



**ST VINCENT'S**  
Better and fairer care. Always.

UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES

# Postgraduate Nursing - Leave Provisions per EBA

## Postgraduate Nursing - Leave Provisions per EBA

This document has been developed in line with the Nurses and Midwives (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2024 – 2028 (The Agreement).

- Professional Development Leave
- Study Leave
- Examination leave

The Agreement - PART H – Education and Professional Development

### 75. Professional Development Leave

All Nurses must meet the continuing professional development (CPD) standards of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

CPD means activities that maintain their knowledge in the Employee's current area of practice, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence and develop the personal and professional qualities required through their professional lives.

The CPD Cycle involves:

- Reviewing practice
- Identifying learning needs
- Planning and participating in relevant learning activities
- Reflecting on the value of these activities

Professional Development Leave, includes conferences /seminar leave, and may be utilised for activities including research or home study.

*Professional development leave should be used for activities that relate to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) rather than studying for a course.*

#### Amount of Professional Development Leave

All employees (other than casuals) are entitled to five days paid Professional Development Leave, which may be used to attend conferences and seminars, and can be utilised for activities including research or home study.

(Casual employees are entitled to Professional Development Leave for Mandatory training only.)

Nurse Practitioners are entitled to a further 10 hours of paid professional leave per annum.

The entitlement for part time employees will be on a pro rata basis.

Professional Development Leave does not accumulate from year to year.

A day for the purposes of Professional Development Leave is the employee's normal shift length, for example an employee who usually works an 8-hour shift and takes Professional Development Leave for that shift is entitled to 8 hours payment.

Pro rata hours	Total hours of entitlement per annum
1.0	40
0.9	34.2
0.8	30.4
0.7	26.6
0.6	22.8
0.5	19
0.4	15.2
0.3	11.4
0.2	7.6
0.1	3.8

*Pro rata hours = 0.8 FTE*  
*0.8 / 100 \* 38 = 30.4 hours per annum*

### Applying for Professional Development Leave

Professional Development Leave is available only on written application by the Employee. An Employee must apply in writing to the Employer at least six weeks prior to the proposed Professional Development Leave date. If the Professional Development Leave is to undertake home study the Employee's application will detail the relevance of the study to the Employee's employment.

An application for Professional Development Leave will be approved by the Employer unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify non-approval.

The Employer must notify the Employee in writing whether the leave request is approved within seven days.

If the leave is not approved, the reasons will be included in the notification to the Employee.

The use of Professional Development Leave is at the sole discretion of the Employee.

#### *Leave not granted:*

Where a valid application is made for Professional Development Leave but no leave is granted during the calendar year, one day's leave will be added to the Employee's accrued annual leave, or taken in another manner as mutually agreed between the Employer and the Employee.

#### *Where leave occurs on a rostered day off:*

Professional Development Leave may be taken on a day that an Employee may not otherwise work. In this case the Employer will do one of the following:

- Allocation of a day's Professional Development Leave paid at the ordinary rate of pay.
- Time off in lieu on a mutually agreed day, to be granted within 28 days
- Where time in lieu is not agreed or does not occur within 28 days, an additional day's ordinary pay or
- An additional day's annual leave which will not attract leave loading.

#### *Mandatory training:*

Any education or training deemed compulsory or mandatory by the Employer will occur within an Employee's paid time, and overtime applies where it would otherwise apply.

Professional Development Leave is not to be utilised to complete Mandatory training.

## 76. Study Leave

Casual employees are not entitled to study leave.

Paid study leave is available to all employees where a component of the course is relevant to Nursing or Midwifery.

Relevance of the component of the course as per clause 4.2 of the EBA where the main criteria for considering relevance are the nature of the education and the current area of practice of the Employee

Other considerations might include:

- a) the clinical or other area of work of the Employee, the classification and position description of the Employee and /or
- b) Whether the education would assist the Employee in performing their role, and/or assist in maintaining quality patient care and/or assist in the administration of the ward/unit/area in which the Employee is employed.

Study leave may be taken as mutually agreed by, for example, four hours per week, eight hours per fortnight or blocks of 38 hours at a residential school.

A part time employee is entitled to study leave on a pro rata basis.

Study leave does not accumulate from year to year.

### Application for Study Leave

An Employee wishing to take study leave must:

- apply in writing to the Employer as early as possible to the proposed leave date and
- include with the application
  - details of the course and institution in which the Employee is enrolled or proposed to enrol, and
  - details of the relevance of the course to the employee's employment

The Employer will not unreasonably refuse a request for study leave.

The Employer must, within seven days of the application being made, notify the Employee in writing whether the application for study leave has been approved.

*Note: For further information in relation to entitlement for study leave for Postgraduate Nursing please refer to the Appendix.*

## 77. Examination Leave

Examination leave is for undertaking and/or preparing for examinations in a course of study. Examinations include major assessment tasks, take home exams and other methods of student assessment.

Employees who meet the criteria in this clause are entitled to five days paid examination leave per year. Leave entitlements pursuant to this clause will not accumulate from year to year.

To be eligible for examination leave, an Employee must:

Be employed to work, on average, at least three shifts or 24 hrs per week, and

Have been employed for not less than eighteen (18) months by their current Employer prior to taking of examination leave.

To be eligible for examination leave, the course of study must be:

- Related to the Employee's Classification in Grades duty requirements, and
- Relevant to advancement through the career structure and to employment at the establishment.
- Such a course of study would normally be undertaken at a tertiary institution.
- Examination leave will be taken at a time that is agreed between the Employer and the Employee. The Employer will not unreasonably withhold approval for such leave.

The employee is paid for the full amount of time they would normally work on a given day, allowing them to take examination leave without any loss in income for that period. For example, if an employee typically works 8-hour shifts, then one day of examination leave would be equivalent to 8 hours of paid leave.



Jade Murphy  
General Manager  
Education and Learning  
St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne

---

*This document has been approved by Jade Murphy General Manager Education and Learning and ratified by Pietta Damianos SVHM Industrial Relations Lead, People and Partnering SVHM. November 2024.*

---

## Appendix

### Study Leave Entitlement Postgraduate Nursing

Many Postgraduate Nursing courses offered by tertiary institutions are delivered through online learning, allowing staff to engage in studies flexibly without being tied to specific times or days on campus. This flexibility supports staff who are pursuing postgraduate studies while continuing to work. However, staff must follow the guidelines set out in The Agreement when requesting study leave.

Staff undertaking Postgraduate Nursing studies are required to apply in writing to their Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) or Manager as early as possible to request study leave. It is important that staff plan the study leave they require and communicate these requests to their managers with as much notice as possible.

For staff undertaking Postgraduate Nursing studies over a 12-month period, it is considered reasonable to request study leave of up to 16 hours per fortnight during the academic term/semester. Requests for study leave exceeding 16 hours per fortnight should prompt a discussion between the staff member and the Manager to assess the necessity and feasibility of such a request.

As a general guide:

- Nursing staff undertaking Graduate Certificate-level studies with Deakin University (Intensive Care, Perioperative, and Cardiac Nursing) are allocated a set study day on Wednesdays during the University Semesters. These students are also required to attend Deakin's Burwood campus on specific days during the semester.
- Nursing staff undertaking the Master of Advanced Clinical Nursing (Graduate Certificate level- Neuroscience) with Monash University will have some set study days during the University Semesters where they will be required to attend Monash Clayton campus.
- Nursing staff undertaking Graduate Certificate-level studies with the University of Melbourne (UoM), (Emergency and Cancer nursing), have no set study days and can engage with online learning flexibly.
- Nursing staff undertaking Graduate Certificate-level studies with Australian Catholic University (ACU) (Medical, Neuroscience, Surgical, Gerontological, Correctional and Renal streams) have no set study days and can engage with online learning flexibly.

Study leave entitlement is calculated on a pro-rata basis, meaning the amount of study leave provided will be proportional to the staff member's FTE (full-time equivalent). For example, staff working at 0.8 to 1.0 FTE are entitled to more study leave compared to staff working 0.6 FTE or below.

For any questions related to Postgraduate Nursing leave entitlements, staff should contact the Postgraduate Coordinator via email at [SVHM.Education.reception@svha.org.au](mailto:SVHM.Education.reception@svha.org.au).