

Glossary of Tuition Terms

Academic year - The academic year is the 12-month period Aug. 1 through July 31. Generally it starts with the fall semester, continues through the spring semester, and finishes with the summer semester. The start date of a class determines its academic year. Tuition assistance maximums are calculated per academic year.

CEUs (Continuing education units) - Courses, exams, or programs required to maintain license status. CEUs are not eligible for tuition assistance.

Degree program – A defined sequence of classes toward earning a certificate, associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorate degree.

Non-degree program – Individual classes that are not part of a degree program. Courses may be credit or non-credit.

Certification exam and prep courses - Course of study where the student demonstrates mastery of the subject matter by passing an exam. In many cases, the program is self-study but in some instances there may be a prep course. Tuition reimbursement may be used for courses intended to prepare a staff member for taking a certification exam provided the courses are offered at an accredited institution and for an exam that is eligible under the tuition assistance guidelines.

Incomplete class or “G” grade - Staff have one year from the class end date to provide proof of successful completion. The class is not reimbursable until an actual grade of “C” or better is received. Advancements given for “G” grades require staff to provide proof of successful completion of class to not have to repay the advancement.

Discount – A reduction in tuition by the school. Not the same as a scholarship or grant.

Scholarship – Non-repayable money given to a student from an outside source to cover educational expenses. Typically a scholarship is given to a student as recognition for an accomplishment or as a result of meeting certain qualifications.

Grant – Non-repayable money given to a student from the government for educational expenses.

Fees – Amounts charged to the student for items other than tuition. The tuition assistance benefit is limited to the staff member’s actual out-of-pocket tuition costs only and does not cover any fees associated with taking classes, such as technology fees, administrative fees, books, room and board, supplies, etc.

Third Party Payments – Payments for educational expenses from outside source that are not part of a scholarship, grant, or discount program and are not paid by the student. Students must show proof that third party payments are not grants/scholarships before tuition assistance can be calculated.

Tuition reimbursement – With tuition reimbursement, staff members pay for classes directly to their school at the beginning of the semester and then request reimbursement of eligible out-of-pocket tuition expenses from UPMC after the completion of the term. Reimbursements are considered taxable income by the IRS and are issued in the staff member's pay with applicable taxes taken at the time the reimbursement is issued.

Tuition Advancement – Tuition advancement provides UPMC staff members with the ability to have the eligible tuition assistance benefit paid directly to the University of Pittsburgh, Community College of Allegheny County, Carlow University, or Chatham University at the beginning of the term. Tuition advancement eliminates the need for staff to pay for a class directly to the school and seek reimbursement from UPMC at the end of the term. Advancements are considered taxable income by the IRS. After each term is complete, the necessary taxes are deducted directly from the staff member's paycheck.

Proof of payment – Students must provide itemized detail of all payments for their tuition. Proof of student payments can be provided in many forms including copies of cancelled checks, school invoices/statements specifically identify direct student payments, or credit card statements.