

Policy name: Fee Support and Education Assistance
Approved by RIAM Governance Committee: 13.11.2023

Approved by Trinity Academic Council: March 2024
Approved by RIAM Governing Body: 14th December 2023

1. Introduction

This policy outlines how employees of the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) may apply for financial assistance towards the cost of further education courses. It is designed to support employees in developing their skills and knowledge, and to make a positive contribution to their career development.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- I. Encourage employees to pursue further education and training that is relevant to their role and the needs of the organisation
- II. Support employees in developing their skills and knowledge, and to remain competitive in the workplace
- III. Attract and retain high-calibre employees
- IV. Contribute to the overall development of the organisation
- V. To develop a body of high calibre staff who can contribute to the delivery of our strategic objectives.

3. Eligibility

- I. All permanent employees who have been employed with the organisation for at least six months and have contracts that run for at least 12 months are eligible to apply for fee assistance.
- II. Fee support may be granted for staff who are undertaking a professional part-time qualification that is aligned to the strategic goals of RIAM, is related to their role and career development, and has been identified through the Performance Management and Development System.
- III. Staff on Career Breaks are not eligible to apply for fee support.
- IV. Fee support covers Registration and Tuition Fees only. Fee support does not cover membership of Professional Bodies, Clubs or Associations.
- V. Fee support does not cover travel and subsistence for attendance at programmes.

4. Application Process

To apply for fee assistance, employees must complete and submit an application form to HR. The application form will require employees to provide information about the course they are interested in, the cost of the course, and how the course will benefit their career development and the organisation.

The fee support panel will be made up of a selection of the senior management team and Heads of Faculty as relevant, will be a minimum of 3 persons and be gender balanced.

Please see appendix 1 for application form.

Applications must include a recommendation and support from the appropriate manager outlining a rationale for their support. A new application must be submitted for each year of a programme.

5. Criteria for Determining Support

The following criteria will be considered when determining whether to grant fee assistance:

- I. The relevance of the course to the employee's role and the needs of the organisation
- II. The availability of funding

6. Conditions For Granting of Fee Support

The following conditions apply to the granting of fee assistance.

Failure to meet these conditions II and III may result in the employee being required to pay back the cost of the fee support:

- I. The employee must be enrolled in a full-time or part-time course at a recognised educational institution
- II. The employee must achieve a passing grade in the course
- III. The employee must remain employed with the organisation for at least one year after the completion of the course
- IV. The amount of fee support to be granted will be determined by the Evaluation Panel.
- V. Operating within a fixed budget may necessitate that only a percentage of the fee can be supported. Fee support will be capped at a maximum of €6,000 annually per person to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funding.
- VI. RIAM reserves the right to suspend fee support without notice in the event of a budgetary deficit situation that impacts on the overall budgetary allocation.
- VII. Over the course of their employment, individual staff members will receive support for one programme of study.
- VIII. Fee support will not be approved for repeat module(s) or year(s) of a course.

7. Payment of Fees

- I. Fees will be paid on successful completion of each year/semester of the programme and on submission of receipts for fees paid. This condition may be waived in special cases of financial hardship and an advance of fees can be requested and approval from the Finance Officer will be required.

- II. Should staff who have been in receipt of fee support for programmes below PhD/Doctorate level decide to leave the employment of RIAM during their studies or within one year of completion of a year/semester of a course/programme for which they have been supported, they will be required to repay the cost of the fee for that year/semester to RIAM.
- III. Should staff who have been in receipt of fee support for Doctorate level programmes decide to leave the employment of RIAM during their PhD research or within two years of completion of a year/semester of a course/programme for which they have been supported, they will be required to repay the cost of the fee for that year/semester to RIAM.
- IV. In the case of eligible staff who are employed on a fixed term basis and are in receipt of fee support the following will apply:-

(a) Where the RIAM does not renew the contract of a staff member, fee support will be discontinued and the RIAM will not seek re-imbursement in respect of previous payments.

(b) In circumstances where the RIAM is willing to renew the contract of a staff member, an individual who chooses not to accept the offer will be liable for re-imbursement.

8. Study and Exam Leave

I. Study Leave

Up to five days study leave with pay may be granted to recipients of Fee Support subject to satisfactory progress, for each year of a course which has been approved as relevant to work or career development. This will also apply to new staff who have commenced relevant programmes prior to their recruitment. Study Leave for Modular courses may also be granted on a pro-rata basis. This Scheme applies to Fulltime d, Part-time and Pro-rata part time staff. Study leave will be afforded to part-time staff on a pro-rata basis

II. Exam Leave

Staff will be granted examination leave in respect of a course that has been approved as relevant to work or career development under Section 6 for each day on which they have one or more timetabled/sessional examinations.

9. Appeals

If an employee's application for fee assistance is denied, they may appeal the decision to HR who will review the appeal and make a final decision.

10. Post Qualification

- I. Employees who receive fee assistance must provide the organisation with a copy of their certificate or diploma upon completion of the course. The organisation may also require employees to complete a performance review to assess the impact of the training on their role.
- II. Staff who have been supported by the RIAM to successfully complete PhDs are subsequently required to participate in the training of Research Supervisors and/or

supervise or co/supervise research students, as appropriate. Any training or additional support required to undertake this role will be provided.

III. For Memberships of Professional Bodies please refer to the [CPD Policy](#).

11. Responsibility

HR is responsible for overseeing this policy.

12. Legislation and Regulation

[Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)

[Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area \(2005\)](#)

[GDPR 2018](#)

[National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\).](#)

[Records Management and Retention Policy](#)

[Data Protection Policy](#)

13. Related Documents

[Continuing Professional Development](#)

14. Document Control

Approved by RIAM Governing body: 14th December 2023

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This policy will be reviewed on a three year cycle, or as required to take into account changes in the law and the experience of the policy in practice.

Appendix 1

Application Form

Fee Support and Education Assistance

Name:
Employee ID:
Current role and grade:
Office/Faculty:
Email address:
Course Information
Programme:
<input type="checkbox"/> Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Name and Address of College/Institution:
Course Title (please attach details/prospectus):
Duration:
Expected number of exams per academic year:
Please indicate how your programme of study aligns to RIAM strategies:
Please indicate how the programme undertaken will develop competencies that will lead to increased effectiveness in your current role and discipline, and for future career development:
Employee Signature:
Print Name:
Date:
Line manager/Faculty Head Signature:
Print Name:

Date:

Brief outline from Line Manager/Faculty Head of rationale for support of application: