How do I obtain Article 10.5 PD Leave?

A brief introduction

FSA members often qualify for Professional Development (PD) funds. But if you fall into one of two categories, you may also be entitled to access PD leave with pay. The categories of members who may obtain PD leave with pay are:

• Regular Faculty
• Specialized Faculty, Assistant Instructors, and Technical Staff

These groups access PD leave under Article 10.5 of the Collective Agreement. In contrast, PD funds fall under Article 10.3. For those who teach solely into Part-Time Studies (PTS), there is a similar, newly established PD fund—see the textbox for more info. The following Q&A is designed to help you better understand the process and access PD. And it is worth noting that, while not perfect, FSA members have access to excellent PD leave relative to our provincial and national comparators.

So how do I get Article 10.5 PD leave? It is not entirely clear to me reading the Collective Agreement.

First you need to know to which committee to apply.

If you are Regular (teaching) Faculty, you can apply to one of four committees:

• Business PD Committee for those that teach in SOB+M
• Engineering, Electronics and Computing Studies PD Committee for those that teach in Engineering, Computing, Technology Professional Program, Electronics or the School of Construction and Environment
• Academic Studies Committee for those that teach in the School of Computing and Academic Studies but who do not fall under the bullet above—the "non-computing" side of SOCAS, in other words
• School of Health PD Committee

If you are Specialized Faculty, Assistant Instructor, or Technical Staff the process is much simpler - you can only apply to the Super PD Committee (or its real but less used name, the Other Staff Super Committee). The good news is you get paid PD leave; the "bad" news is, it's not any more "super" than the PD granted to Regular Faculty. The word super is meant to describe the large number of non-teaching members—thus, a super committee with super volunteers who dispense regular PD leave.

What general criteria do the PD committees look at for determining if my PD will be approved?

The Collective Agreement provides general criteria for obtaining PD leave and associated backfill costs (see Article 10.5.3). It requires demonstrating that the PD leave is of benefit to the applicant and BCIT. This will include showing how the PD request promotes "leadership in technological education"; how it helps the applicant "maintain currency, flexibility and professional competence"; and how it "augments the professional development" of the applicant (Article 10.5.1).

In your application, moreover, you should show how your proposed PD activity is relevant, from your point of view, to your "current or possible future role at the Institute, or its relevance to BCIT's concerns" (Article 10.5.3.7).

Note there are other requirements, such as having a minimum of one year's service to BCIT, etc. The best way to find these is to read the FSA Guide regarding Article 10.5 PD leave, available on our website under the Member Education section. The second best way is to carefully read through Article 10.5.3.

Does each PD committee have its own unique requirements?

Each PD committee follows the Collective Agreement's criteria, as described above. But many committees have elaborated on the types of information they would like to see and how it should be structured when applying.

For example, the Engineering, Electronics and Computing Studies PD Committee (referenced above), has specific recommendations on applying for a work experience PD leave, an academic PD leave to study at an institution of higher learning, to do research, or self-directed studies.

The Super PD Committee, as well, has documents available in a joint Sharespace page (see the text box) and, like the PTS PD fund, publishes its own Terms of Reference and procedures. The Super PD application form also requests the applicant to "describe how and when will you share the learnings gained from participating in this activity with your colleagues, client groups, BCIT community."

What if I have other questions?

So if you want to know, for example, if paid PD leave time can be broken into blocks (it can), or the maximum amount of time one can be on leave (12 months), or any other concerns: consult the FSA guide on Article 10.5 PD leave, mentioned above, or contact us at fsa@bcit.ca.

Where to find my PD Committee's documentation?

Most of the PD Committees, including the Super PD Leave Committee and the new PTS PD Fund Committee have a joint BCIT Sharespace page ("BCIT Committees & PD Funds"). The exceptions are the School of Business—which usually sends out an email from the Dean's assistant with relevant documents—and the School of Computing and Academic Studies, which has its own separate Sharespace page for its Academic ("non-computing") Studies folks. Additionally, the School of Health Sciences keeps its PD leave documentation on The Loop, and not in Sharespace. The FSA is not responsible for BCIT's documentation practices and all of this is subject to change by BCIT.

If you still have questions, don't hesitate to contact your Director or Dean's assistant, a knowledgeable FSA colleague in your department, an FSA Tech Rep, or the FSA office at fsa@bcit.ca.