



### Frequently Asked Questions Scholarship Staff

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#### **What is the Fitness Passport?**

The Fitness Passport is part of the University's Staff Wellness Program. The scheme allows you access to more than 45 gyms and pools across the Newcastle region and 25 across the Central Coast region, all under the one membership.

#### **Who is eligible to join?**

Staff, employed at the time of joining on any of a wide range of work contracts, who are concurrent holders of RHD scholarships with 14 or more months remaining.

#### **Am I restricted to just the one gym on the program?**

No. You can go to any gym or pool on the program as often as you like.

#### **Why is there an additional charge to use Balance, Wests and Anytime Fitness?**

The additional cost to use Balance, Wests and Anytime Fitness has been charged by these fitness centres. Please contact the facilities direct for advice on the additional charges.

#### **The gym I go to isn't on the program. Why not?**

We are guided by what the majority of employees ask for. If your gym isn't on the program it means that it didn't get very many votes in the last survey. If you want a particular gym to be added to the program you will need to nominate them *in the next survey*.

If you vote for your gym, this does not automatically mean it will be added to the program. It must be sufficiently popular amongst staff and the gym must also be willing to negotiate.

#### **How do I pay?**

Direct Debit from your elected account – you will be prompted to enter your bank details at sign-up. Payroll deductions no longer available for new members.

Scholarship Staff are able to join the Fitness Passport because they have ongoing income from their scholarships as they develop their research skills. It is important that they be employees of the university, but the University recognises that emerging researchers also need time to do their research studies. This often means taking up roles which are of limited duration, although perhaps also quite regular, eg sessional tutoring.

#### **Can I leave the program at any time?**

You can leave the program any time *after the first 12 months* of signing up. After you sign up, you must stay with the program for a minimum of 12 months. This is just the same as a standard gym membership with the exception that we allow you to pay fortnightly. If you leave your employment or end your scholarship within this 12-month period then your membership will automatically expire and your membership card will be collected.

#### **I was previously a member of Fitness Passport – how do I re-join the program?**

If you were previously a member of the Fitness Passport program and you are still eligible for membership – please email the administrator at the University to request recommencement of your Fitness Passport: [fitnesspassport@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:fitnesspassport@newcastle.edu.au)

#### **Are time-stops available?**

You are able to put a time-stop on your membership for a minimum of one month if you have an injury or are going overseas (proof of medical injury or overseas travel must be provided). The length of the time-stop will then be added to the end of your 12-month Fitness Passport contract. Membership cards must be returned to Human Resource Services prior to the time-stop commencing. These cards will then be returned to you at the conclusion of the time-stop.

### **When can I start using the gyms?**

Your membership card will be provided to you 2 weeks after the first payment is deducted. The first payment is the fee incurred for the cost of the Fitness Passport card that will be issued to each Member from Fitness Passport and for the administration processes involved.

Membership cards will be available for collection from HRS in the Chancellery. You will be notified by email when your card is ready for collection. Some gyms will issue you with one of their cards when you go. That gym card will then be the only card you need to access that particular facility from then on.

### **How many cards will I receive?**

Each member of your family who is listed on your family membership will receive a membership card. Please note the system will prompt you to upload a photograph of yourself (and each family member) for your membership card.

### **Are exercise classes included?**

Yes.

### **I am not interested in going to the gym/pool but my partner is. Can I just purchase a single membership for him/her instead?**

No. You must purchase a family membership in order for your partner to use the program. The family rate will still be much lower than a single rate at most gyms and this will allow your partner access to a large number of facilities, not just one.

### **I live with my parents/siblings/grandparents/relatives/flatmates. Can I put them on the program under a family membership?**

No. The program is only available for employees, their partners and dependent children aged under 25 living at the same address.

You may be required to provide evidence of those listed on your family membership.

### **My child is 23 and is dependant. Can I put him/her on the program under a family membership?**

Yes. However, dependent children aged 18-24 years old will cost extra per week per child. The child must also reside at the same address and you may be required to provide evidence of this. Once your child turns 25 they must return their Fitness Passport card.

### **My children live with me although we have alternative child care arrangements due to divorce/personal family circumstances. Can they still be on the program with my family membership?**

If you can prove that your children do reside with you then yes (evidence may be in the form of school reports for example). If your children do not reside with you then they cannot be part of the program, they must be dependant AND live at the same address to be eligible.

### **Can I upgrade or downgrade my membership?**

You can upgrade from a single to family membership at any time but can only downgrade from family to a single membership after the initial 12 month period is up.

### **What happens if I go on parental leave?**

You are still eligible for the program.

**I am not a University staff member but I am contracted by an external agency. Can I be part of the program?**

No. This program is only open to University staff for administrative purposes. Ongoing staff and fixed-term staff are eligible. Casual staff and conjoints are not eligible to join this program.

**I am already a member of a gym on the program. Can I switch over to Fitness Passport and cancel my other gym membership?**

This is a question for your gym. Different gyms have different rules in this regard.

The first question to ask is whether you can get out of your gym contract early. If the answer is no, then it will still pay to check for any early exit fees and work out whether it will be cheaper for you to stay a member of the gym until the contract expires or whether it will work out better for you to pay any early exit fees and switch anyway.

Often the difference can be a few hundred dollars and the longer your gym contract has to expire, the cheaper it will be for you to switch to this program (a standard gym membership costs \$750 per year, and a single Fitness Passport membership costs around \$350 per year and will also entitle you to visit a range of other gyms or pools too).

If you have a very short time left on your standard membership it may be cheaper for you to stay a member and then switch when your contract expires.

**I have paid one of the gyms a membership fee and the gym has since relocated/gone broke. I have left employment and am no longer eligible for Fitness Passport. Can I get a refund of that fee?**

This is a separate matter for you to discuss with the individual gym. Membership fees paid to the gym by the individual are arrangements between the individual and the gym that has been paid. Fitness Passport does not receive any of this money and plays no part in this transaction

**I have lost my card. What should I do?**

Please send an email to [fitnesspassport@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:fitnesspassport@newcastle.edu.au) specifying your name and date of birth and attach a statutory declaration stating that you have lost your card. A new card will then be ordered for you and should be available approximately a week later. If you are an existing member of the program, you will be prompted to upload a photograph for your replacement membership card. An administrative fee may be levied.