
Universities Academic Pension Plan (UAPP) Procedure

Policy Sponsor:	Vice President, Finance and Administration
Name of Parent Policy:	Universities Academic Pension Plan (UAPP) Policy
Policy Contact:	Director, Human Resources
Procedure Contact:	Manager, Compensation & Benefits
Effective Date of Procedures:	December 8, 2016
Review Date:	Biennially

Purpose

To outline the employment requirements for eligibility to the Universities Academic Pension Plan (UAPP) and provide information concerning service maximums and periods of leave of absence. Details regarding plan benefits can be obtained from the UAPP web-site at www.uapp.ca.

Definitions

Agreement	The Terms and Conditions Agreement between the Governors of Athabasca University and the Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA).
AUFA	Athabasca University Faculty Association and its members.
Combined Pensionable Service (CPS)	The total number of years of Pensionable Service earned with the same employer (Athabasca University) by a Staff Member who has moved between the Public Service Pension Plan (PSPP) and the UAPP after 1993 with no break in pensionable service.



Contiguous Terms	Terms of employment without a break in service.
Full-time	Regular work schedule equal to 1.0 full-time equivalency (FTE).
Normal Working Year	The year specified by Athabasca University as the annual payroll pay period cycle.
Non pensionable salary	Earnings on which pension contributions are not calculated.
Part-time	Regular work schedule that meets a minimum of 0.5 full-time equivalency (FTE).
Pensionable Service	The sum of years of service that a staff member has contributed to a pension plan plus service recognized from a transfer or purchase of optional service.
Pensionable Service Full-time Equivalency	The base unit for determining Full-time is 1820 hours per Normal Working Year (pro-rated for part-time service).
Permanent	A Staff Member who has no pre-determined date on which employment will end.
Sponsorship and Trust Agreement (STA)	The formal Agreement between participating institutional members and the assigned Trustee that contains the terms and conditions of the UAPP, legislative and regulatory references, and guidelines for the administration of the UAPP.
Staff Member	Permanent or Temporary Staff Members as defined in the AU-AUFA Terms and Conditions Agreement and those Staff Members who have been hired on an Executive, Excluded Management or Excluded Professional (permanent or temporary) employment contract.
Temporary	A Staff Member who is hired for a contractually limited period, for non-Permanent full or Part-time employment and where there is a pre-determined date on which employment will end.



Term Appointment

The contractually limited period for which a Temporary Staff Member is hired. The start date and end date are pre-determined and stated in the employment contract.

UAPP

Universities Academic Pension Plan.

YMPE

Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) within the meaning of the Canada Pension Plan.

Procedure

1.0 General Information:

- 1.1 This Procedure is regulated by the *Employment Pension Plans Act*, the UAPP Sponsorship and Trust Agreement (STA), and the *Income Tax Act*.
- 1.2 The University administers the UAPP in accordance with the UAPP Sponsorship and Trust Agreement and these Procedures are tailored to suit the requirements of Athabasca University and its Staff Members.
- 1.3 Where a discrepancy arises between this Procedure and the applicable Legislation and Regulations or the UAPP Sponsorship and Trust Agreement identified herein, those terms of the applicable Legislation and Regulations or the STA shall take precedence.
- 1.4 Based on any UAPP reciprocal transfer agreements in place for the UAPP, Staff Members may be eligible to transfer prior service and pension contributions to the UAPP. It is the Staff Member's responsibility to contact the UAPP administration office regarding reciprocal transfer requests. Contact information and assistance is available through the Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources.

2.0 Eligibility and Commencement Requirements:

- 2.1 Staff Members who are members of AUFA, or the University's Executive, Excluded Management or Excluded Professional employment groups, respectively, shall participate in the UAPP effective on the date of hiring as follows:
 - 2.1.1 **Permanent Full-time Staff Members** shall participate from the date of commencement of employment.
 - 2.1.2 **Permanent Part-time Staff Members with an Appointment of 0.5 FTE or greater** shall participate from the date of commencement of employment.



- 2.1.3 **Permanent Part-time Staff Members with an Appointment of 0.5 FTE or greater and an additional Term Appointment** shall participate from the date of commencement of employment (all service is pensionable).
 - 2.1.4 **Temporary Full-time Staff Members where the initial Term Appointment is greater than one (1) year** shall participate from the date of commencement of employment.
 - 2.1.5 **Temporary Part-time Staff Members where the initial Term Appointment is greater than one year and is 0.5 FTE or greater** shall participate from the date of commencement of employment.
- 2.2 Staff Members who are not initially eligible for membership in the UAPP, shall become members of the plan when they meet eligibility as follows:
- 2.2.1 **Term Appointment contract renewals – Temporary Full-time and Part-time (0.5 FTE or greater) Members** shall be eligible for membership in UAPP when:
 - 2.2.1.1 Term Appointment renewal is for a period greater than one (1) year.

The UAPP commencement date would be the effective date of the Term Appointment contract renewal
 - OR,**
 - 2.2.1.2 The Staff Member has contiguous Term Appointments which total at least two (2) years as of the start of any NEW Term Appointment.
 - AND,**
 - 2.2.1.3 The Staff Member has earned in respect of the Staff Member's employment with the University at least 35% of the YMPE in each of the two consecutive calendar years immediately prior to the date the Staff Member has met the condition in clause 2.2.1.2 above.

The UAPP commencement date is effective upon the eligibility requirements being met as outlined above.
 - 2.2.2 **Term Appointment contract renewals – Temporary Part-time (less than 0.5 FTE)** shall be eligible for membership in UAPP when:
 - 2.2.2.1 The Staff Member has contiguous Term Appointments which total at least two (2) years at the start of any NEW Term Appointment
 - AND,**



2.2.2.2 The Staff Member has earned in respect of the Staff Member's employment with the University at least 35% of the YMPE in each of the two (2) consecutive calendar years immediately prior to the date the Staff Member has met the condition in clause 2.2.2.1 above.

The UAPP commencement date is effective upon the eligibility requirements being met as outlined above.

2.2.3 **Permanent Part-time (less than 0.5 FTE)** shall be eligible for membership in UAPP when:

2.2.3.1 The Staff Member has at least two (2) years of continuous service from the date of hire

AND,

2.2.3.2 The Staff Member has earned in respect of the Staff Member's employment with the University at least 35% of the YMPE in each of the two (2) consecutive calendar years immediately prior to the date the Staff Member has met the condition in clause 2.2.3.1 above.

The UAPP commencement date is effective upon the eligibility requirements being met as outlined above.

3.0 **Enrollment:**

- 3.1 The Compensation & Benefits unit of the University's Human Resources Department determines, for each Staff Member, their eligibility to participate in the UAPP.
- 3.2 This determination will be made at the time of initial hire and it will be reviewed whenever the Staff Member's position or Term Appointment changes.
- 3.3 In the month a Staff Member becomes eligible for participation in the UAPP, the Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources will forward to the Staff Member information about the UAPP and the appropriate Enrollment Form.
- 3.4 The Staff Member must complete the Enrollment Form, following the instructions provided, and return the Enrollment Form to the Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources.
- 3.5 The Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources will submit the completed Enrollment Form to the UAPP administration office and will initiate the appropriate payroll deduction from the Staff Member's pay consistent with the date of commencement of the Staff Member's participation in the UAPP.



4.0 Contributions:

- 4.1 Both eligible Staff Members and the University contribute to individual Staff Members' pension plans at rates determined by the UAPP Trustees.
- 4.2 Eligible Staff Members will not have contributions deducted from their pay nor remitted to the plan after attaining 35 years of Pensionable Service including Combined Pensionable Service.
- 4.3 Eligible Staff Members can continue to contribute up to the end of the year in which they attain the age of 69 years.
- 4.4 Staff Members on paid leaves of 80% salary or more, shall continue to participate in the UAPP. Both the employee and the University will continue to make contributions on a regular basis through the University payroll system.
- 4.5 Staff Members on sporadic leaves of absence without pay shall continue to participate in the UAPP. Both the employee and the University will continue to make contributions on a regular basis through the University payroll system.
- 4.6 In the event a Staff Member is on a leave of absence without pay, a paid leave where the employee is receiving less than 80% of their salary or pursuant to the Compassionate Care Policy, the Staff Member may choose to make ongoing contributions or not, subject to the following conditions, and will confirm that choice in writing to the Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources at that time:
 - 4.6.1 If the Staff Member chooses to continue contributions, the Staff Member is responsible for both the Staff Member's and the University's share of contributions while on a leave of absence without pay. If the Staff Member is on a partial paid leave, the Staff Member is responsible for the Staff Member's share of contributions and for the University's share of contributions related to the unpaid portion of the leave. The University will pay its share of contributions related to the paid portion of the leave.
 - 4.6.2 If the Staff Member chooses not to continue contributions, arrangements to purchase service for leaves without pay or partial paid leave may be requested at a later date but, in any event, application for purchase of the leave must be made, in writing, by April 30th of the year following the completion of the leave.
- 4.7 Pursuant to the Income Tax Act, a maximum of five (5) years leave without pay may be established as pensionable service during a Staff Member's entire period of service under the UAPP, including service with other employers. Staff Members who commence parental leave after June 30, 2003 may have up to an additional three (3) years of leave without pay recognized as pensionable service.



- 4.8 Staff Members in receipt of Worker's Compensation disability payments shall continue to participate in the UAPP. Both the employee and the University will continue to make contributions on a regular basis through the University payroll system.
- 4.9 Staff Members receiving benefits under the Long Term Disability Plan must continue to participate in the UAPP.
- 4.10 Staff Members who are absent because of illness during the health-related portion of Maternity Leave, which may include a maximum of eight (8) weeks prior to delivery and/or the standard 6-weeks post-delivery period, shall continue to participate in the UAPP and deductions and contributions will continue on a regular basis through the university payroll system. Contributions will continue beyond the standard 6-weeks post-delivery health related absence with support documentation from the Staff Member's doctor. Both the Staff Member and the University continue to pay contributions to the UAPP under these circumstances.
- 4.11 Where a Staff Member moves to a position in a different bargaining unit that is NOT eligible for participation in the UAPP for an indeterminate period of time, the University will notify the UAPP Administrators Office to 'suspend membership' in the plan. Should the Staff Member subsequently move to or accept a position that is eligible for UAPP participation, the Staff Members' membership will be re-established immediately (as the Staff Member had previously met membership eligibility to participate in the UAPP). Contributions would be mandatory and all UAPP service/contributions would be amalgamated.
- 4.12 When a Staff Member is re-hired and is in receipt of a UAPP pension benefit, the Staff Member may choose to continue to receive their pension benefit or suspend their pension benefit and participate in the UAPP and deductions, in which case contributions will continue on a regular basis through the University payroll system.
- 4.13 Non-pensionable earnings include acting pay, overload pay, overtime payments, expense allowances, lump sum payments or bonuses, vacation pay paid in a lump sum, special remuneration or any other similar compensation.

5.0 **Receipt of Pension Benefits:**

- 5.1 On retirement or termination of employment, the Compensation & Benefits unit – Human Resources will provide the Staff Member with appropriate information, contact information at UAPP, and assistance on a case-by-case basis to ensure the Staff Member has access to the information required to make informed choices regarding their UAPP benefit entitlement.



Applicable Legislation and Regulations

Alberta [Employment Pension Plans Act](#)

Canada [Income Tax Act](#)

Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms

[AUFA Terms and Conditions Agreement](#)

[Compassionate Care Benefit Leave Policy](#)

[Universities Academic Pension Plan \(UAPP\) Members Handbook](#)

[Universities Academic Pension Plan \(UAPP\) Policy](#)

[Universities Academic Pension Plan \(UAPP\) Sponsorship and Trust Agreement](#)

History

Governor of Athabasca University - Human Resources Committee, December 8, 2016,
Motion # 182-04 (associated policy approved)