

UNBC UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Exempt Employee Handbook

Approving Authority: Board of Governors

Designated Executive Officer: President and Vice Chancellor

Effective Date: April 1, 2023

Supersedes: November 2013

Date of Last Review/Revision: March 2023

Subsequent Review Date: April 2025

University of Northern British Columbia (“UNBC”) Exempt employees need to be familiar with the information in this Handbook as well as UNBC Policies and Procedures that may guide certain aspects of work at UNBC. UNBC Policies and Procedures are accessible online at: unbc.ca/policy

The terms, conditions, and benefits of employment are as per the BC Employment Standards Act (“Employment Standards Act”), the Public Sector Employers’ Act, Bill 66 and as outlined in this Handbook effective as of April 1, 2023, and are subject to change; in the future and will be reviewed upon request from UNBC or as needed.

UNBC is committed to the practice of reviewing this Handbook in consultation with Exempt employees. When there is a discrepancy between the employment contract and the terms and conditions outlined in this Handbook, the contract will prevail or the higher benefit will prevail until the contract is amended.

Message From the President

As employees, you demonstrate an unwavering commitment to supporting UNBC’s academic mission, promoting a positive, diverse, and inclusive environment, and supporting the growth and success of students, faculty, and staff.

Your dedication to excellence and innovation does not go unnoticed, and I am grateful to be a part of the UNBC community. Your efforts to make UNBC a place where people can thrive and achieve their full potential is inspiring.

You are key to our success and the executive team values you as a member of our diverse team. Your leadership, guidance, and support are deeply appreciated, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to create a bright and successful future for UNBC that is aligned with our vision, mission, and goals.

Dr. Geoff Payne, UNBC President and Vice-Chancellor

UNBC’s Motto

‘En Cha Huná (‘En = he/she/they; Cha = also; Huná = lives)

UNBC’s motto, from the Dakelh (Carrier) Elders, is used to remind us that all people have a voice and a viewpoint. Interpreted as “respecting all forms of life,” ‘En Cha Huná encapsulates the spirit of academic freedom, respect for others, and willingness to recognize different perspectives.

UNBC’s Location Statement, Vision, Mission, and Values can be found on the UNBC website.

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1.0 Scope

This Handbook applies to University of Northern British Columbia (“UNBC”) employees who are exempt from bargaining unit membership and is intended to provide information about UNBC’s terms, conditions, practices, and procedures as they relate to this group of employees.

2.0 Definitions

(a) Employee for the purposes of this Handbook, refers to employees who are exempt from membership in a bargaining unit by virtue of their job duties. This group includes managers, directors, deans, associate vice presidents, and other exempt professionals. This group does not include executives (President and Vice-Presidents) or Academic Services employees (research-funded staff).

(b) Immediate Family Member for bereavement leave, family responsibility leave, and compassionate leave, shall be defined as per the Employment Standards Act.

(c) Supervisor is a generic term that refers to the employee authorized by UNBC to direct the work of an employee and to whom the employee reports.

3.0 Terms And Conditions Of Employment

3.1 Employment Status

An employee’s employment status (regular, term, or casual) is outlined in their individual UNBC employment contract.

3.2 Probationary Period

All new employees are subject to a probationary period of six (6) months. If, despite best efforts, the employee’s performance is not satisfactory, the probationary period may be extended, or the employment ended by UNBC at its discretion.

3.3 Trial Period

For employees who apply for and are successful in their application for a new internal exempt position at UNBC, there is a trial period of six (6) months. During this trial period, the employee’s performance will be carefully reviewed by their direct supervisor. The trial period is also the employee’s opportunity to evaluate the job and the work environment. During the trial period, if it becomes evident to UNBC that the employee will not satisfy the job requirements, or the employee decides not to continue in the position, the trial period may be ended.

3.4 Hours of Work

The normal work week for a full-time employee is five (5) days per week and an average of seven (7) hours per day. The normal work week may vary depending on each unit’s operating hours.

Due to the nature of work for exempt employees, flexibility is required to accommodate varying workloads and operational needs. These employees are normally expected to be self-directing concerning their job function, and may sometimes find it necessary to work more than an average work week to meet outcomes and accountabilities.

3.5 Travel Time

Subject to advance approval to travel outside of your normal location of work by your supervisor, regular travel time will be recognized as part of work schedules. “Travel time” means time spent traveling from point to point. UNBC may determine the most expedient means of such travel.

4.0 Benefits Information

4.1 Health Benefits

Regular full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of 18 hours per week (=0.51 full-time equivalent) will receive the following benefits:

- Basic Life Insurance
- Optional Life Insurance, Optional Spousal Life Insurance, Optional Critical Illness Insurance
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance
- Voluntary Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance
- Long-Term Disability (employee paid)
- Dental Benefits
- Extended Health
- Employee & Family Assistance Program

Part-time employees who work 0.51 to 0.74 of a full-time equivalent are entitled to the above benefits on a cost-shared basis (75% employer and 25% employee). Term employees with a term length of six (6) months or greater are eligible for some of the benefits listed above.

Detailed information regarding benefit eligibility can be found on the Human Resources website. unbc.ca/human-resources/employee-benefit

4.2 Defined Contribution Pension Plan

Regular full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of 18 hours per week (.51 full-time equivalent) will be enrolled in UNBC’s Pension Plan on their date of hire.

Detailed information regarding the pension plan can be found on the Human Resources website. unbc.ca/human-resources/unbc-pension-plan

4.3 Northern Sport Centre Membership

4.3.1 Annual Membership

When an employee purchases basic membership at the Northern Sport Centre and participates in twenty (20) visits over a three (3) month period, 100% of the membership dues paid will be refunded to the employee. In addition, the remainder of the year's basic membership dues will be paid by UNBC.

All refunded and exempted dues are a taxable benefit and are subject to applicable statutory deductions.

4.3.2 Drop-In

If an employee prefers to use the facility on an occasional basis, UNBC will pay the drop-in fee. UNBC will pilot a drop-in program until Dec. 31, 2023, to further understand the costs of the program and needs of our employees. This will be reviewed in January 2024.

4.3.3 Term Employee Eligibility

Both options are available for term employees for the length of their term.

5.0 Vacation And Other Holidays

5.1 Annual Vacation

In the first year of employment, regular and term employees will receive a pro-rated amount of vacation days until Dec. 31 of that year.

Employment Length	Exempt Employees and Managers	Directors (including assistant/ associate directors) / Registrar/ Deans/AVP
1 st to 4 th Year	20 days	25 days
5 th to 9 th Year	25 days	30 days
10 th to 19 th Year	30 days	35 days
20+ Years	35 days	35 days

Term employees with terms of one year or less receive eight percent (8%) pay on their bi-weekly salary. If an extension should carry an employee beyond one year, vacation accrual commences on the 1st pay period following the date of the extension.

Exempt casual employees receive six percent (6%) vacation pay on their bi-weekly wages.

Annual vacation is taken within the year in which it is earned and arranged with their

supervisor. If a full allotment of vacation time cannot operationally be scheduled in the year in which it was earned, it will be rolled into the next year; if not taken in the next year, it will be paid out. Employees are encouraged and should strive to take a minimum of three (3) weeks' vacation. All vacation will be pro-rated in the first year.

5.2 President's Discretionary Days

When the President declares an official University holiday between Christmas and New Year's Day, employees will receive such days as paid days off, with no deduction from their vacation bank.

5.3 Statutory Holidays

Regular and term employees receive the following statutory holidays:

New Year's Day	BC Day
Family Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Easter Monday	Remembrance Day
Victoria Day	Christmas Day
Canada Day	Boxing Day

and any other provincially or federally designated statutory holiday.

6.0 Absence From Work

6.1 Sick Leave

UNBC recognizes that unavoidable absences may occur because of illness or accident and for this reason, provides a sick leave benefit that provides income protection during these situations.

All regular full-time and part-time employees on sick leave receive one hundred percent (100%) of their salary for a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days each calendar year of short-term disability. In a situation where absence due to illness spans calendar years, the maximum period for that illness of leave with full pay is sixty (60) calendar days.

Term employees receive six (6) working days of sick leave per year.

An employee unable to work because of illness or accident must inform the employee's direct supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

For any absence due to sickness or disability greater than five (5) consecutive working days, the employee may be required to provide clear, current, and credible medical information that satisfies UNBC's need to provide a safe and productive work and learning environment. Lack of such documentation may result in the absence being treated as leave without pay. The cost of the documentation is borne by UNBC.

Where there has been a pattern or high usage of sick leave, UNBC may request clear, current, and credible medical information that satisfies UNBC's need to provide a safe and productive work and learning environment.

6.2 Worker's Compensation

If the cause of absence from work is illness or accident compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act, the employee will apply for compensation under the provisions of the legislation. If the employee receives such compensation, UNBC, for a maximum period of sixty (60) calendar days, will pay the difference between one hundred percent (100%) of the employee's net salary and the compensation received under the Workers' Compensation Act.

6.3 Bereavement Leave

In the case of bereavement of an immediate family member, regular and term employees, not on leave of absence without pay, are eligible to receive bereavement leave of up to five (5) working days at their regular rate of pay.

Such leaves are normally taken within one (1) week of the death of the family member. Where circumstances do not allow the leave to be taken within one (1) week, exceptions may be granted by the supervisor.

Employee requests for an extended absence from work due to bereavement will be taken as vacation time or an unpaid leave of absence.

6.4 Family Responsibility Leave

Employees may take up to five (5) days with pay during a calendar year to provide for the medical needs of an immediate family member during an illness.

Employee requests for an extended absence from work due to family responsibilities will be taken as vacation time or an unpaid leave of absence. Employees may wish to review eligibility for Family Caregiver Benefits offered through Employment Insurance (EI).

6.5 Compassionate Care Leave

Employees may take up to five (5) days with pay during a calendar year to attend to an immediate family member who has a life-threatening injury or illness.

Employee requests for an extended absence from work due to compassionate care of an immediate family member will be taken as vacation time or an unpaid leave of absence. Employees may wish to review eligibility for Compassionate Care Leave benefits under the Employment Standards Act which allows for compensation through Employment Insurance (EI).

6.6 Court Leave

Exempt employees who are summoned to be a witness or juror by a court or anybody with the power of subpoena must notify their supervisor of the summons as soon as possible if their attendance requires them to be absent from their scheduled responsibilities. The employee must supply a copy of the summons, providing the court appearance is not occasioned by the employee's private affairs. UNBC maintains all salary, benefits, and pension contributions of employees who have been summoned. Any monies received by the employee during the court duties must be surrendered to UNBC.

6.7 Cultural Leave for Indigenous Employees

UNBC will allow Indigenous employees reasonable leave of absence with pay for up to two (2) days per calendar year, to attend Indigenous ceremonial gatherings or cultural activities in fulfillment of cultural obligations. The employee will seek approval of leave from their supervisor. Such leave requests will not be unreasonably denied.

6.8 Leave of Absence without Pay

6.8.1 All regular employees may apply for an unpaid leave of absence after two (2) years of continuous service at UNBC. UNBC will make reasonable efforts to comply with such requests within one (1) month of employees submitting the request.

6.8.2 Upon employee request, UNBC may, at its sole discretion, grant a leave of absence without pay as follows:

- i. Education leaves for a period not exceeding twenty-four (24) consecutive months.
- ii. General leaves for a period not exceeding twelve (12) consecutive months.
- iii. Leave of absence extensions beyond twenty-four (24) consecutive months.

6.8.3 Upon return from such leave, employees are reinstated in their previous position and at their former salary plus scale changes applicable to that job classification.

6.8.4 Employees must request a leave of absence in writing and submit the request to their direct supervisor as far in advance of the leave as possible. Employees must also forward a copy of the request to the Director of Human Resources who will make every effort to ensure requests receive equitable treatment throughout UNBC.

6.8.5 The levels of approval for a leave of absence are as follows:

- i. Less than one (1) month—approval by the direct supervisor in consultation with the Director of Human Resources.
- ii. Greater than one (1) month—approval by the direct supervisor, the appropriate Dean/Director/Vice President/President, and the Director of Human Resources.

6.8.6 Depending on the length of the leave, the maintenance of the benefit premiums are as follows:

- i. Leaves of one (1) month or less—both UNBC and the employee continue to pay their portion of the benefit premiums and pension contributions.
- ii. Leaves greater than one (1) month—UNBC portion of benefit premiums and pension contributions terminates at the end of the first month of the employee's leave. Employees will be offered to maintain their benefits premiums subject to the group benefits provider's approval.
- iii. If an employee chooses not to maintain the premiums, or is not approved by the group benefits provider, proof of insurability and the applicable waiting period may result upon return to work.

6.8.7 Vacation entitlements will not be accrued while an employee is on an approved leave of absence without pay.

6.9 Maternity Leave Benefit

6.9.1 In addition to the applicable sections of the Employment Standards Act, regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for maternity leave benefits offered by UNBC.

6.9.2 Term employees are entitled to maternity leave as per the British Columbia Employment Standards Act but not the UNBC maternity leave benefits.

6.9.3 To qualify for UNBC maternity leave benefits, employees must submit the following:

- i. A leave form to their supervisor at least four (4) weeks before the commencement of the leave; and
- ii. A certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner to Human Resources certifying that the employee is pregnant and specifying the estimated date of birth of the child.

6.9.4 Upon receipt of an application for maternity leave, UNBC will grant maternity leave to employees consistent in timing and duration with the British Columbia Employment Standards Act.

6.9.5 Eligible employees with more than one (1) year of service, who have applied for, and received EI benefits under the Employment Insurance Act, are eligible to receive a maternity leave benefit allowance, paid by UNBC, as follows:

- i. First one (1) week—employees receive one hundred percent (100%) of their weekly salary at the time of going on leave.
- ii. The remainder of the maternity leave and up to fifteen (15) weeks during which employees collect EI—employees receive payments equivalent to the difference between Employment Insurance benefits they are receiving and one hundred percent (100%) of their weekly salary at the time of going on leave.

6.9.6 Employees and UNBC continue to contribute to the group pension and benefit plans based on one hundred percent (100%) of salary.

6.9.7 Records of Employment are filed electronically with Service Canada within the time period per the current requirement of Service Canada.

6.9.8 Employees' vacation entitlements continue to accrue during the maternity leave.

6.10 Parental Leave Benefit

6.10.1 In addition to the applicable sections of the Employment Standards Act, regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for UNBC parental leave benefits.

6.10.2 Term employees are entitled to parental leave in accordance with the British Columbia Employment Standards Act but not UNBC's parental leave benefit allowance.

6.10.3 Employees who become the natural parent of a child, adopt a child or have adopted a child are entitled to parental leave benefit provided the following:

- i. They have submitted a leave form to their direct supervisor no later than four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of the leave, or if four (4) weeks' notice is not possible due to unforeseeable circumstances, the request is submitted as soon as the need for parental leave becomes known; and
- ii. The written application advises the supervisor of the expected date of delivery/adoption, the intent for taking parental leave, the anticipated commencement date, and the expected duration of such leave.

6.10.4 Upon receipt of a parental leave application, UNBC grants parental leave to employees consistent with timing and duration outlined in the British Columbia Employment Standards Act, including, but not limited to, with the following provisions:

- i. The parents may choose between two options:
 - a. Standard parental leave
 - b. Extended parental leave

The choice made determines the number of weeks and the weekly amount of Employment Insurance that may be received.

- ii. The parents may take their leaves at the same time or at different times.
- iii. Parental leave benefits for biological parents and their partners are payable from the child's birthdate, and for adoptive parents and their partners from the date the child is placed with them.
- iv. Parental leave benefits are only available within the 52 weeks following the child's birth, or for adoptive parents within the 52 weeks from the date the child is placed with the employee's family.
- v. For employees taking parental leave up to thirty-five (35) weeks, UNBC provides employees with a bi-weekly parental leave top-up of 100% of the employee's compensation at the time of going on leave, minus the EI benefit for the entire length of parental leave, upon confirmation of the employee's EI benefit.
- vi. For employees taking extended parental leave greater than thirty-five (35) and up to sixty-one (61) weeks, UNBC will provide the employee with the total top-up dollar amount calculated as one-hundred percent (100%) of thirty-five (35) weeks of the employee's compensation at the time of going on leave minus the EI standard upon confirmation of the employee's EI benefit.

6.10.5 Contributions to the pension and benefit plans continue on the part of the employee and UNBC based on one-hundred percent (100%) of salary at the time of going on leave

6.10.6 For employees not utilizing maternity leave, the following process must be adhered to before commencement of the Parental Leave Allowance as defined above:

- i. Employees must submit a leave form approved by their direct supervisor to human resources.
- ii. Employees must submit a certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner certifying that either the employee or partner is pregnant and specifying the estimated birth date, or documenting the actual date of birth of the child.

6.10.7 Records of Employment are filed electronically with Service Canada within the period per the current requirement of Service Canada.

6.10.8 To receive the Parental Leave Benefit allowance defined above, employees must supply UNBC with proof of application to Employment Insurance.

6.10.9 Employees' vacation entitlements continue to accrue during the parental leave.

6.10.10 Any extension of parental leave utilizing accrued vacation must be submitted and approved by the supervisor in advance.

6.10.11 Regular employees must return to work for one (1) year of continuous service following parental leave. If a regular employee leaves UNBC before completing one (1) year of service, they will be required to re-pay a prorated amount of the top up and one (1) week bridging benefits based on the number of days worked since the employee's return from leave.

6.11 Self-Funded Leave Plan

UNBC provides all members of the Exempt Employees Group with a self-funded leave plan as qualifies under the Income Tax Act and the UNBC Self-Funded Leave Plan policy (Appendix "B").

7.0 Professional Development (PD)

UNBC is committed to providing professional development opportunities for employees as part of a leadership development strategy. UNBC recognizes that ongoing professional development is required for employees to be current in their field of expertise, and to continue to enhance performance, ability, engagement and effectiveness. UNBC encourages and supports continued learning and development and asks that supervisors commit to conversations with their employees that facilitate professional development opportunities.

7.1 Professional Development Fund

7.1.1 Employees (term greater than six (6) months and minimum eighteen (18) hours per week, except those on unpaid leave) are eligible for PD allowances as follows:

Position (examples but not limited)	Salary Ranges	Annual Allowance
Associate Vice Presidents	SL2	\$5,000.00
Executive Directors, Directors, CIO, Registrar	SL1, L3	\$2,500.00
Assistant Directors, Associate Directors, Associate Registrars, Senior positions (HR, Finance, Purchasing, etc.), Chief Engineer, Managers	L3, L2, L1, SP3	\$1,500.00
Specialized Staff	SP2, SP1	\$800.00
Administrative Staff, EA's	OA2, OA1	\$600.00

7.1.2 The PD fund is to be used for the purchase of items related to the performance of an employee’s UNBC-related professional duties. Subject to documentation in accordance with UNBC requirements, UNBC reimburses employees up to the maximum sum as stipulated in the above table. Expenditures that can be classified as UNBC career-related include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i.** Books
- ii.** Subscriptions
- iii.** Courses
- iv.** Equipment directly related to professional activities
- v.** Travel-related expenses not covered by or over other travel grants.

7.1.3 Unused PD in a fiscal year are carried forward to the member’s PD fund for the next fiscal year and can be rolled over for four (4) years.

In the case where an employee has four (4) years of unused funds, the excess funds will be rolled into an exempt pooled fund that will be used to support exempt employees in need of additional funds for PD.

The pooled fund (when funds are available) will be distributed on a case-by-case basis. Employees wanting to access this pooled fund must apply their PD funds first. If the remaining funds can be covered by the pooled fund then the employee requesting the additional funds will submit a request to the Director of Human Resources who will make a final decision in consultation with the Vice President, Finance and Administration. The Director of Human Resources will communicate to the employee if additional PD funds will be applied.

Items purchased under “Professional Development” are deemed to be the property of UNBC.

Further information can be found in the Professional Development Funds document which will be amended from time to time.

Specific to the Exempt Handbook rollout *** Effective July 1, 2023, if an employee's PD fund is in excess of four (4) years of allocation, based on new allocation amounts, no further amount will be added to the fund. Effective July 1, 2024, any amount in excess of the four (4) year total will be placed in the pooled fund.***

7.2 Membership Dues in Professional Associations

7.2.1 UNBC pays for membership dues that are directly related to a professional certification or designation required for a position (e.g., Certified Professional Accountant) for regular employees and term employees greater than one (1) year.

7.2.2 Where membership in a professional association is not required by UNBC, a membership may be paid from the employee's PD allowance. The employee's supervisor is responsible for reviewing their request and approving eligibility.

7.3 President's Leadership Initiative (Master of Business Administration (MBA) Tuition Subsidy Program)

UNBC provides a tuition subsidy for enrolment in the MBA Program for up to three (3) employees per year whose professional goals are aligned with UNBC's strategic direction and operational objectives. Please refer to the President's Leadership Initiative document for terms and conditions (Appendix "A"), which UNBC reserves the right to amend from time to time.

7.4 Continuing Studies Public Courses

UNBC will pay for up to three (3) exempt employees to partake in Continuing Studies public courses per annum (maximum of one course per employee per year). These courses support opportunities for personal and professional development by enabling employees to prepare for promotional advancement, upgrade their present skills, and develop new skills and competencies. Intake is on a first-to-register basis with the supervisor's and the Director of Human Resources' approval to ensure requests are within the allocated budget.

7.5 Professional Development Leave (Associate Vice Presidents (SL2), Executive Directors, Directors, CIO, Registrar (SL1, L3))

UNBC recognizes that its continuing capacity to respond to new priorities and challenges depends on a knowledgeable administrative group with transferable skills. Professional Development Leaves serve the objectives and goals of UNBC by providing directors with a regular opportunity to engage in professional activities at intervals frequent enough to enable them to maintain and enhance their professional effectiveness. For every three (3) years of service, a director is eligible to apply for leave equivalent to one semester (13 weeks).

The purposes for which a Professional Leave may be granted are the following:

- i. The acquisition of skills and knowledge in an area related to their responsibilities.

ii. The development of new areas of specialization relevant to UNBC.

iii. Completion of a formal course of studies leading to an advanced degree.

The non-degree related activities undertaken for the purposes outlined above would normally be for a minimum period of one (1) month and would include activities such as short-credit and non-credit courses, special training programs and workshops, and on-site training experiences. Normally, the activities will be offered through another institution.

Directors holding permanent appointments and with at least three years of service at UNBC are eligible and may apply for Professional Development Leave. Leave may be applied to be taken all at once or be divided into smaller units. Directors shall receive full pay while on Professional Development Leave. Directors granted Professional Development Leave will sign a return-of-service agreement with UNBC for twenty-four (24) months.

Application shall be made to the executive no less than four (4) months prior to the commencement of the leave. The application will be reviewed by the Executive and they will render a decision no later than one (1) month after receiving the application. Such application shall include the following:

- i.** The program of study, the name of the educational institution and verification that the Director has been accepted into the program of study.
- ii.** Research program or professional activity proposed.
- iii.** The duration of the proposed activity.
- iv.** The justification and the specific benefit for UNBC.
- v.** Detailed report on how to manage their proposal in their absence.
- vi.** The amount of time requested for the leave.
- vii.** Detailed estimates of the costs as noted below.

UNBC, upon approval of the leave, will sponsor 100% of the following costs of the program at another accredited college or university:

- i.** Tuition
- ii.** Required text books
- iii.** Non-discretionary student fees

All other costs shall be the responsibility of the Director.

Directors shall be covered by UNBC's benefit plan on the same basis, including payment of premiums of contributions by both the Director and UNBC as a Director on equivalent standing who is not on leave.

In the event that the leave is not approved, the Executive shall advise the Director of the reason(s) as soon as possible. The executive will assist the Director to identify appropriate alternatives.

7.6 Internal and External Secondment

- 7.6.1** Following two (2) years of service in a continuing position, exempt employees may apply to take advantage of secondment to positions external to another University subject to the approval of UNBC, through the offices of the appropriate Vice President or the President.
- 7.6.2** Exempt employees may also be seconded to another internal position, with approval from the offices of the appropriate Vice President or President.
- 7.6.3** External/internal secondments are normally no longer than twenty-four (24) months and an individual is normally not eligible for another secondment until a period of twenty-four (24) months has elapsed following their return to their regular position. When secondments are approved for a full-time visiting appointment at another University, and upon evidence being adduced of the dates and responsibilities of the appointment to the satisfaction of UNBC, the period spent on the full-time visiting appointment is counted as time in service to UNBC.

7.7 Internal Job Postings

- 7.7.1** UNBC's goal is to fill positions with the best available candidates who have the appropriate combination of education, experience, skills, abilities, and suitability to successfully perform the duties of the position. UNBC has policies on employment equity and hiring to ensure that equal opportunity is afforded to all applicants for positions at UNBC.
- 7.7.2** Although UNBC typically posts new or vacant positions, UNBC may occasionally fill positions through other means (e.g., directly promoting employees where their current performance, qualifications and abilities meet the needs of new positions).

7.8 Tuition Fee Waiver

- 7.8.1** Regular full-time and part-time employees, their spouses (including common-law spouses), and their children are eligible for a waiver of the tuition fee for UNBC courses. Tuition fee waivers are treated by applicable Canada Revenue Agency guidelines on the reporting of taxable benefits.
- 7.8.2** The admission requirements set by UNBC must be met by those applying for a tuition waiver before it is granted.
- 7.8.3** Credit and non-credit courses offered at UNBC that are based on a cost-recovery model are not eligible for the tuition waiver. This includes Continuing Studies and MBA courses when not enrolled in the President's Leadership Initiative or in cases such as article 9.4.
- 7.8.4** If the course for which an employee has a tuition waiver occurs during work hours, the employee and the direct supervisor need to make arrangements to make up the time spent in the course.
- 7.8.5** Regular employees, their spouses, and their child(ren) may apply the tuition waiver to auditing courses.
- 7.8.6** In the event of the death of a regular exempt employee, the spouse and children retain their eligibility for the tuition waiver for a period of twenty (20) years (subject

to the above limitations). At the time of retirement, the employee, spouse and children can retain their eligibility for the tuition waiver for a period of eight (8) years (subject to the above limitations). The period commences from the employee's last day of employment with UNBC. For the purposes of this section, retirement shall be defined as a minimum of 50 years of age plus a minimum of 5 continuous years of service with UNBC.

7.8.7 If the eligibility for the tuition waiver is terminated during an academic semester in which an employee, an employee's spouse, or an employee's child(ren) is enrolled at UNBC, the tuition waiver is deemed to be in effect until the end of the semester.

7.9 Performance Feedback

7.9.1 UNBC believes that it is important for the performance of each employee to be evaluated at least once each calendar year. This evaluation is intended to enable employees to receive feedback on all areas of their job profile, to assist them to become more effective in their jobs and to discuss professional development opportunities. The performance feedback will be used to assist leadership in assessing pay for performance. The tools used to assist in providing feedback will change from time to time.

7.9.2 In preparation for such a conversation, employees are encouraged to objectively assess their performance over the past year and develop a personal development plan. Goals, possible performance improvements, and career development should all be considered by employees. Employees should identify actions they need to take and ways that their supervisor might be able to assist.

8.0 Compensation

8.1 Framework

8.1.1 The compensation framework, which is subject to change from time to time at the sole discretion of UNBC, was developed with the following objectives:

- i. Align with the strategic priorities of UNBC by supporting recruitment and retention of outstanding leadership, while adopting a prudent approach.
- ii. Manage financial affordability and sustainability.
- iii. Reward career growth and development by allowing for progression through the ranges based on proficiency and performance.
- iv. Ensure long-term market competitiveness by targeting the 50th percentile of the market.
- v. Ensure equity and follow Public Sector Employers Council (PSEC) guidelines.

A document outlining the compensation framework in further detail will be available online and will be amended from time to time.

8.2 Additional Duties Pay :

Policy can be found at:

our.unbc.ca/sites/Policies/development/Policy/Additional%20Duties%20Pay.pdf#search=additional%20duties%20pay

Forms to submit can be found at:

unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/human-resources/20211216adpform.pdf

8.3 Acting Pay

8.3.1 Acting pay is applied in alignment with professional development opportunities for employees, and may be awarded for assuming significant responsibilities and the principal duties for a higher-level job for a period of two (2) consecutive weeks, but of no more than six (6) months.

8.3.2 Acting pay is to compensate an employee who has been asked to temporarily substitute in, or perform the principal duties of, a position in a higher salary grade. Acting pay ceases at the end of the temporary assignment.

8.3.3 All requests for acting pay must be submitted to the Director of Human Resources (or approved delegate) for approval.

8.3.4 When Acting Pay is approved, the exempt employee is placed at the bottom of the salary range for the senior position or an additional twelve percent (12%) to their current salary, whichever is greater. In no case will the employee be paid above the top of the range.

9.0 Leaving UNBC

9.1 Resignation

When employees decide to leave UNBC, they are encouraged to provide UNBC with a reasonable amount of notice, so their supervisor and colleagues can arrange a smooth transition. A longer notice is desirable.

9.2 Retirement

9.2.1 When employees decide to retire, UNBC encourages them to provide UNBC with several months of written notice, so that appropriate planning can occur.

9.2.2 There is no mandatory retirement age; however, for employees' who plan to work past the age of 65, their benefits coverage is impacted. More information can be found on the Human Resources website.

10.0 Reimbursements

10.1 Cancelled Personal Plans

Situations may arise when urgent UNBC business interferes with an employee's personal plans.

When a vacation has been approved in advance and is cancelled by UNBC, or when overtime is required, and when an employee has made arrangements and incurred personal costs that cannot be recouped, UNBC reimburses these costs in full to the employee.

Appendix A

The President's Leadership Initiative

1. Purpose

The purpose of the President's Leadership Initiative is to provide an approved tuition subsidy for up to three (3) regular, exempt employees (each academic year) to the Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program at UNBC, when space is available.

2. Scope

This Program applies to all regular, exempt employees.

3. Program

The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) is committed to providing professional development opportunities for employees as part of a leadership development strategy. The University will provide a tuition subsidy for enrolment in the MBA Program for up to three (3) employees per year whose professional goals are aligned with the University's strategic direction and operational objectives. Applications will be placed in priority order based on the decision criteria outlined in the process. Acceptance into the President's Leadership Initiative Program is subject to seat availability within the MBA Program. The employee is responsible for familiarizing themselves with the UNBC Graduate Calendar, and is expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct and all other applicable regulations and policies. Employees who receive the tuition subsidy will be required to sign a return of service commitment of twenty-four (24) months beginning the date the employee graduates from the program. The return of service commitment is a retention tool designed to provide leadership continuity within the University, and to generate a return on investment for our commitment to growing the skillset of our exempt staff.

4. Process

First, the employee must apply and be accepted to the MBA Program through the Office of the Registrar. To apply for acceptance into the President's Leadership Initiative, the employee must submit an application to the Eligibility Committee by April 1, prior to the start of the MBA Program in August. The employee's application package must be submitted to Human Resources for review by the Eligibility Committee. The application package must include:

- a. Proof of acceptance into the MBA Program;
- b. A one to two (1-2) page Letter of Intent, signed by the employee and their immediate supervisor outlining the following:
 - i. Why the employee is a good candidate for the MBA Program;
 - ii. How the employee will manage workload while attending the program;
 - iii. How the employee will maintain accountabilities of their position and meet program demands of the MBA Program;

- iv. How the employee's career goals fit within the program in relation to the University's strategic direction and operational objectives;
- v. How the employee's involvement with the MBA Program will benefit the future of UNBC.

- c. A Tuition Subsidy Application Form (see Appendix I) signed and approved by the immediate supervisor and Director, Senior Leader or designate.

The Eligibility Committee will notify the employee of their acceptance into the President's Leadership Initiative by May 30, prior to the start of the MBA Program in August. The Eligibility Committee will send the approved application package to Human Resources and Finance for processing. The employee's approved application package will be filed in their official personnel file in Human Resources. Please note, if the employee is not accepted, the applicant can reapply to the President's Leadership Initiative the subsequent years following the same process, or register for the MBA Program at the full cost.

5. Application Process

- a. The tuition subsidy will not be disbursed until a Tuition Subsidy Application Form has been properly completed and authorized by the employee's Director, Senior Leader, or designate (including the Return of Service Commitment section);
- b. Employees must submit the appropriate form and applicable supporting documentation for authorization to the Eligibility Committee after acceptance into the program, and by April 1, prior to the start of the MBA Program.

6. Eligibility Committee

The purpose of the Eligibility Committee is to review employee applications for strategic fit and alignment with organizational goals and succession plans. The committee will be comprised of a Human Resources representative, the MBA Director, and a representative from the Senior Leadership team (or designate). The Eligibility Committee will consider the following decision criteria when approving applications:

- a. The future benefit to the University;
- b. The alignment of the education with the employee's professional development plan, in addition to the University and department's strategic priorities;
- c. The employee's performance;
- d. Potential for leadership continuity;
- e. The existence of plans to encourage the application of knowledge and skills learned;
- f. The current availability of resources to mitigate operational impact.

The University reserves the right to limit the number of employees (and students) accepted into the MBA Program.

7. Financial Responsibility

- a. Each employee accepted into the program will pay \$1,500 per semester for five (5) semesters (21 months) plus applicable student fees and textbooks. The employee paid portion will be assessed each year and will be reconsidered based on tuition and program cost increases. The University reserves the right to increase or decrease program costs;
- b. The employee is entitled to use their professional development funds towards the cost of the program;
 - i. The employee must pay the amount owing personally, complete a Professional Development Claim form, and submit the form to Finance for reimbursement.
- c. The employee will receive a T2202A for the amount of the employee paid portion only.

8. Unsuccessful Completion

Should an employee fail to complete the MBA Program or meet the required academic standards as outlined in the Graduate Calendar, the employee will not be reimbursed for the employee paid portion of tuition.

9. Return of Service Commitment

- a. The University requires a twenty-four (24) month return of service commitment from employees who receive tuition subsidy to the MBA Program;
- b. The approved costs and the expected return of service commitment will be shown on the approved Tuition Subsidy Application Form;
- c. Human Resources will file the application form in the employee's official personnel file;
- d. The return of service commitment period will start immediately following graduation from the MBA Program;
- e. The length of the commitment will be the same for both part-time and full-time employees;
- f. If an employee resigns from their position within twenty-four (24) months of graduation from the MBA Program within the return of service commitment period, the employee will reimburse the University for the employer cost of the MBA Program on the basis of 1/24th for each unserved month of employment;
- g. The employee will repay the calculated employer cost of the MBA Program within 30 days of their resignation date.

10. Eligibility for the President's Leadership Initiative

- a. Regular full-time or regular part-time exempt employees;
- b. This tuition subsidy does not apply to dependents.

11. Contact Information

If you have any questions or for a copy of the Tuition Subsidy Application Form, please contact a Human Resources Advisor.

Appendix B

Self-Funded Leave Plan Policy

The following sets out the terms of the Self-Funded Leave Plan for the Exempt Employees of the University of Northern British Columbia,

1. Definitions

“Accrued Interest” means the amount of interest earned in accordance with clause 3.3 on the monies retained by UNBC on behalf of the employee, calculated from:

- a. the first day any of such monies has been received by the eligible financial institution or
- b. the last date to which interest has been paid in accordance with clause 3.5, whichever is later.

“Contract Year” means the twelve (12) month period from July 1 to June 30.

“Current compensation amount” means the total compensation payable by UNBC to the employee for the contract year, including his/her proper salary and all allowances in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment.

“Deferral Period” shall be the number of years not to exceed six (6) years for which compensation is deferred in accordance with clause 3.1, including the years referred to in clauses 4.4 and 4.5, if applicable. To allow for the possible application of these clauses, the original deferral period should not exceed five (5) years.

“Deferred compensation amount” means the portion of the current compensation amount that is retained by UNBC for an employee in each year in accordance with clause 3.1 and augmented from time to time by interest thereon calculated in accordance with clause 3.3 but less all interest paid to the employee in accordance with clause 3.4.

“Eligible employee” means an employee of UNBC in continuing full-time employment with at least three (3) years of service at University of Northern British Columbia.

“Eligible financial institution” means any Canadian chartered bank, any trust company authorized to carry on business in the Province of British Columbia, and any financial institution participating in the Federal Deposit Insurance Plan authorized to carry on business in the Province of British Columbia.

“Leave of absence” means the period described in clause 4.1.

“Memorandum of agreement” means the agreement described in Schedule “A”.

“Employee” means an eligible employee who has completed a memorandum of agreement and whose application for participation in the Plan has been approved by UNBC in accordance with clause 2.2

“Plan” means the Self-Funded Leave Plan set out in this Plan and includes all amendments thereto.

2. Application

Formal Application:

2.1 In order to participate in the Plan, an eligible employee must make written application by way of Schedule “A” to the direct Supervisor at least three months prior to the requested commencement of deferrals under the Plan or at a date otherwise agreed between UNBC and the employee, stating the date when the eligible employee wishes the deferrals to commence.

Approval:

2.2 The approval of each application made under clause 2.1 will be considered by the direct Supervisor, who will forward it to the Director or Dean, who will then present it to the appropriate Executive for final approval at President’s Council. The President’s Council will, at least one month prior to the requested commencement of deferrals under the Plan or at a date otherwise agreed between UNBC and the employee, advise each applicant of approval or disapproval of the application, and if the latter, an explanation thereof.

2.3 It is understood that the total number of exempt employees on leave of absence under the Plan in any one year will not exceed three (3) full-time equivalent exempt employees on staff.

Date of Participation:

2.4 If the President’s Council gives approval in accordance with clause 2.2, the participation of the eligible employee in the Plan will become effective on the date requested by the eligible employee, or if such date is not agreed to by the President’s Council then on a date that is agreed to by the President’s Council and the eligible employee.

3. Funding For Leaves of Absence

Funding for leave of absence shall be as follows:

Compensation Deferred:

3.1 During each year of the deferral period, the employee will receive the employee’s current compensation amount, less the percentage amount that the employee has specified in the memorandum of agreement that is to be retained by UNBC and less statutory deductions and other withholdings. Such percentage amount may be varied, subject to clause 3.2, by giving written notice to UNBC at least one (1) month prior to July 1 in any year for the next or subsequent years.

Maximum Percentage Deferred:

3.2 The percentage of the annual current compensation amount deferred by the employee cannot exceed thirty-three and one-third (33 1/3%) per cent.

Investment of Deferred Compensation:

3.3 The monies retained by UNBC for each employee, in accordance with clause 3.1, including interest thereon (until paid out in accordance with clause 3.4) shall be pooled and shall be invested and reinvested by UNBC in investments offered from time to time by an eligible financial institution. The monies retained shall be forwarded to the eligible financial institution within fifteen (15) calendar days.

Payment of Accrued Interest:

3.4 The eligible financial institution will pay the accrued interest on each Dec. 31 to the employee.

Reporting to Employees:

3.5 UNBC will make, no later than July 31 of each year, an annual report to each employee as to the deferred compensation amount held as of June 30.

4. Taking of Absence

The taking of a leave of absence shall be governed by the following provisions:

4.1 The leave of absence will begin and end on dates mutually agreed upon between the employee and UNBC. The period of leave will be from a minimum of six (6) to a maximum of twelve (12) consecutive months.

Manner of Payment during Leave:

4.2 The time and manner of payment to the employee during the leave of absence will be in accordance with a plan determined by the employee prior to the commencement of leave, but in any event payments shall not be more frequently than provided for the payment of regular salaries and all amounts payable shall be paid to the employee no later than the end of the first taxation year that commences after the end of the deferral period.

Amount of Payment during Leave:

4.3 The total of the payments to be made to an employee in accordance with clause 4.2 during a leave of absence shall be the deferred compensation amount retained by UNBC, but less any monies required by law and subject to Revenue Canada rules and regulations to be paid by UNBC for or on behalf of an employee. The employee will not receive any salary from UNBC or from any other person or partnership with whom UNBC does not deal at arm's length during the leave other than the deferred compensation amount.

University's Right to Refuse Leave:

4.4 If UNBC is unable to obtain a suitable replacement for an employee for the period of a leave of absence specified in the memorandum of agreement, UNBC, upon not less than six (6) months' notice prior to the scheduled date for the commencement of the leave, may in its discretion defer the leave of absence, on one occasion only, for one year. In such case, the employee may choose to remain in the Plan or may withdraw from the Plan.

Employee's Right to Defer Leave:

4.5 Notwithstanding the period of leave specified in the memorandum of agreement, an employee may, on one occasion only, with the consent of the President's Council given not less than six (6) months' notice prior to the scheduled date for the commencement of the leave, postpone such leave for one year. If the employee does not take a leave of absence in the designated period the deferred amount must be paid to the employee in the first year that commences after the end of the deferral period.

Leave of Absence:

4.6 The leave of absence shall immediately follow the deferral period.

5. Withdrawal

Termination of Employment:

5.1 An employee who ceases to be employed by UNBC also terminates participation in the Plan.

Withdrawal from Plan:

5.2 An employee may withdraw from the Plan upon giving written notice of withdrawal not less than six (6) months prior to the date on which the leave of absence is to commence. Withdrawal from the plan is contemplated only in the case of financial or other undue hardship.

Payment:

5.3 Upon termination of employment and/or withdrawal from the Plan, UNBC will pay to the employee the deferred compensation amount, including any unpaid interest within sixty (60) days or, at the option of the employee, at a later date but no later than the end of the first taxation year that commences after the end of the deferral period. Upon such payment being made UNBC will have no further liability to the employee.

Upon Death:

5.4 Should an employee die, UNBC will within sixty (60) days of notification of such death pay any deferred compensation amount retained at the time of death to the employee's estate, subject to UNBC receiving any necessary clearances and proofs normally required for payment to estates.

6. Termination or Amendment of Plan

6.1 The Plan shall not be terminated or amended without agreement of the Exempt Employees Group during the term of this Handbook.

7. General

7.1 UNBC will bear the administrative expenses of the Plan.

- 7.2** An employee's fringe benefits will be administered by UNBC during the leave of absence; however, the full premium costs of all fringe benefits shall be paid by the employee through payroll deduction.
- 7.3** It is understood that during the leave of absence no sick leave credits will be earned or used.
- 7.4** The employee shall be required to register an intent to participate in the Self-Funded Leave Plan a minimum of one (1) month prior to commencement of salary deferral.
- 7.6** Upon resumption of duties, the employee will be assigned either to the same position or an equivalent position.