

INTERNAL BURSARY POLICY

Policy Number:	Approved Date:
Effective Date:	Review Date:

Why Have a Policy?

The Internal Bursary Policy is intended to assist the Municipality in securing adequately qualified personnel for its service by providing financial assistance to employees to enable them to qualify themselves educationally for the Municipality's service and to enhance their level of competence to perform the duties assigned to them.

THE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The Bursary Policy (hereinafter referred to as the “Scheme”) is intended to assist the Municipality in securing adequately qualified personnel for its service by providing financial assistance to employees to enable them to qualify themselves educationally for the Municipality’s service and to enhance their level of competence to perform the duties assigned to them. The Scheme does not apply to bursaries for full time study or to any training undertaken in terms of the Municipality’s training policy, or to any overseas study leave.

2. DEFINITIONS

All terminology used in this policy shall bear the same meaning as in the applicable legislation.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003

4. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of Ubuhlebezwe Municipality.

5. OBJECTIVES OF POLICY

- To encourage career development of employees through further education.
- To encourage self-development activities provided that they are along the lines regarded as beneficial to the municipality by management.
- To provide financial assistance to employees who wish to improve themselves through formal courses of study.

6. POLICY CONTENT

6.1 Administration of Scheme

The Corporate Services (Human Resources Section) shall be responsible for the administration and implementation of the Scheme and he/she, or his/her assignee shall have the power to conclude contracts in terms of the Scheme.

6.2 Financial Assistance

Financial assistance shall be given to an employee in respect of expenses to be incurred to enable him/her to obtain qualifications approved by the Municipal Manager or his/her assignee, subject to availability of funds in the budget.

Financial assistance, which shall include registration, tuition and examination fees, shall be paid directly to the relevant educational

institution upon receipt of proof of registration for the qualification and the relevant invoices.

Where a qualification is obtainable through an accredited institution the amount of financial assistance in respect of tuition fees shall be limited to the scale of fees charged by such accredited institution.

6.3 Contractual Obligations

Should an employee at any time suspend or abandon his/her studies for the approved qualification, be refused permission by the educational institution or examining authority to continue his/her studies, or not pass any qualifying course of study during 2 consecutive years, he/she shall be obliged, from a date fixed by the Municipal Manager or his/her assignee to repay the Municipality the full amount of the financial assistance given to him/her, inclusive of study leave. Where an employee has been granted leave on full pay he/she may, at his/her option, be permitted to have his/her accumulated annual leave reduced by an equivalent number of days taken as study leave provided that such action does not conflict with any leave regulations of the Municipality.

In the event of an employee retiring, resigning or being dismissed from the Municipality's service before having obtained the qualification in respect of which he/she was granted financial assistance, he/she shall repay to the Municipality the total financial assistance paid by the Municipality.

With correspondence courses, the time frame in which an employee can complete a diploma qualification is at least four to five years with 18 to 22 modules that must be completed. The employee will be under an obligation to pay back all financial assistance over the period that he/she studied if the employee wants to resign, etc without having served the required period. The employee has to remain in the service of the Municipality for at least one year for each year the employee received financial assistance from the Municipality.

In the event of an employee dying or becoming physically or mentally incapable of completing the qualification in respect of which he/she was granted financial assistance, he/she or his/her estate, as the case may be, shall at the employer's option, repay to the Municipality the total financial assistance received from the Municipality.

For block release courses, an employee shall, whether or not he/she obtains the qualification concerned, serve the Municipality for two years in respect of each year in which study leave up to and including twenty-six weeks is taken in any one year, the period of obligation being two years for each period of study leave up to twenty six weeks per year taken.

In the event of an employee retiring, resigning or being dismissed from the Municipality's service before having served his/her period of obligation, he/she shall repay to the Municipality the total financial assistance received from the Municipality.

Service obligation shall not be condoned on a pro-rata basis. Therefore, unless the employee remains in the service of the Municipality until the expiry date of his/her service obligation he/she shall remain liable for the full settlement of the financial assistance received.

In the event of an employee dies or become physically or mentally incapable of completing his/her service obligation, he/she or his/her estate, as the case may be, shall at the employer's option, repay to the Municipality the total financial assistance received from the Municipality.

The employee shall cede to the Municipality his/her rights, title and interest in and to all amounts due to the employee by the Municipality & the Pension Fund to which the employee contributed during his/her employment with the Municipality, both future and present, as security for the indebtedness of the employee to the Municipality arising out of the obligation created by this agreement.

The cession referred to in the policy shall endure and be of force and effect until the liability of the employee to the Municipality has been paid by the employee to the Municipality or otherwise discharged.

The certificate under hand of the Chief Financial Officer certifying the amount due by the employee to the Municipality shall be prima facie proof of the amount due and payable by the employee to the Municipality.

If an employee is unable to pay the Municipality the full amount owing to the Municipality in terms of the Scheme, the Chief Financial Officer shall, in consultation with the employee, make suitable alternative arrangements to facilitate full settlement of the amount owing to the Municipality, provided that such arrangement shall not extend beyond one year from the date on which the employee originally became liable for the full settlement of his/her debt to the Municipality in terms of the Scheme.

6.4 Study Leave

An employee who is a part-time or distance learning student and who is studying for an approved qualification, shall be granted examination, study leave as follows:

- Examination leave for the date or dates on which he/she is required to present himself/herself as a candidate for such examination.

- Study leave, one day per examination paper, solely for the purpose of preparing for an examination prescribed by the registered educational institution where the employee is registered.
- The employee may be granted study leave on full pay to attend lectures or to undertake practical work or to attend practical demonstrations in cases where he/she establishes to the satisfaction of the Municipal Manager or his/her assignee that such leave is essential for the fulfilment of the contract entered into in terms of the Scheme.
- The study leave benefits shall not apply to an employee who wishes to repeat a qualifying course of study which was previously written by him/her for which examination leave was taken and which he/she failed. If an employee was unsuccessful in an exam, the study leave should be converted to annual leave.
- An employee who takes study leave shall be considered as having received financial assistance in terms of the Scheme and shall be required to sign the prescribed contract.

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

This policy will be implemented and effective once recommended by the Local Labour Forum and approved by Council.

8. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to all Municipal employees using the full range of communication methods available to the municipality.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

10. BUDGET AND RESOURCES

The financial and resource implication/s related to the implementation of this policy should be qualified and quantified.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Municipal Manager or his assignee shall have the authority to:

- Approve qualifications and its priority for inclusion in the Scheme, or delete those which are no longer appropriate.
- In conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer determine the amount of, and conditions governing, financial assistance in connection with approved qualifications as deemed necessary to give effect to the principles of this scheme, and to safeguard the interests of the Municipality.
- Approve the continuation, extension, variation or termination of facilities to individual students on conditions laid down in the Scheme.

- Determine the educational institutions at which any student may pursue an approved qualification.
- In conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer determine the method and terms under which money owing to the Municipality for financial assistance paid in terms of the scheme shall be repaid.
- Adopt whatever actions are deemed necessary to address any anomalous situation which is not specifically addressed by the Scheme.
- Continuously monitor the effectiveness of the Scheme and submit recommendations to the Municipality whereby the Scheme may be amended to accommodate changing or anomalous circumstances.

12. PENALTIES

Non-compliance to any of the stipulations contained in this policy will be regarded as misconduct, which will be dealt with in terms of the Disciplinary Code.

13. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute arising from this policy due to ambiguous wording or phrasing must be referred to the Local Labour Forum for adjudication. Resolutions from the Local Labour Forum must be incorporated into the policy.

14. AUTHORITY

Formulated by:	Date:
Consulted: LLF:	Date:
MM Approval:	Date:
Council Approval:	Date: