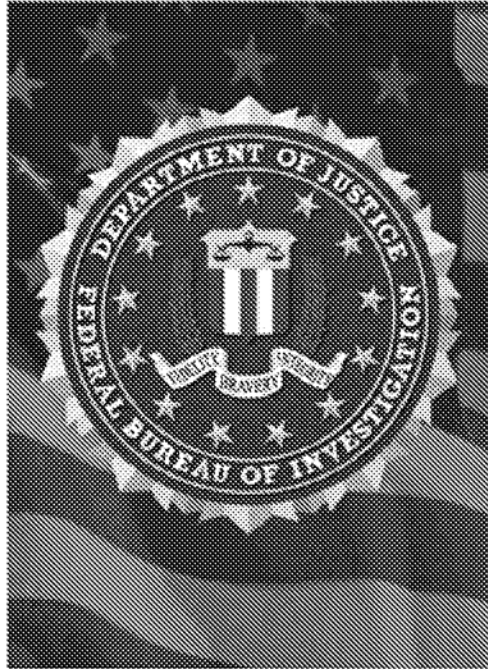


UNCLASSIFIED
University Education Program Policy Guide

University Education Program Policy Guide



Federal Bureau of Investigation

Human Resources Division

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Final Approval	Jeffrey S. Sallet Executive Assistant Director Human Resources Branch

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General Information

Questions or comments pertaining to this policy guide (PG) can be directed to:

Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters (FBIHQ), Human Resources Division (HRD),
Employee Development and Selection Program Section (EDSPS), Office of Workforce
Development (OWD)

Division point of contact (POC): University Education Program (UEP) office,

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Supersession Information

This document supersedes the *University Education Program Policy Guide* (0970PG).

This document and its contents are the property of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). If the document or its contents are provided to an outside agency, it and its contents are not to be distributed outside of that agency without the written permission of the unit listed in the contact section of this PG.

Revision Log

The revision log documents substantive changes made to the previous version of this policy, the *University Education Program Policy Guide* (0970PG), published on August 24, 2017.

The numbers and titles in the “Revised” column refer to the subsections as they currently appear in this updated policy. “Deleted” subsection numbers refer to those in the previous published version of the policy.

Revised Section Number and Title	Deleted Section Number and Title
4.2.2. Application Package	
4.3.5. Tuition Cap	

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the *University Education Program Policy Guide* is to establish procedures and requirements to ensure that the University Education Program (UEP) meets the following objectives:

- Foster a culture of continual learning
- Encourage self-development
- Ensure that the FBI remains the employer of choice
- Retain a highly skilled workforce
- Broaden employees' knowledge of technical and administrative disciplines

1.2. Scope

This policy guide (PG) is intended for all Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) employees who either have an interest in participating in the UEP or are supervisors of UEP participants.

1.3. Exemptions

There are no exemptions.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. University Education Program, Office of Workforce Development (OWD), Human Resources Division (HRD)

The UEP office, OWD, HRD must:

- Announce the UEP open season to all FBI employees (currently by electronic mail [e-mail], Intranet, and *Employee E-Brief*).
- Provide detailed instructions on the application process through this PG.
- Ensure that all UEP applications are complete and the candidates are qualified to apply.
- Submit the names of the ranked candidates to the Leadership Selection Unit (LSU), HRD for name check processing.
- Notify UEP applicants in writing of their acceptance/non-acceptance into the Program.
- Approve changes made within the program by program participants.
- Request an annual budget from the Resource Planning Office (RPO) prior to each fiscal year (FY).
- Receive and verify third party draft (TPD) requests from participants and forward to the Commercial Payments and Confidential Services Unit (CPCSU), Finance Division (FD) for payment.
- Review monthly separation reports received from HRD to ensure service obligation commitments have not been violated.
- Administer all aspects of the UEP according to this PG.
- Report participant debts to the Accounts Receivable Unit (ARU), Accounting Section, FD.

2.2. Commercial Payments/Confidential Services Unit, Finance Division

FD's CPCSU must:

- Review invoices prior to payment.
- Authorize TPD requests for reimbursement requests.

2.3. Finance Division's Contracting Officer (CO)

FD's CO must:

- Review agreements with educational institutions that offer discounts to all federal employees.
- Finalize and sign all agreements that require the expenditure of funds for tuition costs.

2.4. Resource Analysis Unit (RAU), Resource Planning Office

RAU must determine and allocate the annual UEP budget based on the availability of funding.

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2.5. Finance Division's Accounts Receivable Unit

FD's ARU must, upon receipt of the notification from the UEP team, initiate collection procedures against former employees who have not fulfilled their service agreements in accordance with *FBI Employee and Non-Federal Entity Debt Collection Policy Directive (0480D)*.

2.6. Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters (FBIHQ) Division and Field Office (FO) Management

FBIHQ division and FO management must:

- Designate a point of contact (POC). This individual must be the division's/FO's training coordinator or training technician.
- Designate a chair for the local review board (LRB) at the assistant special agent in charge (ASAC) level in the field or the section chief (SC) level at FBIHQ.
- Submit the rankings from the LRB via the Virtual Academy (VA) application system by the stated deadline.

2.7. Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters Division and Field Office Points of Contact

FBIHQ division and FO POCs must:

- Receive the application materials on behalf of the LRB.
- Establish a UEP LRB to ensure that UEP criteria are met and enter the rankings provided by the board members based on the division's/FO's list of qualified UEP applicants.
- Maintain justification for any re-ranking by the LRB.

2.8. Local Review Board

The LRB must:

- Rank all qualified candidates based on their applications and the FBI's strategic objectives. Division/FO heads reserve the right to re-rank the LRB ranking.
- Deny applications that do not adequately meet the following three criteria:
 - Demonstrated correlation between degree/certificate program and the FBI's strategic objectives
 - Demonstrated correlation between current position and degree/certificate program
 - Articulated return on investment to the FBI

2.9. University Education Program Participants

UEP participants must:

- Confirm in the VA system that they have been approved for participation in the UEP.
- Represent the FBI in a professional manner according to FBI policies.
- Validate all courses before the start of each course via the VA system.

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- Submit grades via the VA system within 30 days of course completion.
- Submit final transcripts via e-mail or the fax found on the .
- Ensure that OWD, HRD has an invoice for current classes so that payment can be made.
- Make payment of all additional expenses incurred that are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Assume responsibility for payment of all classes and additional expenses in the event the participant does not meet criteria established by the UEP PG.
- Be aware of the tuition cap and time limits associated with the degree programs.
- Enroll in a for-credit degree program. The UEP does not fund noncredit courses.
- Ensure enrollment in at least one class within each six-month period. If a participant is inactive for a consecutive period of six-months, his or her status in the UEP becomes inactive and he or she must reapply to the UEP for future participation.
- Take notice of programs requiring internships or externships and plan accordingly, since the UEP is for off-duty participation only.
- Continue employment with the FBI in a full-time status until the service commitment has been completed. If the employee fails in this obligation for any reason other than involuntary separation, the employee will be required to repay the expenses paid by the FBI on his or her behalf, as described in this PG.
- Update OWD, HRD on position changes during participation in the program.
- Brief their new supervisors on their participation in the UEP.

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2.10. Participant Supervisors

Participant supervisors must:

- Approve or disapprove employees' application packages.
- Evaluate participants' performance during their participation in the program as the employees' rating officials.
- Approve or disapprove changes in employees' UEP degree/certificate plans.

2.11. Leadership Selection Unit

LSU must verify the eligibility of all candidates being considered by conducting name checks. A name check is a query of all FBI records (i.e., Office of Professional Responsibility [OPR], Inspection Division [INSD], Security Division [SecD], Office of Equal Employment Opportunity Affairs [OEEOA], and Office of Disciplinary Appeals [ODA]) for any administrative action, open, pending or closed investigation or complaint involving a specific employee. The name checks query the previous three years, and LSU presents any findings to the assistant director (AD), HRD to determine the candidates' suitability for continuation in the selection process.

3. Policy Statement

The UEP supports the FBI's mission by providing professional development, training, and educational opportunities that enhance the capabilities of FBI employees. The UEP is a professional development program endorsed by the Director of the FBI and complies with the FBI's strategic objectives.

The UEP is subject to the policies mandated by the FBI, consistent with federal regulations and stipulations. Changes in policies governing reimbursement of expenses within the FBI may impact existing and new UEP participants and may supersede all previous understandings and agreements.

HRD reserves the right to alter existing policies or implement new policies relating to present and future UEP degree/certificate programs. HRD also reserves the right to cancel any and all UEP degree/certificate programs as deemed necessary at any time, even when a person is already attending a degree/certificate program.

Acceptance into the UEP does not guarantee admission into an education program. Employees must meet all academic requirements of the college, university, or academic institution.

UEP participants should note that attending and completing a degree/certificate program is not a promise or a guarantee of a new position, a promotion, a step increase, or any other job-related incentive that goes beyond the educational experience.

4. Processes and Procedures

4.1. Eligibility Requirements

This program is available to employees who maintain a strong work ethic and can handle the additional responsibilities of attending school outside of their normal business hours. The supervisor's approval ensures that the applicant meets the minimum qualifications.

To be eligible for tuition prepayment and reimbursement in the UEP, the FBI employee must apply during the UEP's annual open season. Minimum qualifications include the following:

- The candidate is a full-time permanent employee of the FBI.
- The candidate has successfully completed all probationary periods. (An employee may submit an application if his or her probationary period will be completed by December 31 of the year in which he or she applies. If the candidate is accepted, courses that start before probation has been completed will not be funded by the UEP.)
- The candidate has his or her supervisor's approval.
- The candidate has a "Consistent Performer" or better rating on his or her latest Performance Wrap-Up. (For Senior Executive Service [SES] employees, a rating of "Achieving Results" or "Level 3" is the equivalent of "Consistent Performer.")
- The training relates to the employee's current principal job duties.
- The candidate has identified an academic institution regionally accredited through an accrediting agency recognized by the United States (U.S.) Secretary of Education.

4.2. Application Process

4.2.1. Solicitation

An FBI-wide solicitation is disseminated to all FBIHQ divisions and FOs by means of an all-employee e-mail, the Intranet, and the FBI E-Brief (electronic brief) announcing the UEP open season and required submission deadline. UEP candidates must submit an application that addresses all requirements in the UEP online application form in VA. Failure to address all requirements in the application may disqualify the candidate. Applications must not include classified information.

4.2.2. Application Package

Each application package must consist of the following in order to be considered:

- Criteria responses
- First-level supervisor and division/FO head recommendation
- Additional justification of circumstances and a statement regarding the compelling need of the FBI for specific subject matter expertise in the field of study, if applying for a second UEP-funded master's degree

All applications for a doctorate degree or a second UEP-funded master's degree must be separated from other degrees and ranked by an executive board held by HRD. The UEP will only accept applications for doctorate degrees in disciplines that are identified on an annual basis by

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HRD executive management (EM). The UEP does not accept applications for juris doctor (JD) degrees or accelerated programs (see [subsection 4.3.5](#) of this PG).

4.2.3. Supervisor Approval

Based on the guidelines established in [subsection 4.1](#), supervisor approval must be obtained before each applicant is reviewed by the LRB for his or her division/FO. A supervisor's approval ensures that he or she is aware of the additional responsibility of participating in the UEP in case it interferes with the employee's current work assignments, short-term deadlines, or travel required for current or collateral duties. The supervisor's endorsement ensures that the applicant meets the minimum qualifications and has received a "Consistent Performer" or better rating in each critical element on his or her latest Performance Wrap-Up. If an employee's supervisor does not approve the employee's UEP application during open season, the application will not continue in the vetting process.

4.2.3.1. Application Ranking

Each application must be ranked on the following three criteria using a scoring rubric provided by the UEP:

- Demonstrated correlation between degree/certificate program and the FBI's strategic objectives
- Demonstrated correlation between current position and degree/certificate program
- Articulated return on investment to the FBI

Prior to each open season, guidance will be sent to FBIHQ divisions and FOs containing details on a point system for ranking applications.

HRD ensures that each FBIHQ division's and FO's ranked nomination packages are reviewed for completeness and that each applicant is qualified to apply based on the minimum qualifications described within, as well as the eligibility requirements elicited by the criteria questions.

Divisions and FOs must not forward unranked applications to HRD. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted. HRD makes the final decision on the acceptance of new participants into the UEP based on program criteria, funding levels, and the division/FO rankings of qualified applicants. HRD reserves the right to revisit rankings based upon the totality of applications and the need to ensure the optimal return on investment for the FBI.

New participants will be accepted into the UEP based on these program requirements and available funding for the subsequent FY.

All applications for second UEP-funded graduate degrees will receive an additional review by the HRD LRB.

4.2.4. Notification Process

HRD will notify all candidates by e-mail of selection or non-selection after completion of the vetting process.

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4.3. Program Participation

The UEP offers payment of tuition for employees who seek degrees or certificates in areas that are applicable to current and principal job duties and are related to the top mission priorities of the FBI. The UEP is designed for off-duty hours only; it should not interfere with mission responsibilities. The UEP does not permit an employee to attend a course during on-duty hours. The use of administrative leave is not authorized to attend a course or to travel to attend a course. If an employee contemplates signing up for a course outside of a 50-mile radius of the employee's workplace or home, the employee should consult his or her supervisor in advance to ensure that attendance will not interfere with mission responsibilities.

An employee's enrollment in the UEP does not obligate a supervisor to approve annual leave for the employee to depart work early to travel to a course. It is at the supervisor's discretion to determine whether the mission would be negatively impacted before approving or disapproving any leave requests (see the *Leave Policy Guide* [0341PG]). If an employee signs up for a course offered in a distant location, the employee must be aware that he or she may not be able to attend all class sessions if departing prior to the end of the workday would be required. Any questions directed to UEP personnel about the use of leave will result in a reminder of the rules described above and a referral to the *Leave Policy Guide* (0341PG).

4.3.1. Frequency of Participation

UEP participants cannot participate in the UEP and the Sabbatical Program concurrently. If an employee is currently participating in the Sabbatical Program, he or she may not apply to the UEP for participation in a second degree/certificate program, or vice versa, until the first degree/certificate is complete and the Continuing Service Agreement (CSA) (see subsection 4.3.3.2 of this PG) is fulfilled. An employee may apply to the UEP or the Sabbatical Program upon graduation from his or her degree/certificate program and subsequent fulfillment of the CSA.

Current Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) participants may apply to the UEP provided they are not receiving money from both programs for the same expense. The FBI reserves the right to deny participation in these programs at any time. If employees participate in the UEP and SLRP at the same time, their respective service agreements for each program will run simultaneously with one another.

4.3.2. Publications

Many academic institutions require participants to complete a thesis, a dissertation, or a similar project as a condition precedent to graduation and the granting of degrees. UEP participants using FBI source information in their written work must contact the Record/Information Dissemination Section (RIDS), Information Management Division (IMD) to discuss their objectives and to review any written works before submission to the school or a faculty member. A participant's FBIHQ division or FO maintains the right to review a thesis, a dissertation, or a similar project upon request.

If an FBI employee engages in plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty, the employee will be removed from the UEP and the matter will be referred to OPR for possible disciplinary action and to FD for debt collection (see subsection 4.5.3 of this PG).

Some degree/certificate programs may require a UEP participant to submit a published paper to OWD or the sponsoring division upon completion of the program. Furthermore, OWD may

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request a copy of the participant's thesis, dissertation, or similar paper to be placed on the Intranet for others to view (see the *Prepublication Review Policy Guide* [0792PG]). OWD must not place an employee's written paper or thesis on the Intranet without first giving the employee an opportunity to object.

4.3.3. Submission of Required Program Documentation

Once accepted into the UEP, the participant is responsible for submitting the required documentation to the UEP via VA on time. A participant may not attend UEP-funded classes until all required electronic documentation has been received and processed by the UEP and the participant has received notification that funding has been approved. Failure to submit all required documentation via VA will result in nonpayment of tuition.

VA documentation includes:

- School name and address
- Course names, numbers, start and end dates, and estimated costs
- Course validation
- Completed course grades

4.3.3.1. Course Maps/Study Plan

Each participant must ensure that a current course map remains on file with the UEP. Course maps are required to be updated upon validation of each course via the VA system. The course maps are the main source of information that is used to define budgetary requirements. The UEP understands that course maps change frequently, but it is the responsibility of the participant to keep the UEP apprised of any changes. The course map must include all courses that will be taken during the remainder of the degree program. Failure to submit a course map identifying study plans, course names and dates, and credit hours for a participant's degree program may result in nonpayment of tuition. Course maps/study plans should be submitted to the UEP Office only via the VA system.

4.3.3.2. Continuing Service Agreement

Each UEP participant is obligated to fulfill a CSA of five times the length of the training period, consistent with Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section (§) 4108. This service obligation period commences upon either the completion of or withdrawal from the degree/certificate program, on the first workday after the last day of participation at the school. (See below for the service obligation period calculation.)

Candidates who do not agree to the continued service commitment on their applications will not be considered for the UEP. The responsibility rests with the candidate to acknowledge his or her acceptance of the service commitment in the application.

Prior UEP service agreements established between the FBI and the UEP participant must be fulfilled before the participant reapplies to the UEP during the open enrollment period.

The UEP candidate's application represents his or her understanding of, and agreement to, the service agreement period and the parameters set forth in the application and this document. The UEP participants, former and present, who separate from the FBI for any reason other than involuntary separation, are accountable for the terms in their applications and the policies

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described herein. The terms of the participant's service agreement are not dismissed even if he or she departs the FBI and is not advised of his or her service obligation during the exit interview process, or if the participant is rehired by the FBI at a future date.

4.3.3.2.1. Continuing Service Agreement Calculation

By applying to the program, each participant agrees to a UEP CSA. Participants must continue full-time employment with the FBI after the end of their training for a period of five times the length of the training period, unless they are involuntarily separated from the FBI. The training period is defined as the number of credit hours funded by the UEP, multiplied by 15 contact (hands-on) hours, multiplied by five times the length of the training period. This calculation is based on a random survey the UEP conducted of schools that UEP participants were attending in 2006, whereby it was determined that individuals complete approximately 15 hours of instruction and homework per credit hour earned. The UEP Advisory Panel concurred with this assessment.

Example: A normal bachelor's degree takes approximately 140 credit hours ($140 \times 15 \times 5 = 10,500/40$ (hours in a work week) = 262.5 weeks, or five years). It is assumed that one credit hour is equal to 15 contact (hands-on) hours.

Should a participant voluntarily separate from the FBI within the service obligation period, he or she agrees to reimburse the FBI for a prorated amount of funds expended for his or her UEP participation. The amount owed is based on the number of days completed in the participant's CSA. This policy also pertains to special agent (SA) separation at age 57.

Participants are obligated to maintain good standing in their degree programs, to continue in a full-time employment status with the FBI, and to repay all program costs for failure to successfully complete each course funded by the UEP or to fulfill the service commitment, consistent with 5 U.S.C. § 4108 and the policies of the FBI. (See [subsection 4.5.1](#) of this PG for guidance regarding CSA fulfillment when an employee is separated from the FBI.)

Participants accepted before the 2011 open season will be "grandfathered in" under the previous service agreement length.

4.3.3.3. Grade Requirement

Participants must provide updated final grades to the UEP within 30 days following the completion of each academic term in VA.

UEP participants in undergraduate programs (such as associate's and bachelor's programs) must achieve a final grade of C or better on an A-through-F letter grade scale, or the equivalent, for each course. UEP participants in graduate programs (such as master's, doctorate, or certificate programs) must achieve a final grade of B- or better on an A-through-F letter grade scale, or the equivalent, for each course.

Failure to submit or attain the minimum grade requires the participant to reimburse the FBI for expenses the government incurred on his or her behalf. ARU, FD initiates all debt collection proceedings of UEP participants who do not meet this grade requirement.

If a participant does not meet the minimum grade requirement identified above in one or more courses funded by the UEP, the participant's debt for that class will be referred to ARU and the participant will be able to participate in the UEP only through reimbursement (i.e., his or her tuition will no longer be prepaid by UEP). In order to be reimbursed, the participant must submit

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form FD-794, "Payment Request," proof of a final grade that meets the above minimum grade requirement in the course, and an invoice showing that he or she has paid in full for that course (see the UEP Intranet site for additional information). This status is permanent going forward and cannot be reversed.

If a participant receives two or more grades that do not meet the minimum requirements as established by the UEP, he or she will be removed from the program at that time. The account in VA will be closed and the service agreement will commence immediately. The student may still continue to pursue the degree on a self-pay basis; however, the tuition will not be funded or reimbursed by the UEP.

4.3.4. Course Limits per Academic Term

Participants are approved to take two courses at a time. However, if a participant wishes to take three or more courses at the same time, this may be approved by the supervisor in conjunction with the UEP.

The participant must submit a request by e-mail through the participant's supervisor, who must forward it to the UEP. The UEP makes the determination for approval based on the supervisor's recommendation and availability of funds at the time of the request.

4.3.5. Tuition Cap

The following tuition caps apply for each degree:

Degree Level	Degree Cap
Associate's	\$25,000
Bachelor's	\$50,000
Certificate	\$15,000
Master's	\$40,000
Doctorate's	\$55,000

Tuition caps are lifetime, not per each admittance into the UEP. If a participant reaches the cap for a particular degree and then reapplies to the UEP, only a degree with a higher cap may be pursued. For example, if a participant earns an associate degree funded through the UEP and spends \$15,000 and then applies for a master's degree through the UEP, the cap for the total funded amount through the UEP will not exceed the master's degree cap minus the amount previously spent on the associate degree, which means only \$25,000 is available for the master's degree.

If the tuition cap is not reached by the participant, remaining funding is available only once the CSA is fulfilled. An application for a degree equal to or higher than the previous degree may be submitted during a future open season. Tuition caps are not retroactive and do not affect UEP participants who were accepted into the UEP prior to open season 2010.

JD's are not accepted by the UEP. A participant pursuing a doctorate has five years to complete his or her degree program, beginning on the start date of their first UEP-funded classes, or he or she will be made inactive in the UEP. Note that if a participant is made inactive due to exceeding

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the above time limits, the participant will be removed from the program and still be responsible for fulfilling his or her CSA.

4.3.6. Degree Programs

Each UEP participant is approved for a specified certificate/degree program at a specified school, as identified during the application phase. The degree program or the educational institution identified on the application may not be changed without the UEP Office's approval. The participant must submit a request to change degree programs and/or educational institutions through the VA system. This request must include the following information:

- A justification that the new degree program is related to the participant's current job
- An overall comparison of costs between the present degree program/educational institution and the proposed degree program/educational institution
- If applicable, an indication as to whether or not previously earned UEP-sponsored credit hours will transfer to the new degree program/educational institution

Credits that do not transfer between degree plan changes will have to be reimbursed to the FBI.

The participant's supervisor must approve these changes. The approval must be based on the change in the degree program and/or educational institution in relation to the participant's current principal job duties. The UEP will approve or disapprove the request after reviewing the supervisor's recommendation and the availability of funds. If the requested change is denied, the participant may either remain in the originally approved degree program or reapply during a future open season, after the completion of a one-year waiting period from the date of withdrawal.

Each participant is approved for a single-degree program and must meet his or her CSA and reapply to the UEP before continuing into another degree program. Dual-degree programs are prohibited.

4.3.7. Maintaining Active Status

Upon acceptance into the UEP, participants must start the first course by March 1 and enroll in at least one course every six months thereafter. If a participant does not successfully complete at least one course by the end of a six-month period from the date of completion of the last class and every six-month period thereafter, the individual's UEP account will be closed. Participants whose accounts are closed or who choose to withdraw from the UEP voluntarily are dropped from the program and must wait one calendar year from the date of withdrawal before reapplying during the next application window in order to recommence tuition payments (see [subsection 4.4.5](#) of this PG). Prior to UEP account closure, a one-time waiver for reconsideration of this administrative action may be requested by e-mail through the employee's supervisor, who then must forward it to the UEP Office. Examples of acceptable justification for a waiver include, but are not limited to, extended sick leave or a high-priority FBI work assignment, such as a temporary duty (TDY) assignment overseas. The UEP Office will approve or disapprove the waiver request.

4.4. Program Funding and Course Offerings

Continued participation in the UEP within each FY, and among multiple FYs, is dependent upon funding. HRD does not guarantee funding for participants who are attending degree/certificate

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programs that span multiple FYs. If the funding is terminated, UEP participants will be notified and will be required to withdraw from their degree/certificate programs before completion, unless alternate funding for their degree/certificate programs can be obtained.

Each UEP participant is approved to take two courses at a time, unless approval from HRD is obtained for additional classes. The UEP does not fund noncredit courses. The UEP funds only tuition and does not pay for books or fees. Prerequisite courses are not eligible for UEP funding.

New UEP applicants will not have their tuition payment retroactively reimbursed before their acceptance into the program. However, FBI employees who have already started a degree program may apply to the UEP to be eligible for funding for the remainder of their courses. Selection for the UEP does not promise or imply promotion or reassignment to any other position.

Validation of a course in VA does not imply a commitment from the UEP Office to pay tuition costs. Prior written approval to take each course constitutes the agreement by the FBI to pay for the course.

4.4.1. Education Taxes

All UEP funds expended for tuition by the FBI are nontaxable and not included as income.

In general, federal tax law excludes employer-provided educational assistance up to the amount of \$5,250 from gross income, regardless of the job relevance of the education obtained.

Employer-provided educational assistance in excess of \$5,250 may be excluded from gross income as long as the education obtained is job-related and is not used either to meet the minimum requirements for a particular job or to qualify for a new trade or business. All UEP candidates are required to assess and confirm the applicability of the training to their current principal job duties when completing the application. Candidates whose job duties are not applicable to the degree/certificate program are not accepted into the UEP. Candidates with questions or concerns can contact their tax advisors or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or review IRS publications on this issue (e.g., IRS Publication 970, *Employer-Provided Educational Assistance*, which can be found at www.irs.gov/publications/p970/ch12.html).

4.4.2. Financial Aid

Participants in the UEP are eligible for reimbursement of tuition only. Participants may pursue other financial aid to subsidize or supplement additional expenses; however, they may not accept additional funding for expenses that have been or will be reimbursed through the UEP. In other words, participants may not “double dip” by receiving money from two different sources (e.g., grants, GI Bills, or SLRP) for the same expense, and then keep one amount and pay with the other. Participants must contact the UEP Office directly for further instructions if they are granted outside funding.

4.4.3. Costs Paid by the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Only tuition costs are paid by the FBI. Invoices received that include other fees, including the cost of books, will not be paid or reimbursed.

4.4.4. Reimbursement of Expenses

UEP participants who have prepaid the cost of tuition should submit the following to FBIHQ Room 10929, to the attention of UEP:

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- Original FD-794, "Payment Request," signed by the supervisor (Per CPCSU, FD, only supervisor signature is required, and the UEP team lead will sign in place of the next-level supervisor for FBIHQ participants or the special agent in charge [SAC]/assistant special agent in charge [ASAC]/administrative officer [AO]/supervisory administrative specialist [SAS] for FO participants.)
- Receipt reflecting payment to school
- Grade report reflecting grade of C or higher (or equivalent) for undergraduate participants, or B- or higher (or equivalent) for graduate students, in courses to be reimbursed (only for students on permanent reimbursement)

4.4.5. Withdrawal From Program Participation

Participants may withdraw from the UEP without penalty if they are not in the middle of a course and their UEP paperwork is complete, including the submission of all grades for UEP-sponsored courses. If a participant chooses to withdraw or is removed due to inactivity, he or she will not be eligible to reapply to the UEP for one calendar year from the date of withdrawal. Participants who leave the FBI, unless they are involuntarily separated without completing the required service agreements, must reimburse the FBI for any tuition or fees the FBI has paid during their participation in the UEP (see subsection 4.2. of this PG). The amount owed is prorated based on the number of days completed in the participant's CSA.

4.4.6. Tuition Discounts

Various colleges and universities may offer government employees or veterans discounted rates toward tuition, books, technology fees, or other educational costs associated with certain academic programs. Per Department of Justice (DOJ) ethics regulations and the *FBI Ethics and Integrity Program Policy Directive and Policy Guide (0754DPG)*, employees may accept discounts that are available to the general public or to all government or military personnel. FBI employees who are also in the military reserves or retirees may be authorized to accept the discount under either group (but not both). For other offered discounts, or any related questions, employees should contact their division/FO ethics counselor or the Office of Integrity and Compliance (OIC).

4.4.7. Continued Participation Assessment

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to evaluate the participant's performance during his or her participation in the program. The supervisor may place a participant's UEP-funded education on hold when the participant's performance rating on any critical element on the annual Performance Wrap-Up or Performance Check-In falls below "Consistent Performer," or if program participation negatively affects the FBI's mission. A participant may be placed on an administrative hold for a maximum of 90 days without penalty, and the employee's supervisor must send a notification of this to the UEP. While on administrative hold, the participant is not eligible to receive UEP funding. If the participant's performance does not return to at least the "Consistent Performer" level on all critical elements during this hold period, the participant will be placed in an inactive status.

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4.5. Federal Bureau of Investigation Separation, Course Failure, Withdrawal, and Debt Collection

The FBI has the right to recover all UEP program costs if a participant separates from the FBI for any reason other than involuntary separation prior to the completion of his or her UEP service commitment. If a participant withdraws from the UEP without fulfilling the CSA, the FBI will recover a prorated amount of costs based on the number of days completed in the CSA. The FBI also has the right to recover all UEP costs for a course that the participant withdraws from or fails. For all employees, any such liabilities are treated as debts due the United States. Employees may request a waiver of debt pursuant to *FBI Employee and Non-Federal Entity Debt Collection Policy Directive (0480D)*.

All UEP participants must meet the minimum grade requirement, as detailed in subsection 4.3.3.3. of this PG, and report all grades for UEP-funded classes in VA within 30 days of completing each course. Failure to meet the minimum grade requirement or to submit a final course grade within 30 days will result in the UEP reporting the matter as a debt to FD for collection proceedings, in accordance with the provisions of subsection 4.5.3. of this PG.

4.5.1. Separation

In the event that a participant separates from the FBI for any reason other than involuntary separation, the FBI will seek to recover a prorated amount of education and related costs as debts due to the U.S. government (USG).

Should a participant voluntarily separate from the FBI within the service obligation period or be unable to complete the service obligation due to SA mandatory separation at age 57, he or she agrees to reimburse the FBI for funds expended for his or her UEP participation based on the number of days completed in the CSA (see subsection 4.3.3.2. of this PG for more information). Participants are obligated to maintain good standing in their academic programs, to continue in a full-time employment status with the FBI, and to repay all program costs for failure to successfully complete each opportunity funded by the UEP or to fulfill the service commitment consistent with 5 U.S.C. § 4108 and the policies of the FBI.

HRD is required to conduct monthly reviews of separation reports to ensure that service obligation periods have not been violated. In the event that a participant resigns or is separated from the FBI without fulfilling a service commitment, the amount of tuition owed will be prorated, taking into consideration service completed between the completion date of the program and the participant's separation date. For example, if the UEP funded a participant's education in the amount of \$10,000, and the participant owes the FBI one year of service and resigns after six months (or after having served 50 percent of the service commitment), the participant would be required to reimburse the FBI 50 percent of the total tuition paid while he or she was a participant in the UEP, or \$5,000. For all participants, service obligations start upon completion of their last UEP-funded course, on the first workday after completion of the course.

4.5.2. Course Failure and Withdrawal

Course failure includes, but is not limited to, failure to obtain the certificate or degree associated with the UEP, failure to obtain a passing grade or grade point average as defined by the academic institution or the FBI, and failure to complete a thesis or similar assignment associated with the UEP.

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In the event that a participant withdraws from a course or fails to meet the minimum grade requirement as outlined in this document, the FBI has the right to recover all training costs as debts due to the USG.

4.5.3. Collection Proceedings

In the event that a participant separates from the FBI without fulfilling his or her CSA, withdraws from a course, or fails to meet the minimum grade requirement as outlined in this document, this debt will be referred to ARU, FD.

4.5.3.1. Debt Collection Tracking

Both FD and HRD must designate corollary POCs for debt collection actions. HRD must maintain an electronic tracking system detailing the UEP training provided for all participants and identify participants who have violated their UEP training agreements. FD must maintain an electronic billing and collection database that enables identification of UEP participants who have violated their training agreements and summarizes actions taken by FD for participants who have been referred for debt collection. FD must provide these payment arrangements, as well as payment history, to the UEP POC on a quarterly basis.

5. Summary of Legal Authorities

- Title 5 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) § 1315, Prompt Payment Act
- 5 U.S.C. § 4107, Academic Degree Training
- 5 U.S.C. § 4108, Employee Agreements; Service After Training
- Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996
- Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 (Public Law [PL] 108-411)

6. Recordkeeping Requirements

UEP participant files are maintained to facilitate the verification of all records pertaining to classes, payments, grades, and service agreements. It is recommended that each UEP participant maintain a copy of all paperwork submitted to the UEP Office. UEP participant files must be maintained for five years after the FY in which the employee's participation in UEP was completed; they should then be destroyed or deleted.

6.1. Participant Files

For participants accepted prior to the 2011 open season, the UEP participant file is maintained electronically in the UEP Office and may contain the following documents:

- Original UEP application containing a printout of the online application, the criteria questions, and the course map originally submitted
- FD-794, "Payment Request," submitted for reimbursements (if any)
- Grade reports for UEP-sponsored courses (if any)
- Significant e-mail correspondence between the UEP Office and the participant
- Course maps (if any)
- School correspondence

6.2. Database Records

For participants accepted during the 2011 open season and thereafter, an electronic version of the participant's file is maintained in the UEP database and may contain the following student information:

- Name
- Social security number (SSN)
- Job title
- Job family
- Division/FO
- Resident agency (RA)/unit
- Work telephone number
- Entry on duty (EOD) date
- Pay plan
- Job series
- Pay grade

Appendix A: Sources of Additional Information

Intranet Sites

- [Accounting Section, FD](#)
- [FBI's strategic objectives](#)
- [OPR](#)
- [RIDS, IMD](#)
- [RPO](#)
- [OWD, Employee Development and Selection Program Section \(EDSPS\), OWD](#)
- [UEP](#)

Policies

- [*Leave Policy Guide \(0341PG\)*](#)
- [*Performance and Development Policy Guide \(1083PG\)*](#)

Other Sources

- IRS Publication 970, *Employer-Provided Educational Assistance*,
www.irs.gov/publications/p970/ch11.html

Appendix B: Definitions and Acronyms

Definitions

Academic term: the time during which a school holds classes, termed a semester, a trimester, a quarter, or a session.

Colloquium: an organized conference or seminar on some subject involving a number of scholars or experts.

Continuing Service Agreement: a written agreement executed by the UEP Office requiring that the employee, upon completion of the training, continue in service unless he or she is involuntarily separated from the service of the FBI. If a UEP participant voluntarily separates from the FBI prior to the end of the period for which he or she agreed to continue in the service of the FBI, the employee must pay the expenses incurred by the FBI in connection with the training taken.

Degree program: a course of study leading to an academic degree.

Grade: a number, letter, or symbol indicating a student's level of accomplishment in each class.

Gross income: the income listed on an employee's IRS W-2 Form under "Wages, Tips, and Other Compensation."

Invoice: a document from a vendor that lists the following:

- Name of the vendor
- Invoice date
- Government contract number or other authorization for delivery of goods and services
- Vendor invoice number, account number, and/or any other identifying number agreed to by contract
- Description, price, and quantity of goods and services rendered
- Shipping and payment terms
- Taxpayer identification number (TIN)
- Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
- Contact name, title, and telephone number

Local review board: a board established in each division/FO to review applicants who applied during open season.

Probationary period: the time period following EOD to the FBI, during which the employee must demonstrate fitness for continued employment by the FBI. All FBI appointments have a defined probationary period.

Residency: on-site or virtual learning experiences that allow students to collaborate and network with other students, staff, and faculty members.

School: a college or university accredited by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

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Supervisor: an employee's rating and/or reviewing rating official on his or her performance appraisal.

University Education Program: a program that offers payment of tuition for employees who seek degrees or certificates in areas that are applicable to current principal job duties and are related to the top mission priorities of the FBI and division/FO needs. The UEP is designed for off-duty hours only.

Acronyms

AD	assistant director
ARU	Accounts Receivable Unit
AO	administrative officer
ASAC	assistant special agent in charge
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPCSU	Commercial Payments and Confidential Services Unit
CSA	continuing service agreement
CO	contracting officer
DOJ	Department of Justice
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
EDSPS	Employee Development and Selection Program Section
EM	executive management
EMSS	Employee and Medical Services Section
EOD	entry on duty
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FBIHQ	Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters
FD	Finance Division
FO	field office
FY	fiscal year
HRD	Human Resources Division

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IMD	Information Management Division
INSD	Inspection Division
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
JD	juris doctor
LRB	local review board
LSU	Leadership Selection Unit
ODA	Office of Disciplinary Appeals
OEEOA	Office of Equal Employment Opportunity Affairs
OIC	Office of Integrity and Compliance
OPR	Office of Professional Responsibility
OWD	Office of Workforce Development
PD	policy directive
PG	policy guide
PL	public law
POC	point of contact
RA	resident agency
RAU	Resource Analysis Unit
RIDS	Record/Information Dissemination Section
RPO	Resource Planning Office
SA	special agent
SAC	special agent in charge
SAS	supervisory administrative specialist
SC	section chief
SecD	Security Division
SES	Senior Executive Service

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SLRP	Student Loan Repayment Program
SSN	social security number
TDY	temporary duty
TIN	taxpayer identification number
TPD	third party draft
UC	unit chief
UEP	University Education Program
U.S.	United States
U.S.C.	United States Code
USG	United States government
VA	Virtual Academy
