Professional Development Procedure

Policy code:	PC1041
Policy owner:	Director, People and Culture
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Purpose

This procedure supports and mandates the implementation of the Professional Development Policy. It expands on the principles and practices outlined in the corresponding policy as they relate to professional development opportunities for all staff employed by Federation University Australia (FedUni).

Scope

This procedure describes the approval and record keeping process for Higher Education HE, Professional and Vocational Education and Training (VET) staff wanting to apply for professional development. This procedure applies to all full-time, part-time, sessional and casual employees of FedUni, in a range of roles including academic, teaching and research, and professional and general roles. This procedure outlines the professional development application process as relevant to FedUni staff. Staff employed by Partner Providers and Third Party Providers both onshore and offshore should also follow a similar process of recording their qualifications and relevant professional development needs with their respective employers, particularly where VET delivery and assessment occurs. Select professional development opportunities may be offered to Partner Providers.

Legislative Context

- University Collective Agreement for Academic and General Staff Employees

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- Federation University Australia TAFE Teaching Staff Agreement
- Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement Academic and General Staff Employees 2019-2021
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007
- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Education Regulation 2017 (NSW)
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (QLD)
- Further Education and Training Regulation 2014 (QLD)
- South Australian Skills Act 2008 (SA)
- South Australian Skills Regulations 2021 (SA)

Definitions

A complete list of definitions relevant to this procedure is contained within the Professional Development Policy Policy Code: HR1540.

Actions

1. Identifying the Type of Professional Development

A professional development opportunity should allow for an extension of skills and/or knowledge and/or expertise in a specific area of workplace relevance. There are many types of professional development opportunities that may relate to a staff member's role.

Internal Professional Development Opportunities: Professional development may be offered internally, whereby the University offers timely, short (up to a half day) and long (greater than half day) professional development opportunities through a face-to-face/blended/online capacity to meet a specific target goal. This procedure does not apply when planning to attend informal internal professional development offered by FedUni, unless it has a financial implication for the School/Directorate or is deemed to have a substantive impact on workload. If unsure, please consult with the supervisor. This procedure does apply to formal internal professional development opportunities where a qualification is attainable (i.e. Graduate Certificate of Education (Tertiary Teaching)). Factors such as relevance, cost, availability and priority need to be considered with any professional development opportunity.

External Professional Development Opportunities: Professional development may be offered externally, whereby an organisation other than FedUni offers timely, short (up to a half day) and long (greater than half day) professional development opportunities through a face-to-face/blended/online capacity to meet a specific target goal. The maximum allocation for external professional development for staff is **five days (per annum),** taken as 'Business leave' through the Employee Self Service (ESS) system. Any allocation greater than this needs to be negotiated between the staff member and their supervisor. The professional development opportunity must align with the staff member's role, position description and PRDP, and contribute to strategic goals at the University/ Directorate/School/discipline/individual level. Factors such as relevance, cost, availability and priority need to be considered with any professional development opportunity.

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2. Obtaining Professional Development for Higher Education and Professional Staff

Professional development needs and opportunities will primarily be identified through the Performance Review and Development Program (PRDP) for ongoing or fixed-term contract staff, and the Performance Plan (PP) and/or Professional Development Plan (PDP) for casual and sessional employees. Higher Education and Professional staff need to apply for external (formal and informal) and internal (formal) professional development as outlined in the procedural table below (Table 2.1).

Examples of professional development for Higher Education and Professional staff include the following:

• Participation in short courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and formal learning programs/qualifications

(Please note, although professional development funds can support formal learning programs, 'Leave Without Pay' or other staff leave entitlements must be accessed to support staff release for this type of professional development)

• Participation in mentoring, professional associations and other learning networks

• Personal development through individual research and scholarship of learning and teaching related activities

Table 2.1

	Activity	Responsibility	Steps
1	Identify staff development opportunity	Staff member(s) and/or relevant supervisors	Staff members consider the type, relevance, cost and priority of the professional development opportunity in context with their role and School/ Directorate etc. Professional development needs should be identified during PRDP/PP/PDP discussions and in collaboration with the staff member and the supervisor.
2	Complete Professional Development Application Form relevant to HE and Professional Staff	Staff member(s)	Identify the Professional Development Application Form relevant for Higher Education and Professional Staff.
3	Forward a completed application form by email to your supervisor for consideration	Staff member(s)	Applications must be received at least four weeks prior to the scheduled commencement of the professional development opportunity. Any application received within four weeks of the opportunity may not be assessed in a timely manner. Staff are encouraged to discuss the proposed development activity

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			with their direct supervisor prior to completing the application form.
4	Completion of the application form with a final outcome must be provided to the staff member within two weeks of the original submission date	Supervisor	The application must clearly state the reasons for supporting the outcome. If there are any discrepancies, or more information is required from the staff member before the final outcome can be released, then the supervisor must communicate this within one week of receiving the application to ensure that the final outcome still meets the two-week turn-around time. If a re-submission is required, the process may be extended by two weeks from the date of the original submission.
5	Apply for leave through ESS/ Empower	Staff member(s)	Staff member(s) must apply for leave to attend all external (informal and formal) professional development opportunities, particularly where they are physically leaving their regular workplace to attend. Within the ESS system, all staff must select their supervisor to seek approval. The ESS request will be only approved once the professional development opportunity is approved. 'Business Leave' is the appropriate leave type to choose.
6	File the original approved application in School/ Academic Unit/ Directorate	Supervisor	Approved applications are key records for Higher Education and Professional staff attending professional development activities. These records are important for reporting and future data collection purposes, and serve as evidence in claiming reimbursements. Electronic copies of documents must be stored by line supervisors on a university-endorsed drive. The location of the files must be made known to the Executive Assistant of the School/Directorate etc.

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| 7 | Evidence of attendance and dissemination of professional development opportunity to a broader audience | Staff member(s) | Staff members are strongly encouraged to share information and/or their evaluation of the activity in their School/ Directorate via a method most appropriate to their role.

This can include: a journal reflection within the PRDP system; a written/oral or multimedia report to their supervisor; a written/oral or multimedia report to a team meeting or appropriate forum in the School/Academic Unit, and copy of the attendance certificate or other formal documentation, as relevant to the activity. |

3. Obtaining Professional Development for VET Staff

The University values, and is committed to supporting, highly skilled VET and VCAL teaching staff. The University requires staff to pursue higher levels of teaching and assessing qualifications, and to maintain current vocational competence and engagement with industry. The **VET Teacher Qualifications and Competency Policy** also ensures compliance with regulatory requirements. All FedUni VET staff must follow the procedures outlined in Table 3.1 about applying for external (formal and informal) and internal (formal) professional development opportunities.

VET Professional Development Point system

A professional development opportunity should allow for an extension of skills and/or knowledge and/or expertise in a specific area of workplace relevance. There are many types of VET professional development opportunities that may relate to a staff member's role. This includes both formal and informal activities that encompass vocational competencies, currency of industry skills and knowledge and practice of vocational training, learning and assessment, competency-based training and assessment. The VET Professional Development Point System is a systemic professional development program led by FedUni TAFE. For more information, contact the Director, VET Practice (FedUni TAFE).

Examples of VET professional development activities include participation in:

- training, courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, or formal learning programs
- mentoring, professional associations or other learning networks
- personal development through individual research or reading of publications or other relevant information
- moderation or validation activities specific to VET programs
- industry release programs

For more information, refer to the following website: [The Victorian Training Guarantee](link)

Table 3.1

	Activity	Responsibility	Steps

1	Identify staff development opportunity	Staff member(s) and/or relevant supervisors	Staff members need to consider the type, relevance, cost and priority of the professional development opportunity in context with their role and School/ Directorate etc. A staff member's professional development needs should be identified during PRDP/PP/PDP discussions and in collaboration with their supervisor.
2	Complete the Professional Development (VET) Application Form	Staff member(s)	Please refer to: Professional Development (VET) Application Form
3	Forward a completed application form to a supervisor by email for consideration	Staff member(s)	Applications must be received at least four weeks prior to the scheduled commencement of the professional development opportunity. Any application received within four weeks may not be assessed in a timely manner. Staff are encouraged to discuss the proposed development activity with their direct supervisor prior to completing the application form.
4	The application form with a final outcome must be completed and provided to the staff member within two weeks of the original submission date	Relevant Education Manager or supervisor (as appropriate)	The application must clearly state the reasons for supporting the outcome. If there are discrepancies, or more information is required from the staff member before the final outcome can be released, then the supervisor must communicate this within one week of receiving the application to ensure that the final outcome still meets the two-week turn-around time. If a re-submission is required, the process maybe extended by two weeks from the date of the original submission.
5	Applying for leave through ESS/ Empower	Staff member(s)	Staff member(s) must apply for leave to attend all external (informal and formal) professional development opportunities,

			particularly where they are physically leaving their regular workplace to attend. Within the ESS system, all staff must select their supervisor to seek approval. The ESS request will be only approved once the professional development opportunity is approved. 'Business Leave' is the appropriate leave type to choose.
6	File the original approved application in School/ Academic Unit/ Directorate	Relevant Education Manager or supervisor (as appropriate)	Approved applications are key records for TAFE professional development activities. These records are important for reporting and future data collection purposes, and serve as evidence in claiming reimbursements. These records are also important for auditing, reporting and future data collection purposes. Electronic copies of documents must be stored by line supervisors on a university-endorsed drive. The location of the files must be made known to the Executive Assistant of the School/ Directorate etc.
7	Evidence of attendance and dissemination of professional development opportunity to a broader audience	Staff member(s)	Staff members are strongly encouraged to share information and/or their evaluation of the activity in their School/ Directorate via a method most appropriate to their role. This can include: a journal reflection within the PRDP system; a written/oral or multimedia report to their supervisor; a written/oral or multimedia report to a team meeting or appropriate forum in the School/Academic Unit, and copy of the attendance certificate or other formal documentation, as relevant to the activity.

3.1 Defining Vocational Competency related to Professional Development

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Vocational competency is defined as broad industry knowledge and experience, usually combined with (an) industry qualification(s). A person who has vocational competency will be familiar with the content of, and will have current experience in, the industry. Vocational competency must be considered on an industry basis and with reference to the guidance provided in the appropriate assessment guidelines within National Training Packages. The quality of VET and VCAL programs is directly influenced by the qualifications and competence of the staff associated with delivery and assessment practices.

Staff delivering and assessing the University's VET units of competencies/programs/qualifications must use appropriate professional development activities to constantly renew, develop and improve their:

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills that inform their training and assessment
- Vocational knowledge and skills relating to their relevant industry, and
- Trainer/Assessor knowledge and skills

3.2 Providing Evidence, Sharing and Evaluating VET Professional Development

Staff who deliver and/or assess the University's VET related learning and teaching elements must provide evidence that demonstrates compliance with vocational competency. This evidence must be uploaded by teaching staff into the University leave system (ESS). This is a requirement of all FedUni VET teachers including, but not limited to, ongoing, contract and sessional/casual staff.

Professional development relates to the individual and programs, therefore formal professional development records must be documented using the following methods:

- Documented on individual work plans as part of the PRDP/PP/PDP (depending on employment status)
- Updated on the Trainer Skills Matrix for each qualification taught
- Evidence of qualifications and certificates must be formally cited by the Education Manager or equivalent, and uploaded into ESS as part of the individual teacher's personal information file
- The PRDP Policy and Procedure should be used to identify, plan and record evidence relating to the maintenance of training, and assessing, current vocational competencies and VET knowledge

Supporting Documents

- People and Culture Policy
- Performance Review and Development Program Procedure

Forms.

- Professional Development Application Form Higher Education and Professional Staff (DOCX 205.1kb)
- Professional Development Application Form VET (DOCX 954.8kb)

Responsibility

The Director, Centre for Learning and Professional Development (CLIPP), is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy and its accompanying procedure.

Promulgation

The **Professional Development Procedure** be promulgated throughout the University via:

1. An Announcement Notice under 'FedNews' on the University website and through the University Policy - 'Recently Approved Documents' webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved procedure;

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2. Inclusion on the University's online Policy Library.

Implementation

The Professional Development Procedure will be implemented throughout the University via:

- PRDP/PP/PDP discussion with staff and supervisors;
- Staff exploration of professional development opportunities;
- University-wide information sessions;
- CLIPP/HR/FedUni TAFE offerings.

Records Management

Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
HE & Professional Staff Application Form	University endorsed confidential drive	Supervisor	Destroy two years after organisational use has concluded
VET Staff Application Form	University endorsed confidential drive	Supervisor	Destroy two years after organisational use has concluded
Professional Development Plan and Performance Plan	University endorsed confidential drive	Supervisor	Destroy two years after organisational use has concluded

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