Career Development Support Procedure

1. The purpose of our procedure

Our procedure sets out how we support our staff through development opportunities that align with the University's strategic objectives and the Adelaide University Enterprise Agreement 2026 (Enterprise Agreement).

Please read this procedure in conjunction with the:

- Staff Development and Performance Policy
- Performance Planning, Development and Review (PDR) Procedure
- [Professional Staff Secondment Procedure]
- Academic Promotion Procedure.

2. Who our procedure applies to

2.1 Inclusions

This procedure applies to continuing and fixed-term staff who meet the relevant Enterprise Agreement and participation requirements for each category.

2.2 Exclusions

This procedure does not apply to:

- casual staff
- staff for whom participation requirements cannot reasonably be met, for example staff on a fixed-term contract where a development activity goes beyond their contract end date.

This procedure authorises the Executive Director, Organisational Capability to maintain associated protocols.

3. Our staff career development opportunities

3.1 How we support staff career development

Our Enterprise Agreement sets out the University's key career development offerings for staff, and this procedure outlines key steps as required by the Enterprise Agreement including:

- financial support via a discount for approved study
- study release

- professional staff development scholarship scheme
- sabbatical program
- overseas conference leave.

The University provides a variety of opportunities to support staff to achieve their goals and develop their skills, capability, and experience. Staff development and career goals are usually identified and discussed through the **Performance Planning, Development and Review (PDR)** process. Where practical, outcomes of applications for career development offerings will be communicated in writing, and if the application is declined, feedback will be provided.

3.2 How we financially support approved study

To be eligible for financial support for approved study, staff must:

- choose an eligible approved program of study provided by Adelaide University
- be continuing or on a fixed-term contract that extends for a minimum 12-month period beyond the completion of the approved study
- not be in receipt of other forms of financial support for the same program of study
- sign a repayment / reimbursement agreement.

Proposed programs of study should be discussed and agreed upon between the staff member and line manager as part of regular PDR conversations.

Applications must be submitted with agreement from the line manager and must be supported with documents to demonstrate enrolment and fee information.

The senior leader will assess whether the application meets the criteria and will then either approve or decline the funding application. The outcome will be communicated to the staff member by their line manager.

Completed applications will be forwarded to People and Culture for recording on the staff member's file and to the Student Finance team for processing. Applications must be submitted through to student finance prior to the census date for the relevant period of study. After the fee discount has been applied, an updated invoice will be issued outlining the discount applied and the remaining fees payable by the staff member. Refer to the Fees and Loans Policy for further information.

3.2.1 Unsuccessful completion of study

If a staff member fails their program or withdraws after the census date from a program for which they have received a financial support discount, the discount may be reversed, and the full original study costs will be invoiced to the staff member.

3.2.2 Retention commitment

Acceptance of financial support under this procedure is conditional upon the staff member remaining employed by the University for a period of 12 months following completion of the funded study.

If a staff member does not remain employed within 12 months of completing the funded study, the University may require repayment of all fees funded or subsidised by the University for the last year of study undertaken.

3.3 How we support study release

Eligible professional staff may be granted study leave to support approved professional development and study activities.

Study release may only be approved where:

- the request is approved in accordance with the delegated authority prior to the commencement of the study or development activity;
- the proposed study or activity aligns with the requirements of the staff member's role or agreed development objectives;
- the staff member demonstrates satisfactory performance;
- the proposed program of study has been discussed and agreed with the staff member's line manager through regular PDR discussions; and
- the operational requirements of the work area can be reasonably accommodated.

In considering an application for study release, the line manager will take into account the staff member's agreed development plan and the operational needs of the local work area.

To apply for study release, staff members must provide all information reasonably required to support their application, including details of the program, study schedule, rationale for study release and any anticipated impact on work commitments. Personal information provided in support of applications will be handled sensitively and in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements.

Refer to Privacy Policy for more information.

Relevant documentation includes:

- an official statement of the previous year's results where applicable
- the letter of offer for the program of study inclusive of overall program details for new applicants
- evidence of the proposed timetable and expected study load

- a statement outlining how the proposed study will align with their current role and /or career development.

Applications will be assessed by the line manager, and will consider the following:

- alignment with organisational priorities
- benefit to the staff member and the University
- impact on service delivery, team workload and resourcing
- previous use of study release, where relevant.

The line manager will approve or decline the request and communicate the outcome to the staff member in writing, including the reason if not approved.

Staff approved for study release must:

- maintain satisfactory academic progress
- notify their line manager of material changes affecting approved study arrangements.

If a study release arrangement is altered due to a change in circumstances, such as changing the program of study or moving to a new position or work area, the staff member must complete a new application to reflect the varied arrangements to be agreed by the line manager.

3.4 Our professional staff development scholarship scheme

The professional staff development scholarship scheme provides professional staff with an opportunity to apply for a scholarship as outlined in the Enterprise Agreement. The scheme is administered by People and Culture through an annual application process, with applications assessed in accordance with the approved eligibility and selection criteria.

The scheme supports staff wanting to engage in one-off or short courses or learning initiatives to develop their knowledge and capability on their career path.

To apply for a professional staff development scholarship, eligible staff must submit a written application when the round is opened providing:

- program details
- alignment with the staff member's future career direction and PDR goals
- cost
- line manager endorsement including that the staff member's performance is at an appropriate level to undertake additional development.

The Capability Development team will review applications against the selection criteria and forward eligible applications to the relevant Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) or college Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) for assessment, prioritisation and

approval based on the scholarship allocation available. The Capability Development team will communicate scholarship outcomes to applicants.

3.5 Our sabbatical program

All academic staff members (except casuals) are eligible to participate in the University's Sabbatical Program provided their contract of employment extends beyond the period of the sabbatical for at least an equal period. The program allows eligible staff a planned period of absence from their normal duties to undertake activities that support their academic development and contribution to the University.

Applications for the sabbatical program will be invited annually. Academic staff may become eligible for sabbatical leave through **recognised service** in accordance with clause 64 of the Enterprise Agreement, including applicable accrual and maximum period provisions. Staff must apply for sabbatical leave via Staff Services Online (SSO) once the sabbatical program application has been approved.

Participation in the sabbatical program may be approved where the proposed activities:

- support the strategic objectives and priorities of the University;
- enhance the staff member's professional knowledge, skills, qualifications, research capability, teaching practice, or contribution to their discipline or profession; and
- are relevant to the staff member's role and future contribution to the University.

To apply, staff members must discuss their proposed activities with their line manager and submit an application that has been endorsed by their line manager.

Application assessment will consider:

- eligibility requirements, including accrued sabbatical leave, where applicable;
- the anticipated benefits and outcomes for the staff member, local work area, and University;
- the staff member's demonstrated capacity to successfully complete the proposed activities;
- operational requirements of the relevant work unit;
- if the staff member is subject to an investigation relating to misconduct, serious misconduct, or unsatisfactory performance;
- the time elapsed since the staff member last accessed sabbatical leave or a comparable program; and

- whether the staff member's employment is expected to continue for a period following their return, at least equal to the period of sabbatical leave taken.

Portfolios employing academic staff must establish an appropriate process for assessing sabbatical applications, including suitable academic representation.

Applications will be assessed by the relevant academic panel, which will make a recommendation to the relevant PVC. The PVC may approve, decline, or approve subject to conditions and / or variations.

In exceptional circumstances, the relevant DVC may approve accrual of up to 14 months to support participation in the sabbatical program.

Academic staff who undertake approved sabbatical leave must submit a completion report within three (3) months of return. The report will outline the activities undertaken, outcomes achieved, alignment with approved objectives and any follow-up actions or impacts. Failure to meet reporting requirements may be considered in future applications.

After returning from sabbatical, staff are expected to remain in the employment of the University for a further period at least equivalent to that of the sabbatical leave taken. If a staff member resigns from the University before the end of this period, they will be required to refund to the University all monies received from the University in the form of travel allowances or other expenses granted in support of the sabbatical. However, the University may consider extenuating circumstances communicated in writing by the staff member at the time of resignation.

3.6 How we support overseas conference leave

All continuing and fixed-term academic staff, excluding post graduate students, can apply for support to attend an overseas conference where:

- the conference has a clear connection to their role, professional development, research activities, or strategic contribution;
- attendance delivers a demonstrable benefit to Adelaide University;
- necessary approvals and funding arrangements have been secured; and
- the staff member can be reasonably released from normal duties.

Staff must discuss their intention to attend the conference with their line manager. Formal approval for leave, travel and associated expenditure must be obtained in accordance with the Delegation Policy and Staff and Visitor Travel Procedure.

Any period of personal travel associated with the planned travel must be discussed and applied for at the same time via SSO.

4. Who holds a responsibility within this procedure

Refer to the Delegation Policy for all delegations at Adelaide University.

4.1 The relevant Deputy Vice Chancellor is required to:

- approve accrual of up to 14 months to support participation in the sabbatical program
- assess and approve professional staff development scholarship applications where responsibility sits with a Deputy Vice Chancellor
- consider extenuating circumstances and determine repayment requirements where a staff member resigns following participation in the sabbatical program
- make determinations on exceptions to this procedure where authorised to do so under the Delegation Policy.

4.2 Pro Vice Chancellors (or equivalent) are required to:

- assess, prioritise and determine professional staff development scholarship applications for their academic area allocation
- consider recommendations from academic assessment panels and approve or decline sabbatical program applications subject to conditions or variations
- support implementation of academic development opportunities within their area of responsibility.

4.3 Deans of School (or equivalent) are required to:

- support workforce planning and resourcing arrangements that enable staff participation in approved development opportunities
- ensure workload arrangements are appropriate and sustainable for approved development participation
- support implementation of academic development processes for their academic area where required.

4.4 Senior leaders are required to:

- approve or decline financial support applications on the recommendation of line managers.

4.5 People and Culture are required to:

- maintain and administer application processes, timelines, forms, guidance materials and documentation requirements
- verify the eligibility and completeness of applications as required
- undertake or coordinate relevant checks, including eligibility, probity and conduct checks where required

- maintain records associated with development applications and approvals including communicating outcomes as required.

4.6 Student Finance are required to:

- process approved study fee discounts
- apply approved financial support arrangements to student accounts
- issue updated invoices and related financial documentation where required.

4.7 Line managers of academic staff are required to:

- support development planning processes and equitable access to development opportunities including regional participation where appropriate
- provide advice and endorse applications including by confirming satisfactory performance and alignment with university priorities
- review and confirm that completion reports submitted by staff returning from sabbatical leave are satisfactory and have been submitted within the required timeframes
- ensure development activity is captured and managed through the PDR process.
- consider operational impacts associated with staff participation.

4.8 Line managers of professional staff are required to:

- support development planning processes and equitable access to development opportunities including regional participation where appropriate
- consider operational impacts associated with development participation
- review and approve or decline study release requests
- review and endorse financial support requests and, if required, make a recommendation to a senior leader for approval
- approve relevant development participation within delegated authority and support staff undertaking approved development opportunities.

4.9 The staff member applicant is required to:

- comply with application, participation, and reporting requirements
- provide complete and accurate information in support of applications
- notify their line manager of material changes affecting approved development activities.

5. Definitions used in our procedure

Please refer to the Adelaide University glossary for a full list of our definitions.

Performance Planning, Development and Review (PDR) means the University's collaborative process between a staff member and their line manager to support performance and development conversations, set goals and expectations, review progress, provide feedback, and identify development and career opportunities in alignment with the University's values, strategic objectives, and role expectations.

Recognised service means continuous service with Adelaide University, a foundation university, or another higher education institution with an equivalent program.

Sabbatical leave means an approved period of leave for academic staff to undertake scholarly and professional development activities in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement.

6. How our procedure is governed

This procedure is categorised, approved and owned in line with the governance structure of Adelaide University and the offices and officers listed below.

Parent policy	**Staff Performance and Development Policy**
Policy category	Corporate
Approving authority	Vice Chancellor and President
Policy owner	Deputy Vice Chancellor – People and Culture Provost and Deputy Vice Chancellor
Responsible officer	Executive Director, Organisational Capability
Effective from	11 November 2026
Review date	4 years after date this version is approved
Enquiries	Submit enquiries via General enquiry - P&C on Services Hub
Replaced documents	None

7. Legislation and other documents related to our procedure

Refer to the Delegation Policy for all delegations at Adelaide University.

Category	**Documents**
Related procedures	Performance Planning, Development and Review Procedure

	Staff Probation Procedure
	Academic Promotion Procedure
Related policy documents	Staff Development and Performance Policy
	Staff Code of Conduct
	[Leave Procedure]
	Wellbeing and Safety Policy
	Fees and Loans Policy
	Staff and Visitor Travel Procedure
	Privacy Policy
Related legislation	*Adelaide University Act 2023*
External references	Adelaide University Enterprise Agreement 2026, as varied or replaced from time to time.

8. History of changes

Date approved	To section/clauses	Description of change
11 November 2026 AD2026/459111	N/A	New procedure

At the time of writing, some organisational details within Adelaide University are still evolving. Square brackets [ ] are used to indicate placeholders or areas where information may be refined, clarified, or confirmed. These will be updated as the University's arrangements are finalised.