

Employee Tuition Affordability Program Policy

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide tuition assistance to eligible employees of The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA or University) promoting the University's institutional mission and to enhance employee benefits, recruitment and retention. This complies with UT System Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents [Rule 30112 Training and Education](#), and is consistent with the provisions of the State Employees Training Act (Tex. Gov. Code [§ 656.041](#)).

II. Policy Statement

The UTA Employee Tuition Affordability Program (UTA-ETAP) provides eligible employees with tuition assistance to support them in achieving personal and professional growth and development. The UTA-ETAP program empowers employees to pursue an undergraduate degree, graduate degree, or job-related courses at UTA that enhance job performance and satisfaction. In addition, it fosters a culture focused on learning and growth by increasing employee knowledge, work capabilities, and competencies needed to achieve both UTA employee's and the University's goals and objectives.

A. Compliance

Compliance with the UTA-ETAP is the responsibility of the participating employee and their manager.

B. Eligibility

1. An employee becomes eligible for the UTA-ETAP once they have completed six months of continuous regular full-time employment (40 work hours per week) or part-time employment (20 to 39 work hours per week) with the University prior to:
 - a. August 1 for the Fall semester;
 - b. January 1 for the Spring semester; and
 - c. May 1 for the Summer semester.

The employee must have a regular (non-temporary) appointment as of the first day of class of the academic term for which the UTA-ETAP is paid.

2. The employee must apply, be admitted, registered for classes as a student at UTA and successfully complete the class(es). Retirees and student employees are not eligible for the UTA-ETAP.
3. In addition to the requirements above, recipients must:
 - a. Be in and maintain active non-probationary employee status. Probationary employees who previously worked at least six months for another Texas state agency prior to hire at UTA, and employees who previously worked at least six months as a student employee at UTA and then directly transferred into a staff or faculty position satisfy this requirement.
 - b. Have received at least a satisfactory rating on the most recent performance evaluation.
 - c. Not subject to a final written warning, or on administrative leave in the six months prior to the day the academic semester begins.
4. All required forms and paperwork must be approved by the employee's supervisor and Vice President or Dean and turned in to the Financial Aid Office for review and approval. Deans may delegate approval to assistant/associate deans, and vice presidents may delegate approval to assistant/associate vice presidents.

C. Benefit

1. The UTA-ETAP is a flat dollar amount which covers in-state designated tuition, statutory tuition, mandatory fees, and average differential tuition (e.g. technology fee, student services, registration fee). The UTA-ETAP is applied up front directly to the recipient's student account on behalf of the University.
2. UTA-ETAP recipients must pay any remaining balance due after the benefit has been applied.
3. The UTA-ETAP provides tuition assistance for:
 - a. Up to six credit hours per semester for full-time employees and up to three credit hours per semester for part-time employees (including the summer semester), for UTA undergraduate and graduate courses. This includes Accelerated Online Programs, with the exception of the Nursing Accelerated Online Programs.
 - i. There is no minimum enrollment credit hour requirement for the UTA-ETAP.

4. The UTA-ETAP is capped only by the number of semester courses per eligible employee and has no maximum amount of tuition assistance per calendar year.
5. The UTA-ETAP complies with the tax provisions of [26 U.S. Code § 117\(d\)](#) and [26 U.S. Code § 127](#).
 - a. Tuition assistance received for undergraduate courses under the UTA-ETAP is excluded from the recipient's gross income.
 - b. Tuition assistance received for graduate courses under the UTA-ETAP up to \$5,250 per calendar year is excluded from a recipient's gross income. Once the UTA-ETAP exceeds \$5,250 in graduate benefits for the calendar year, graduate tuition benefits are taxable to the recipient. Recipients will be responsible for paying taxes on any amount over \$5,250 for graduate courses.

D. Approval

Upon completion of the required provisions herein of the employee to receive UTA-ETAP tuition assistance and those set forth in any procedure implementing this program, the UTA-ETAP will be applied to the employee's tuition and course related fees for the semester by the Financial Aid Office. The program is paid for by UTA central administration funding at no cost to the employing department.

E. Continued Tuition Assistance Eligibility

1. The employee is eligible to receive the UTA-ETAP only for courses in which they received a grade of at least:
 - a. "C" (2.0 grade points) or higher for undergraduate courses (Specific programs may require a higher grade); or
 - b. "B" (3.0 grade points) or higher for graduate courses.
2. In order to continue to be eligible for the UTA-ETAP, the employee must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Maintain a GPA of:
 - i. 2.5 as an undergraduate student; or
 - ii. 3.0 as a graduate student.
 - b. Receive a final grade for each course.

- i. An employee is not eligible to continue participation in the UTA-ETAP if the employee has a grade of “Incomplete” or “Withdrawal”.
 - ii. If an employee fails to meet the criteria above, they will be eligible again once the employee’s GPA returns to:
 - 1) 2.5 as an undergraduate student; or
 - 2) 3.0 as a graduate student.
 - c. Remain in a continuous regular full-time/part-time employment status throughout the semester.
3. UTA-ETAP recipients are required to meet all the eligibility criteria throughout the semester. If eligibility requirements are not met, the employee will lose eligibility for funds provided under the UTA-ETAP the following semester.

F. Limitations

1. The UTA-ETAP tuition assistance will not apply to room and board charges, textbooks and supplies, transportation, personal/miscellaneous costs, parking costs, late fees or financing fees, travel expenses, or incidental items (including those required by the instructor, such as calculators or specific software).
2. The UTA-ETAP cannot be used for any other cost of instruction, Executive MBA or other executive degree programs, or Nursing Accelerated Online Programs. UTA-ETAP is not applicable for auditing classes.
3. The UTA-ETAP cannot be used in place of any other tuition waiver, grant, or scholarship which an employee receives. In the event an employee receives a partial tuition waiver, grant, or scholarship; the UTA-ETAP may be used for the remaining tuition expenses. Employee’s spouses, children and other family members are excluded from the UTA-ETAP.
4. There is no limit on the number of UTA-ETAP recipients.

G. Class Attendance During Working Hours

1. Employees should make every effort to register for courses outside of working hours. However, there may be circumstances that would necessitate taking a course during the workday. In this case, employees must request prior approval and have obtained advance

authorization for release time from their supervisor each academic semester.

2. Granting of release time is at the discretion of the supervisor and will be granted by either:
 - a. Paid release time up to three hours per week without reduction in pay;
 - b. Unpaid release time; or
 - c. Allowing the employee to make up the missed time outside of normal working hours.
3. In the event that release time is approved, the employing department must make the appropriate arrangements for the proper disposition of the employee's work.

H. Separation of Employment

A recipient must sign an agreement to remain employed by the University for at least one full year after completion of courses or the undergraduate or graduate degree program, beginning with the month after the month in which the employee completed the course or undergraduate or graduate degree program.

I. Program Termination

Except as may be limited by Texas law or UT System policy, the University reserves the right, by action of its President (or the President's authorized designee), to amend or terminate the UTA-ETAP at any time.

III. Definitions

N/A

IV. Relevant Federal and State Statutes

[26 U.S.C. § 117\(d\)](#) *Qualified Tuition Reduction*

[26 U.S.C. § 127](#) *Educational Assistance Programs*

State Employees Training Act, Texas Government Code [§ 656.041](#)

V. Relevant UT System Policies, Procedures and Forms

UTA Procedure [HR-B-PR-01](#) *Employee Tuition Affordability Program*

UT System Rules and Regulations of the Board or Regents [Rule 30112](#) *Training and Education*

[Office of Talent, Culture, and Engagement Forms and Documents:](#)

UTA Form HR-B-F1 *Employee Tuition Affordability Program Application*

VI. Who Should Know

All UTA faculty and staff eligible for the Program and all supervisors.

VII. UTA Office(s) Responsible for Policy

Responsible Officer: Vice President for Talent, Culture & Engagement

Sponsoring Department: Office of Talent, Culture & Engagement

VIII. Dates Approved or Amended

July 14, 2016

May 8, 2025

August 1, 2020

September 12, 2025

March 29, 2023

December 3, 2025

March 31, 2024

IX. Contact Information

All questions regarding this policy should be directed to: askhr@uta.edu

Send notifications of errors or changes to: policysite@uta.edu