

## **STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

Professional development per this policy refers to learning, training and upgrading undertaken by males and females employees to maintain and advance their skills, knowledge and competencies, specifically as they relate and add value to the job and workplace. It is a dynamic process and may be achieved not only through participation in formal coursework but also through professional experience, collaboration, mentoring, and participation in activities of professional organizations, and independent study and research.

### **1. Purpose/Objectives**

The College is committed to providing a supportive and rewarding environment for all employees, particularly, the female. Such college environment should recognise that the quality, responsiveness and professionalism of its workforce are inextricably linked to the College's achievement of its mission and strategic goals.

The purpose of the Professional Development Policy is to encourage and support employees especially, the female to actively pursue their professional and career development as an integral element of their employment with the College. The College acknowledges that continuing professional development contributes to personal job satisfaction, workplace productivity, reward and recognition.

The specific objectives of this policy includes:

- To offer financial assistance and support to staff members for staff professional development.
- To ensure equitable distribution of funds for staff professional development.
- To provide equal opportunity for male and female staff.
- To ensure that beneficiaries of the staff development funds stay in the College for at least three years (This is subject to the number of years spent in pursuing the programme and the investment made by the College in a staff).
- To ensure that special preferences are given to female staff members

This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant clauses of the Harmonised Statutes and Conditions of Service for Colleges of Education and any other applicable College policy or procedure.

### **2. Scope/Application**

This Policy shall apply to all members of staff of the College community (Academic and Non-Academic)

### **3. Policy Statement:**

The College recognises the importance of professional development activities that relate to staff work. Professional development opportunities will include workshops, short courses, further studies, professional conferences, exchanged programmes and academic research, etc.

Responsibility for professional training and development extends to all levels of the College:

- The College is responsible for identifying, creating, and providing opportunities for professional development and training to enhance and build the capacity, skills, excellence, and professionalism of employees to enable them to contribute effectively and creatively to the College's mission.
- HODs are responsible for assessing and communicating professional development and training needs of individual employees in their direct reporting line, identifying and actively encouraging and supporting appropriate learning experiences.
- The Staff Development and Research Committee (SDRC) will receive and study applications, and recommend the granting of scholarships/grants to appropriate persons.
- Individual employees are responsible for assessing their job related skills and knowledge, for maintaining a high level of performance throughout their College employment, and for seeking approval for appropriate professional development and training opportunities in consultation with their HODs.
- Professional development and training opportunities should be available to all employees, especially females.
- HODs need to plan for and allow appropriate professional development and training activities that occur as part of work time.
- Professional development and training activities that require time away from the employee's workplace must be approved by the Principal.

#### **4. Supporting Procedures**

##### **4.1. New Employees (Induction)**

The College provides an organisational induction programme for new employees to enable them access:

- Information on the College's Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan; Governance, Statutory and Policy Framework; Organisational Structure; [Code of Conduct](#) and Core Values; and Conditions of Employment; and
- Professional development support in core skills and competences required for their work.

##### **4.2 Continuing Professional Development**

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) facilitates the recognition of employees as a professional group. A commitment to CPD by both management and employees enables joint responsibility for demonstrating high professional standards; reviewing current knowledge and skills; building professional capabilities; continuous quality improvement in work practices; and optimizing career opportunities for employees.

The College shall ensure CPD of all staff (males and female) in the following areas

- Weekly continued profession development to sharpen staff pedagogical skills.
- Short courses and conferences related to their field of work.
- Research and publications workshops
- Student teaching support
- E-learning workshop, etc,

## 5. Education Support

An employee undertaking an approved formal award course may be eligible for education support in the form of paid study leave, exam leave and/or an education support allowance. Education support is available to full-time employees who have completed a minimum of the equivalent of 36 months' full-time continuous service and who have satisfactorily met performance expectations. The approved study and relevance of the course to the employee's career development should be discussed with and agreed to by the Principal at the time of the performance, planning and development meeting and form part of the employee's individual development plan.

### 5.1 Study Leave

An employee may apply for paid [study leave](#) to undertake an approved formal award course. The study leave must be approved by the HOD/Unit Head and must be consistent with the provisions of the Harmonised Conditions of Services for Colleges of Education.

Study leave may be used to undertake activities directly related to and required by the approved course of study, for example, to attend weekly lectures or a residential programme, course related research, or practicum.

Study leave will be granted twice in respect of a subject and will not be granted retrospectively.

Study leave for completion of postgraduate research studies will be granted subject to the employee meeting the requirements for satisfactory progression and for completion within the maximum time limit allowed.

Study leave must have prior approval of the HOD/Unit Head. Employees must provide evidence of satisfactory progress to their HOD/Unit Head. The nature and extent of study leave will be determined as part of the annual performance, planning and development and work plan discussions and in accordance with the relevant College policies.

In the event that an application for study leave to undertake an approved formal award course is not approved, reasons for the decision are to be provided to the employee.

### 5.2 Exam Leave

Eligible employees enrolled in an approved formal award course will be granted paid leave to undertake an examination. [Exam leave](#) will be limited to the time necessary to complete the examination and does not include travel time. Exam leave is additional to any study leave granted. A [leave form](#) must be completed.

### **5.3 Education Support Allowance**

The College will provide support to employees enrolled in an approved formal award course through payment of an Education Support Allowance which will be sourced from the GETFund allocation for Professional Development and other sources. The Education Support Allowance may be used to assist with course fees, purchase of textbooks or course materials.

The Education Support Allowance is to be approved by the HOD/Unit Head and paid from the College's allocation for Professional Development from GETFund or other sources.

The Education Support Allowance will be granted twice in respect of a subject in a course. Where an employee fails a subject, no further support will be granted for that subject or an equivalent subject.

Employees should complete the [Education Support Allowance Application Form](#) to be approved by the HOD/Unit Head and the Staff Development and Research Committee, then forwarded to the Office of the Principal for processing.

### **5.4 Study Visit**

An employee may be eligible to undertake a study visit to another College or institution. A study visit is usually of short duration from a few days to two weeks where an employee undertakes a study visit to a similar unit or area at another College or institution. The purpose of a study visit is to further the employee's professional development and study other college practices, processes or systems to support the implementation of improvements or organisational change initiatives at the College.

All full-time or part-time employees who have completed a minimum of the equivalent of 12 months' full-time continuous service and who have satisfactorily met performance expectations may apply for a study visit. The opportunity to undertake a study visit or other forms of career development should be discussed by the employee with their supervisor at the time of the annual performance, planning and development meeting and form part of the employee's Individual Development Plan.

## **6. Conditions for Study Visit**

- The College will support a short study visit to another institution(s) which is directly relevant to the employee's work. Support will be in the form of granting work time to undertake the study visit and a contribution towards part or the full cost of travel and accommodation. Funding for the study visit will be met from the Unit budget.
- Applications must be approved by the Unit Head.
- Employees seeking to organise a study visit are required to make written application to their Unit Head with the support of their line supervisor and include the following:
  - Purpose and description of the study visit including duration and schedule
  - Rationale for undertaking the study visit at the nominated institution/ organization

- Expected outcomes of undertaking the study visit
  - Evidence of support from the nominated institution/organization
  - Costs and financial assistance applied for to undertake the study visit
  - Recommendation and support for the study visit by the line supervisor
  - An undertaking to write a report within one month of completing the study visit.
- Where an application for a Study Visit is not approved, the Unit Head will advise the employee in writing

## 7. **Keywords & Definition of terms**

For the purpose of this policy:

- a. **Professional Development** includes the provision of learning and development opportunities and activities to extend and broaden the scope of professional capabilities of employees in relation to their roles and responsibilities. Professional development activities build on the collective knowledge and experience of employees and provide employees with opportunities to acquire, practise and adopt new knowledge, thereby enhancing individual, group and organisational learning and capabilities.
- b. **Capabilities** refer to the combination of attributes, qualities, skills, knowledge and understanding of ethical principles that underpin the professional practices of employees and that enable a person to perform to a high standard in a given context and role.
- c. **Continuing Professional Development** facilitates recognition of employees as a professional group and reflects a commitment to demonstrating high professional standards, building professional capabilities, continuous quality improvement in work practices, and optimising career opportunities.
- d. **Short Courses** are courses of short duration that are normally from half a day to five days in length, run on consecutive days or over a period of time, offered by an external provider and which would not normally lead to a qualification.