

"THIS POLICY IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING REVIEWED."



**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

**A NEW
SCHOOL OF
THOUGHT**

POLICIES AND ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

POLICY NUMBER:	POH040929002
PREVIOUS POLICY NUMBERS:	POH040929002 (amended 13/08/07 via minor amendment) POH040929002 (amended 07/03/06 via minor amendment)
POLICY NAME:	Professional Development
DATE APPROVED:	8 August 2007
POLICY TYPE AND CATEGORY:	General (Human Resources)
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director, Human Resources
FIRST EFFECTIVE DATE:	11 October 2004

1.0 PURPOSE

This policy provides the framework for professional development for all staff across the University.

The purpose of professional development is to enhance personal and work performance, organisation and system outcomes, effective work relations and career development.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The University is committed to the continuing and equitable development of all staff to facilitate the fulfilment of the University's primary goals as outlined in its Strategic Plan. It recognises the key role of professional development both to the efficient and effective operation of the University and to the work, career and personal goals of staff.

The Professional Development Policy aims to give effect to the University's strategic objective for Staff which states

To engage staff in a creative and rewarding learning community for the benefit of students, staff and stakeholders.

The Professional Development Policy also aims to support and promote the University's values being

- *knowledge and skills, and critical and imaginative inquiry for their capacity to transform individuals and the community;*
- *equality of opportunity for students and staff;*
- *diversity for its contribution to creativity and the enrichment of life;*
- *co-operation as the basis of engagement with local and international communities;*
- *integrity, respect and transparency in personal and collaborative action; and*
- *the pursuit of excellence in everything we do.*

"The current official version of this policy is maintained on the Victoria University Central Policy Register and downloading and printing of this policy will produce an uncontrolled copy which may not be current."

The policy also links directly to the Learning and Teaching Support Functional Plan and the Staff Functional Plan and gives effect to Clause 28.1 of the *Victoria University (Academic and General Staff) Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2005* which relates to developing and implementing a professional development policy for general staff.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Professional Development

A systematic approach to professional and career development to ensure that all staff have the capabilities necessary to fulfill their roles, develop themselves and their careers, adapt to change and assist in developing others.

Professional Development Activities

Professional development occurs through a range of formal and informal work related activities. These include:

Attendance at: Conferences, seminars, short courses (internal or external) or workshops.

Participation in: Staff exchanges, action-learning groups, committees or working parties, communities of practice, industry placement/visits, mentoring schemes (being mentored and acting as a mentor), coaching as a participant or a coach, subject or course meetings, in the outside studies program or undertaking specific project/consultancy work, courses or programs.

Involvement in Work Integrated Learning: Job exchange, job rotation, shadowing, critical reflection on practice, professional reading, focused consultation with colleagues, obtaining and acting on feedback from students, clients and/or colleagues, networking, temporary performance of duties in another position or undergoing career counselling.

Formal Studies: Studies for formal TAFE or higher education programs at undergraduate or postgraduate level including research activities.

Research/Writing: Obtaining a research grant or performing action research, study tours, preparing and publishing papers or books.

External Engagement: Service on external committees or working parties to an industry or professional association or involvement in community groups and activities.

4.0 KEY WORDS

Professional Development, Career Development, Training, Teaching and Learning, Staff Learning and Development Activities

5.0 POLICY

5.1 Context

Professional development activities should benefit the individual by and the University by enhancing the skill and capability base of the relevant organizational unit. Supervisors should work with their staff members to ensure that identified activities are consistent with priorities and requirements of the immediate work unit, the school or department and the University.

5.2 Alignment with the University Strategic Plan and Functional Plans

Professional development is part of the broader framework of the University's Strategic Plan, the Staff Functional Plan and the Learning and Teaching Support Functional Plan. It aims to reflect current and projected needs of both the University and the individual, providing support for career development and adapting to change and changing roles.

5.3 Participation

All University staff are encouraged to participate in professional development activities. Some activities may be mandatory by agreements, external legislation and/or University policy. Additionally, staff may be required to attend certain activities related to technological or organisational change and development. However, participation in staff learning and development activities normally will be voluntary and should be discussed by the staff member with the staff their supervisor.

5.4 Responsibility

The development of staff is a responsibility shared by individual staff members, supervisors, managers and the University. Specifically these responsibilities are:

Individual

Professional development is a shared responsibility between the supervisor and individual staff member. Ultimately, each individual is responsible for their own learning and development and is expected to manage their own personal and professional development, as well as contribute to the development of their colleagues by sharing their expertise.

Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for encouraging, counselling and helping the staff they supervise to identify their learning and career development needs and to help them find and pursue activities to meet those needs. Managers and supervisors are expected to ensure access to relevant staff learning and development activities for individuals and groups of staff.

University

The University is responsible for developing and maintaining the policy framework relating to professional development, monitoring the implementation of those policies, providing resources for learning and development activities, coordinating learning and development throughout the University and seeking resources from external bodies which provide funding for staff learning and development.

5.5 Equal opportunity

Professional development plays an important role in the University's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan. All staff are eligible for learning and development in some form, and equitable opportunity applies to access and participation by all staff.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 All University Staff

6.1.1 Utilisation of University staff for professional development

Wherever possible, professional development activities should draw on the skills and knowledge of the staff of Victoria University and University staff should be preferred to external providers in delivering professional development services and activities. Sharing expertise with colleagues is an essential element of the collegial culture of the University and all staff are expected to use their knowledge, skills and expertise to help develop their colleagues.

6.1.2 Confidentiality

Members of staff seeking assistance from providers of professional development have the right to expect that any information about them will be treated confidentially. While providers may produce aggregate information in reports, no information that allows the identification of a member of staff may be released.

Where professional development activities include matters that are of a confidential or private nature, participants must be warned of this at the start of the activity. Under these circumstances, breaches of confidentiality by participants will be treated as misconduct.

6.1.3 Induction and Orientation

All new staff, including casual and sessional staff, must undergo an induction and orientation process on or immediately following their commencement with the University that includes orientation to their workplace, the Staff Code of Conduct, Occupational Health & Safety induction and induction to their obligations regarding discrimination and harassment legislation and the University policies and practices relating to these areas. All new staff should also be actively encouraged and supported by their supervisors to attend a University Induction Program for New Staff.

All new staff should ensure they are fully aware of the existence of University statutes, policies and procedures and conversant with those applicable to their role within the University.

6.1.4 Funding of Staff Learning and Career Development Activities

Funding for staff learning and career development activities must be identified and the University's financial processing procedures applied. Sources of funding may include: University central funding, including targeted allocations from DEST, OTTE, TAFE Development Centre; external funds including allocations through projects, grants and awards; and personal contributions by individual staff members.

6.1.5 Funding of Professional Development Activities by Cost Centres

All cost centres should include in their budgets the costs of supporting the professional development of their staff. The level of funding for professional development will vary from cost centre to cost centre but should take into account activities included in the agreed professional development plans of staff in the cost centre.

In general, the cost centre concerned will fund most routine professional development, such as attending conferences or updating operational skills. Similarly, the cost centre concerned must meet study assistance grants from its annual budget allocation.

6.1.6 University fees

University staff are encouraged to enrol for TAFE, undergraduate or postgraduate courses offered by the University. Members of staff undertaking such courses will not be charged the General Service Fee. In addition, members of staff will not be charged tuition fees for non-award single subjects and courses (Refer: University Regulation 11.1.1)

HECS charges are not normally subject to exemption. However, HECS charges will be waived for staff undertaking the University's Graduate Certificate in Teaching (Tertiary).

6.1.7 Study assistance grants

A study assistance grant to offset costs of study is available to continuing members of staff and staff on fixed term contracts of 12 months or more undertaking courses of tertiary study, as approved in the staff member's *professional development plan*, on a part time basis at any institution.

A grant of up to \$500 per annum is available to staff successfully completing subjects/units that amount to 0.5 or more of a year's full-time study. Staff studying units that amount to less than 0.5 of a full year's study are eligible for assistance on a pro-rata basis.

Provision of a study assistance grant is conditional on successful completion of each subject/unit or evidence of satisfactory progress if the case of staff undertaking a master's degree by research or a PhD without a HECS exempt scholarship.

Applications for the grant, supported by evidence of subjects passed, should be made to their supervisor for recommendation and then referred to the cost centre manager for approval.

Payment of study assistance grants is made via the payroll on the authority of the employee's cost centre manager.

6.1.8 Professional development plans

Staff should meet at least annually with their supervisor to develop and review development plans through the University's Staff Performance and Development Plan.

6.1.9 Completion of professional development activities

On the completion of any professional development activity, staff are expected to complete any evaluation and information sharing activities that have been agreed and negotiated between the staff member and their supervisor and/or Department. This may include but is not limited to:

- copies of seminar programs, agenda, papers and the like
- discussion and feedback to colleagues
- an internal program for the benefit of other staff member
- an evaluation of the value and usefulness of the activity
- evidence of satisfactory progress for study leave
- a report on the activity

6.2 Academic Staff

6.2.1 Induction and Orientation

In addition to the procedure set out under 6.1.3 above, all newly appointed teaching staff who are scheduled to teach at least 10 hours in a year are required, as a condition of their probation, to satisfactorily complete the prescribed Initial Induction Program for teaching staff. Additionally all newly appointed teaching staff with continuing or fixed term contract appointments are required to either satisfactorily complete the prescribed Extended Induction Program for teaching staff within the first three years of their employment or to gain exemption from this program. (Refer: Induction for Teaching Policy)

6.2.2 Research Active Academic Staff

Research is an important aspect in the professional development of all academics. Academic staff may be classified as research active on the basis of their enrolment in a research degree. The maximum teaching load for research active staff will normally be lower than the load for non-research active academic staff.

6.2.3 Outside Studies Program (Higher Education academic staff only)

An outside studies program (OSP) is a period of release from normal duties for a member of the academic staff to allow concentration on specific projects of scholarly work related to research, teaching or other appropriate academic activities. Such a program is normally spent within another higher educational institution, but frequently is spent in government or non-government institutions, or in industry.

6.3 VE and FE Teachers

6.3.1 Induction and Orientation

In addition to the procedure set out under 6.1.3 above, all newly appointed teaching staff who are scheduled to teach at least 10 hours in a year are required to satisfactorily complete the prescribed Initial Induction Program for teaching staff. Additionally all newly appointed teaching staff with on-going, tenurable or contract appointments are required to either satisfactorily complete the prescribed Extended Induction Program for teaching staff within the first three years of their employment or to gain exemption from this program. (Refer: Induction for Teaching Policy)

6.3.2 Time Allocation for Professional Development

The annual allocation of VE and FE teachers' workloads includes a **minimum** allocation of 30 hours of relevant professional development.

6.4 General staff

6.4.1 Access to Career Development Opportunities

The University is committed to improving and extending career development opportunities for staff. All general staff shall have access to appropriate and relevant career development opportunities which include both training and internal promotion opportunities.

6.4.2 Time Release to Attend Professional Development Activities

General staff will be entitled to time release from duties to attend relevant professional development activities as identified through their Staff Performance and Development Plans.

6.4.3 Career and Promotion opportunities

The University realises the value of providing career and promotion opportunities. Accordingly, the University will consider the filling of vacant general staff positions in the first instance by internal advertisement for all positions up to and including HEW 7.

6.4.4 Study Leave

General staff who undertake an approved course of study are eligible to apply for study leave.

In general terms, continuing members of the general staff employed on at least a 0.5 time fraction who are undertaking a full part-time study load may be granted a maximum of four hours per week for the purposes of study. In addition, up to 5 days paid leave per year may be granted for completion of assignments and preparation for examinations. Paid leave to attend examinations associated with these courses will also be granted.

Applications for study leave should be made directly to the staff member's supervisor.

6.4.5 General Staff Development Fund

The General Staff Development Fund (GSDF) is a fund established by the University to support the professional development of members of the general staff. In general terms, it is used to support activities that are directly related to the University's strategic goals but which lie outside the scope of activities normally funded by cost centre budgets (see GSDF Guidelines attached).

7.0 CONGRUENCE WITH LEGISLATION AND RELATED POLICIES

- Induction for Teaching Policy
- Outside Studies Program Policy
- Staff Performance and Development Plan
- Integrated Management System – IMP 14 Professional Development within the TAFE Division
- General Staff Development Fund Guidelines
- Equity and Social Justice Policy Framework
- University Strategic Plan
- Learning and Teaching Support Functional Plan
- Staff Functional Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Relevant awards and agreements
- University Regulation 11.1.1 – Fees and Charges

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The policy builds on previous staff development and professional development policies developed in Victoria University. Relevant documents and policies were also sourced and examined from the following universities:

Deakin University
Edith Cowan University
Latrobe University
Monash University
Queensland University of Technology
RMIT University
University of Melbourne
University of Western Sydney

9.0 CONSULTATION

Director and Heads of Unit, SLED

Previous version: CEDS, Human Resources, CCID

This version is based on research and updates to include procedural details already existing in industrial agreements and custom and practice.

10.0 REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in three years.

11.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES

11.1 RESPONSIBILITY

Director, Human Resources

11.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A Staff Professional Development Policy is currently in place; this is an update of the current Policy. Once this new policy is formally approved staff will be advised through a global email. This advice will identify the changes from existing policy. The policy link will be provided on the TLS website.

11.3 TRAINING PLAN

Reference to this Policy will be included in HR Forums for Managers and included in induction sessions for new staff and staff taking on supervisory roles.

11.4 COMPLIANCE

All staff will be advised of this policy.

11.5 EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY

Increased number of staff requesting and/or undertaking professional development activities.

12.0 FORMS

- [Application for Study Assistance Grant](#)
- [General Staff Development Fund Application](#)

13.0 APPENDICES

[General Staff Development Fund Guidelines](#)

Appendix



General Staff Development Fund Guidelines for 2005

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The General Staff Development Fund (GSDF) is a fund established by the University to support the professional development of members of the general staff.
- 1.2 In general terms, the General Staff Development Fund supports professional development activities that are directly related to the University's strategic goals but which lie outside the scope of activities normally funded from cost centre budgets. Cost centres are expected to fund routine staff development activities for their staff, such as updating operational skills, from their own budgets.
- 1.3 The consideration of all applications will be consistent with the University's Equity and Social Justice policies, including its Affirmative Action policy.

2 Criteria for selection

- 2.1 The activity must be clearly related to the University's strategic goals.
- 2.2 The activity must have the potential to benefit both the member of staff concerned and the University.
- 2.3 The activity should focus on medium to long term career development. Preference will be given to the development of broad career-related skills or attributes rather than the development of the specific job-related operational skills.
- 2.4 The activity should be directly relevant to the staff member's current professional development plan
- 2.6 Preference will be given to professional development needs resulting from redeployment, restructuring, job redesign or new service initiatives.
- 2.8 In the case of attendance at conferences, preference will be given to applicants presenting a paper or running a workshop session.

3 Suitable activities

- 3.1 Professional development activities suitable for funding include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 3.1.1 Attendance at conferences and seminars to present a paper or keep abreast of relevant new developments.
 - 3.1.2 Study tours to other organisations for purposes related to quality improvement (e.g. establishing best practice or benchmarking).
 - 3.1.3 Evaluation and investigation projects aimed at quality improvement.
 - 3.1.4 Attendance at educational leadership and leadership and management development programs.

4 Level of Support

- 4.1 The level of support given to successful applications will be
- up to 50 % of the total cost of the activity;
 - a maximum of \$1500.
- The remainder is to be funded by the organisational unit of the applicant or the applicant themselves.
- 4.3 No more than one application per person will be supported in one calendar year.

5 Decision making processes

- 5.1 All applications for funding will be submitted to the General Staff Development Fund Committee which consists of the Director, Staff Learning and Educational Development, the Manager, Equity and Social Justice and a Director of an administrative department.
- 5.2 All applications should be submitted well ahead of the scheduled dates for the proposed professional development activities to allow sufficient time for the Committee to meet and consider them. Applications received by the Staff Career and Professional Development Unit less than two weeks prior to the event will not be considered.
- 5.3 All applications should include the following information:
- 5.3.1 Details of applicant/s.
 - 5.3.2 Details of activity (including dates).
 - 5.3.3 Specification of support sought including a full breakdown of costs.
 - 5.3.4 An explanation of how the application meets the criteria.
 - 5.3.5 A copy of the applicant's current professional development plan.
 - 5.3.6 All relevant supporting documentation as an attachment including completed registration forms where applicable.
 - 5.3.7 Endorsement of the Principal Officer, Dean, Director, Associate Director, Head of School or Department or Manager, as appropriate.

6 Reporting

- 6.1 On completion of activities supported by the General Staff Development Fund, successful applicants will be required to provide a brief report on the benefits of the activity and how they have shared, or intend to share, the information gained from the activity with their colleagues.
- 6.2 Non-compliance with this obligation will be taken into consideration of future applications.

7 Reimbursement Process

- 7.1 Claims for payment must be made within 6 weeks of completing the approved activity.
- 7.2 A brief report of the completed activity is required and must be received before payment can be made.