
Flexible Benefit Plan for Excluded Management and Excluded Professional Staff Policy

Policy Sponsor:	Director, Human Resources
Policy Contact:	Manager, Payroll Services
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Purpose

To provide excluded management and excluded professional staff members with a flexible benefit plan pursuant to employment contracts. This benefit reflects the compensation principles established for excluded management and excluded professional staff. This flexible benefit plans makes possible a monthly stipend with the option to acquire additional vacation credits.

As well, a learning leave option is provided that reinforces Athabasca University as a learning organization. Members are entitled to a paid leave of absence to acquire additional education or pursue activities to enhance the professional performance of the staff members in their assigned University roles.

Definitions

Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLPL)	A plan that allows a member to defer a portion of total monthly salary and flexible stipend to fund a future leave, following Canada Revenue Agency requirements for such plans.
Excluded staff	For purposes of this policy, excluded staff members are excluded managers and excluded professional members that, by virtue of their employment roles, have an excluded employment contract with the



University. Their positions are out-of-scope and excluded from membership in a union or faculty association, and therefore are not covered under one of the collective agreements.

Flexible stipend

An amount, generally a percentage of salary, that may be available to members as a monthly stipend payment and/or additional vacation credits.

Learning leave

A leave of absence with full or reduced pay for the purpose of enhancing the professional performance of the Plan member in their assigned role(s) at the University.

Policy Statements

Benefits

The Flexible Benefit Plan (“Plan”) is available to excluded management and excluded professional staff members as agreed upon in their contracts of employment with the University.

At commencement of employment with the University and every five years thereafter, members can elect to receive a flexible stipend, as stipulated in their contracts of employment, or accrue learning leave entitlement.

Flexible Stipend

Members can elect to use the flexible stipend to purchase additional vacation credits, in one week increments.

Flexible stipend allocation elections to purchase additional vacation credits must be made annually.

Members can purchase one, two, three or four weeks of additional vacation credits, for use in the same year.

Where a member elects three or four weeks of additional vacation credits, the member’s immediate supervisor must approve the request in advance of the election.

Members must comply with the University vacation carry forward restrictions.

After allocations to vacation credits, the remainder of the stipend will be paid as a monthly stipend.

Members choosing the flexible stipend option can also participate in a Deferred Salary Leave Plan, regardless of whether additional vacation credits are chosen or not in any year.

Learning Leave

A member can elect to accrue Learning Leave entitlement instead of the Flexible Stipend.



Learning Leave entitlement will accumulate at two months per year for full-time continuous service (prorated for part-time service).

A member must apply at least one year in advance of an intended Learning Leave, outlining the intended learning activity during the leave, such as graduate study, professional training or conducting a research project.

A Learning Leave requires the approval of the member's supervisor and respective Executive Officer.

A Learning Leave will be a minimum of four (4) months and a maximum of twelve (12) months duration.

The University will normally provide to the member 80 percent of normal salary for the duration of the Learning Leave, together with employee benefits as if the member was working full-time.

Members can elect the full salary option, whereby accumulated leave is converted and consumed so that the member receives full salary, and the leave is reduced accordingly.

There is no cash value to this option, and the DSLP will not be available to individuals selecting this option.

Staff members that leave the employ of the University will not be entitled to Learning Leaves or any cash value of the accumulated entitlement.

General

This Plan does not constitute an enlargement of any rights to which an employee is entitled apart from this Plan.

Any resulting personal tax or other liabilities related to payments and benefits from this Plan are the full responsibility of the member.

The University intends to maintain this Plan in force indefinitely but necessarily reserves the right to amend or discontinue the Plan should future conditions warrant such action in the opinion of the University.

No amendment to the Plan shall reduce the benefits that members of the Plan have earned prior to the date of the amendment.

Applicable Legislation and Regulations

[Income Tax Act](#)



Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms

[Flexible Benefit Plan for Excluded Management and Excluded Professional Staff Procedure](#)

Flexible Benefit Plan Allocation Form (in development)

History

Replaces Flexible Benefit Guidelines