COLLEGE POLICY

Policy No. & Title:	**P 240 - Professional Development**
Policy Sponsor:	Vice President, People & Culture and Career Services
Reference Cmtee:	Policy & Procedure Committee
Effective:	2023-07-01
Next Review:	2026-10-31

Purpose

The College recognizes continuing education and lifelong learning is an important part of an employee's professional development. Accordingly, the College is committed to creating an engaging workplace which values employee development and growth. This policy provides a framework which guides the program decisions, funding, and procedures regarding professional development benefits for employees. We encourage employees to pursue education in job related areas that will help them perform in their current role more effectively, or to support their development for future advancement with our organization.

The purpose of employee development and training is to continually improve competencies, skills, knowledge, and performance to improve job satisfaction, career potential, and to maximize employee contribution to the College's strategic direction.

The responsibility of professional development is a joint responsibility of the employee and manager.

Scope

This policy applies to all full and part-time employees that have completed 6 months of employment, at acceptable performance, regularly work 20 hours a week or more, and have decided to pursue professional development.

Any education provided by a third party on behalf of the College, completed at the direct request of the College, or is required for regulatory professional licensing is not covered under the scope of this policy and should follow the regular business expense reimbursement process.

Definitions

Professional Development: includes conferences, workshops, seminars, courses, online learning, diploma, and designation or degree completion.

POLICY

1) The College recognizes the needs and desires of employees to pursue excellence through differentiated professional development. The College will offer flexible professional development opportunities to support individual growth and the changing needs of the College. Professional development programs will be designed to promote career development and success in the workplace.

   The guiding principles for professional development are:

   - **Results-oriented and transformative**: stimulates and supports initiatives to achieve team goals and the College with strategic priorities, enhances the leadership capacity within the College.
   - **Collaborative and collegial**: values and utilizes the expertise of employees to support learning from each other; develops common language around best practices across faculties/departments.
   - **Responsive to the ever-changing needs of our Students and the College**: ensures alignment of employee capabilities with the needs and demands of the changing world and the success of Students; fosters practice that is relevant to the experiences and skills of diverse cultures and communities.
   - **Designed to promote active learning and present a range of growth opportunities to all employees:** assist employees in having a meaningful role in identifying individualized learning needs, setting personal growth goals, selecting professional development opportunities, and evaluating their progress.
   - The course must be administered by an accredited educational institution, or a professional organization that has the appropriate credentials to provide the specific training.
   - All course requirements must be completed outside of working hours unless manager approval is provided in advance. Overtime compensation is not provided for time spent outside of working hours for courses under this policy.
   - Campus Director/Remote Education Director the department in which the employee is employed will bear the expenses associated with training.

2) Annually, through the budget process, the College will identify the amount of money to be allocated to the professional development fund. The amount may be adjusted from year to year based on available resources and College plans.
3) Applications for professional development that assist in the achievement of objectives that support the College's strategic plan, the Academic plan, and Student success or required designations will be given highest priority.
   a) Applications for courses that support an employee's development plan within their current role or into a role to which they aspire and have been encouraged to consider at the College will be more favourably considered than those where the alignment is not as clear. The Professional Development Rubric in the P 240p - Professional Development Procedure provides additional information.

b) Development activities that are special interest and personal in nature and which have no direct relevance to the employee's role or to the strategic directions of the College are not within the scope of this policy.

4) At times, there may be budget restrictions, and the need to manage College wide expenditures. Accordingly, the College may need to pause new applications. However, where a person has already begun their studies prior to the pandemic and where we have a record on file for that program, the College will continue to review applications for courses towards that approved credential.

Employee Responsibilities

- Take an active part in the process of planning their own professional development and creating an individual Development and Performance Management learning plan with their manager.
- Demonstrate ongoing currency in their field and a commitment to continuous improvement in their skills and knowledge.
- Submit written application and receive approval for funding in advance of registering for any course or program.
- Secure the approval of their supervisor prior to applying for funding.
- Participate in training and development activity deemed essential by the College
- Attending the Professional Development session(s) as committed.
- Provide appropriate documentation to substantiate successful completion of each course or program.
- Share learning from College-funded developmental activities with colleagues through written and/or oral reports.

People & Culture Responsibilities

- Advise and assist employees with their individual learning plans as requested.
- Advise and assist managers in their role in employee professional development.

Organizational and Professional Development Responsibilities

- Identify College-wide, shared professional development needs and develop strategies to meet them.
- Administer training programs in leadership and management principles for all levels of Management.
- Provide seminars, workshops, e-learning and other developmental activities that address shared learning needs at little or no cost to schools and departments.
- Administer a budget for HR sponsored professional development initiatives.
- Provide a centralized source of information for employees about PD available within the College.

Supporting Documents/Forms
P 240p - Professional Development Procedure
PD Application Form
Tuition Reimbursement Agreement