions**

- A. Graduate Courses or Programs: Any credit-bearing course or program offered by a university at the post-baccalaureate level, to include graduate certificates, master's degrees, post-master's certificates and doctoral degrees.
- B. Covered Expenses: Tuition only, subject to limits described below.
- C. Career Relevant: Having a direct relationship to the manager's immediate position or a higher level position at WCU within the current career track, as determined by a Division Head.

- D. Authorized University Manager: Any fulltime, non-temporary manager-level employee of the University who has successfully completed the probationary period, has currently satisfactory performance, anticipates remaining in the University's employ for a minimum of one (1) year, has pre-approval of the graduate course or program to be taken, and is not receiving state or federal grants or scholarships, or other tuition assistance that cover tuition expenses is deemed authorized to participate in this program.
- E. Eligible Institution: West Chester University provided that the graduate coursework is available at WCU. Managers may complete graduate coursework at another University if a similar course or program is unavailable at WCU. The University's chief academic officer will determine if a similar course or program is unavailable at WCU.

**Effective Date:** Beginning Fall 2016 Semester.

### **Notes**

- A. Taxability: While the University believes that this education assistance qualifies for exclusion from the manager's gross income, any contrary determination by the IRS or changes in IRS Tax Code resulting in taxability is the responsibility of the manager.
- B. Suspension of Program: The President reserves the right to suspend this program with six (6) months prior notice to managers in any year when fiscal requirements necessitate it.

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C. Interpretation: The Chief Human Resources Officer is responsible for interpretation of this policy.

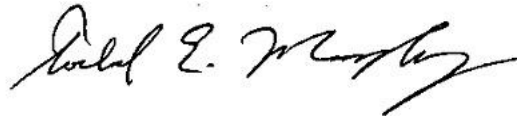
D. "Tuition" in Section II.B. includes the Tuition Technology Fee.

E. "Pre-approval" of a course or program by a manager's division head does not constitute course registration or admission to a graduate program at West Chester University or any other university. Course registration and/or meeting graduate admissions requirements are the responsibility of the eligible university manager.

**Reviewed by:** Office of Human Resources

**Policy Owner:** William J. Helzsouer

**Approved by:**



Todd E. Murphy

Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Effective Date:** January 11, 2016

**Reviewed by:** William J. Helzsouer

**Review Date:** March 12, 2022

**History:**

**Initial Approval:** January 11, 2016

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