

TYPE: Employment-Related
TITLE: Professional Development
NO.: EMPL-307
RESPONSIBILITY: Associate Vice President, Human Resources and Equity
APPROVED BY: Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 2025

1. Introduction

Durham College recognizes the importance of academic credentials, including diplomas, degrees, and advanced degrees. As a learning organization, Durham College is committed to supporting employees in their achievement of academic credentials that will enhance the quality of education and student experience.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to articulate the commitment of the College, as well as the employees' roles and responsibilities to and for professional development.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. Professional development, focused on College goals and employee needs, is a shared investment in people whose work and performance serves as a foundation for the College to succeed in its mission, as well as contribute to the growth of its employees.
- 4.2. Durham College recognizes that professional development is a shared responsibility between the College and its employees. The College has a responsibility to encourage and support the continuous development of employees. Each employee has the responsibility to seek out their own professional and career development.
- 4.3. This policy applies to Durham College full-time permanent employees, partial load faculty, as well as the regular part-time support staff employee group.

- 4.4. All employee professional development costs, to which this policy applies, are to be funded under this Policy. Employees cannot be further supplemented for these, or any associated, costs beyond the central funding account.
- 4.5. Co-ordination of College-sponsored programs completed under this policy is the responsibility of the Associate Vice President, Human Resources & Equity.
- 4.6. Co-ordination of professional development is a shared responsibility between an employee and their immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor will have responsibility for ensuring specific requests comply with the employee's professional development plan. Approval of the immediate supervisor will include verification of activity and scheduling.
- 4.7. Immediate supervisors and Vice Presidents are responsible for approving tuition advance and reimbursement requests.
- 4.8. Employees are responsible for obtaining appropriate approvals for professional development in advance of program registration, as well as providing required documentation to support the advance/reimbursement, including transcripts and showing successful completion of courses
- 4.9. Employees who receive tuition advancement or reimbursement agree to remain employed by Durham College for a minimum of three years, following the completion of the degree. Employees who leave employment prior to three years following the completion of the degree will be required to repay 50 percent of the tuition funds they were advanced or reimbursed under this policy.
- 4.10. Typically, employees will be eligible for completion of one credential under the terms of this policy.

5. Procedure

5.1. Diploma, Certificate and Undergraduate programs:

Durham College will reimburse 50 percent of tuition for employees successfully completing courses, to a maximum of \$3,000 (CDN) per calendar year. The reimbursement amount is calculated based on the year in which the course was completed. Employees can also request tuition advancement for the full tuition prior to the start of each course. The total amount owed by the employee, 50 percent of total tuition, will be automatically deducted from the employee's pay for the duration of the course.

5.2 Post-Graduate studies:

Durham College will reimburse 50 percent of tuition for employees successfully completing courses to a maximum of \$5,000 (CDN) dollars per calendar year. The reimbursement amount is calculated based on the year in which the course was completed. Employees can also request tuition advancement for the full tuition prior to the start of each course. The total amount owed by the employee, 50 percent of total tuition, will be automatically deducted from the employee's pay for the duration of the course.

- 5.2.1 Employees pursuing a Master's degree will be eligible for reimbursement for a maximum of two years. Employees can apply to the Associate Vice President, Human Resources and Equity for extra time if circumstances warrant an extension
- 5.2.2 Employees pursuing a doctoral degree will be eligible for reimbursement for a maximum of six years. Employees can apply to the Associate Vice President, Human Resources and Equity for extra time if circumstances warrant an extension.
- 5.3 To be eligible for reimbursement, the credential must be relevant to the employee's job responsibilities/teaching assignment.
- 5.4 A completed Tuition Reimbursement Planning and Approval Form is required prior to the start of the program.
- 5.5 The completed planning and approval form is to be sent to Human Resources for processing.
- 5.6 Upon successful completion of the course, employees must provide a grade report for Human Resources' records. If a grade report is not received, future application submissions will not be processed.
- 5.7 Employees who do not successfully complete their program of study will be required to reimburse the College for all advances.
- 5.8 For programs taken in another Country, additional documentation is required to support the currency exchange rates that occurred at the time of payment.

5.9 Access to Part-time Courses

- 5.9.1 Employees are eligible to access part-time courses with regulated tuition, at a reduced fee. Please refer to the Durham College Employee Access to Part-time Courses at a Reduced Fee policy and procedure EMPL-305.

5.10 Other professional development activities

- 5.10.1 Participation in other professional development-related activities is to be planned in advance with approval of an employee's manager. Associated costs are the responsibility of the employee's department. These activities are considered paid work time and any related expenses require prior approval and must follow the Durham College Business and Travel Expense Reimbursement policy and procedure ADMIN-215.

6 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7 Non-compliance implications

Failure to invest in the professional development of individual employees or groups of employees could result in the College not being able to best meet the needs of students, in and/or out of the classroom.

8 Related forms, legislation or external resources

- Academic College Agreement
- Administrative Staff Performance Planning and Development System
- Administrative Staff Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Faculty Performance Review and Planning Process
- Support Staff Collective Agreement
- Support Staff Performance Review and Planning Process.
- Tuition Reimbursement Planning & Approval Form (HRS65)