OZFORD
Institute of Higher Education

ACADEMIC STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Approving Authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the Professional Development policy for academic staff.
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean
Next Scheduled Review	**February 2031**
Document Location	R:\Managers\OIHE\Policies
Associated Documents	Equivalence of Professional Experience And Academic Qualifications Policy
	Free Intellectual Enquiry in Learning and Teaching Policy
	Human Resources Policy and Procedure (Manual)
	Records Management Policy and Procedure
	Academic Staff Professional Development Procedure
	Strategic Plan
	Learning and Teaching Plan

1. PRINCIPLES

The Institute is committed to the continuing and equitable development of all staff as outlined in the Strategic Plan. Professional development is key to the Institute's efficient and effective operation and to the work, career and personal goals of staff enabling equity and assisting in retaining staff and workplace planning.

Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as "the Institute:) encourages and supports academic staff professional development and participation in scholarly activities to enable all staff to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities, and deliver teaching and learning that engages with advanced knowledge and inquiry.

The TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requires that staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in higher education courses and units of study have knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice.

The Institute's approach to scholarship is addressed in the **Learning and Teaching Plan**. The Institute is primarily a teaching institution and therefore has a focus on the scholarship of teaching.

The Institute's academic staff require knowledge and skills in the areas of modern industry based teaching, learning and assessment principles appropriate for the discipline, modes of delivery, the needs of the student cohort, current systems and technology, legislation including the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks.

The **Academic Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure** set out the roles of managers and supervisors, and the Institute, in relation to encouraging and supporting academic staff development and attainment of scholarship. They make academic staff aware of their personal obligation to maintain their knowledge and skills and pursue their professional development goals.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, sessional/casual and contracted academic staff.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic Staff

Academic Staff means all staff with academic leadership and oversight responsibilities, and all staff with teaching and/or supervisory roles in higher education courses and units of study.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination and more than 'cultural awareness' and 'cultural sensitivity'. It empowers people and allows them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

External Professional Development

External professional development activities are professional development opportunities provided by or delivered by external organisations such as TEQSA, professional bodies or industry.

ESOS framework professional development obligations

The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) sets out the legal framework governing delivery of education to international students in Australia on a student visa. Supporting the ESOS Act, the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) provides nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their courses. The National Code Standard 6 requires that the Institute ensures that the staff who interact directly with overseas students are aware of the Institute's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.

Formal Award Programs

Formal award programs refer to staff obtaining degrees, diplomas, certificates and other programs leading to a diploma or degree for the staff member.

In-house Professional Development

In-house professional development activities are professional development opportunities made available to academic staff and may be delivered by internal or external professional development experts or involve self-directed learning.

Learning and Teaching-based Professional Development

Learning and Teaching-based Professional Development refers to those activities that develop the academic staff member's understanding of pedagogical issues and the underlying scholarship of teaching related to teaching higher education students.

Professional Development

Professional development refers to learning activities for the purpose of developing, maintaining and enhancing professional knowledge, competence and skills. Professional development occurs through a range of formal and informal work-related activities which may be self-directed or supported by the Institute.

Professional Development Activities

Professional development activities include:

- In-house Professional Development and External Professional Development

- attendance at conferences, seminars, short courses (internal or external) or workshops or the completion of accredited training and award programs.

- involvement in work integrated learning, industry placements, job exchanges and rotations, shadowing, networking, volunteering or working in relevant industry, ie. attending a workplace to experience the latest techniques, processes and resources or engaging with industry such as through discussions with employers or attending industry networking events.

- mentoring schemes (being mentored and acting as a mentor) or coaching as a participant or a coach, focused consultation with colleagues, obtaining and acting on feedback from students, clients and/or colleagues.

- critical reflection on practice and professional reading of professional and industry journals and subscriptions and membership with professional bodies and industry associations, staying informed about changes to technology relevant to delivery of education services and/or to industry or keeping up to date with changes to relevant legislation relevant to delivery of education services and/or to industry.

- action-learning groups, committees or working parties, communities of practice, membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups.

Scholarship

Scholarship refers to activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, or appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge, or keeping up to date with advances in the field. Scholarship advances knowledge or professional practice in a field or transmits advances through contemporary approaches to teaching and learning, or research and training.

Scholarly Activities

Scholarly activities include:

- peer reviewed scholarly output/publication/communication (e.g literature reviews, conference presentations, journal publications)

- scholarly review, original research or teaching practice that collectively contribute to course development

- synthesising and communicating advances in evidence-based practice (e.g. presentations/podcasts/feature articles on current knowledge, practice, or teaching and learning in a field)

- teaching practice engaging the latest ideas, debates and issues (e.g. improved pedagogies, learning processes, curricula, academic policies and learning materials)

- contributions to relevant professional bodies or communities of practice (e.g. development of new standards, knowledge resources, codes of practice)

- active and ongoing involvement in relevant scholarly academic societies, editorial roles or peer review

- undertaking higher level qualifications that lead to scholarly activity, in particular higher degrees by research

- undertaking advanced specialised practice or scholarly secondments.

The following activities do not represent sufficient evidence of scholarship:

- personal or professional development activities that constitute lower-level training or are unrelated to the teaching role (e.g. undertaking a Moodle training session, attending an Emotional Intelligence training workshop, learning unrelated software, an unrelated research technique or taking a course in an unrelated field)

- membership on one or more academic governance committees

- dated or irrelevant scholarly activity (e.g. content or methods that are no longer employed in the field)

- unrelated research in disciplines/fields being taught (e.g. information systems teacher conducting research in art history)

- basic or routine practice that does not engage with advances in practice, or is unrelated to the discipline/field (e.g. an accountant preparing personal tax returns for individuals while teaching corporate finance or training in software use)

- involvement in professional/community groups or activities unrelated to the content or teaching methods of the discipline/field being taught (e.g. an engineering lecturer attending a literary discussion group)

- similar activities at a lower AQF level (e.g. teaching in a related field at a lower level)

- attendance at conferences or membership of a professional body.

4.   POLICY

4.1   The Institute has a culture of continual professional development, scholarship and life-long learning that:

- is aligned to the **Strategic Plan**, Institute values and other priorities identified from time to time,

- supports the delivery of teaching and learning that engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry,

- is the shared responsibility of individual employees, teams, supervisors, and the Institute.

- empowers individuals to drive their own learning and career development by building their self-efficacy and being focused and determined,

- provides access to a broad, flexible and relevant range of opportunities, and

- demonstrates capability and application of knowledge and skill within the role and the workplace.

Obligations of the Institute

4.2   The Institute ensures that all academic staff have the necessary capabilities to perform their expected roles through the recruitment process as set out in the **Human Resources Policy and Procedure (Manual).**

4.3 The Institute encourages and supports academic staff to undertake professional development and be active in scholarship.

4.4 The Academic Dean is responsible for supporting professional development and scholarly activities of academic staff including:

- Developing and implementing cost-effective methods to support the professional development needs of staff.

- Considering student feedback in identifying professional development needs of academic staff.

- Providing mentorship and advice to staff regarding their proposed professional development and scholarly activities.

- Inviting staff to discuss scholarly activity opportunities, proposals and outcomes at staff meetings.

- Evaluating the outcomes of staff professional development and providing feedback to the staff they supervise in relation to professional development that has been completed.

- Ensuring all staff undertake training provided by the Institute to meet legislative and regulatory professional development requirements.

- Facilitating the transfer of, and use of skills introduced at professional development programs, by following up with staff members who attend professional development programs to assist with transfer of learning to the current job.

4.5 The Institute develops a plan that sets out in-house training and opportunities for self-directed professional development and learning for a 12 month period. All academic staff will be provided with the opportunity to engage in a minimum of 2 in-house training sessions supplied by the Institute. Staff may also be provided with opportunities to undertake self-directed training. Full-time staff are expected to attend a minimum of two in-house professional activities annually, and other staff are expected to attend a minimum of one in-house activity annually.

4.6 The Institute provides academic staff with a range of professional development opportunities which include (but are not limited to):

- induction,

- mandatory compliance training,

- the staff performance and development review,

- provision of face-to-face and external online professional development programs and activities,

- mentoring and coaching,

- communities of practice and opportunities for networking and building industry connections,

- study leave, and

- support for external professional development.

4.7 As set out in the **Human Resources Policy and Procedure (Manual),** all academic staff are given the opportunity to engage with the Institute's staff performance and development review process.

- For full-time and part-time staff, this will usually take place on an annual basis after the individual has completed their probation period.

- For casual/sessional staff, the performance and development review will usually be in the period shortly before or after the end of each contracted period.

4.8 The Institute meets all regulatory and legislative professional development requirements. This includes:

- The Institute ensures all staff understand their obligations in respect to the HESF.

- The Institute ensures all staff who interact directly with overseas students are aware of the obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of this obligation.

4.9 The Institute will endeavour to identify and pursue opportunities for training collectively with other higher education organisations.

Obligations of Academic Staff

4.10 All academic staff have an ongoing obligation to engage in professional development and scholarly activities in order to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and capabilities relevant to their role and responsibilities with the Institute, and to achieve their career aspirations.

4.11 All academic staff are required to keep a record of professional development and scholarly activities undertaken and provide these records to the Institute.

Support for Academic Staff Professional Development and Scholarship

4.12 The Institute will allocate an amount in its annual budget to support professional development and scholarly activity for academic staff. The Academic Dean will ensure funding for professional development and scholarly activity is used in an equitable manner.

Formal Award Qualifications

4.13 Full-time and part-time academic staff with a minimum of two years continuous employment with the Institute may apply to receive support for a Masters or Doctoral level programs with relevance to Institute activities and/or a relevant teaching qualification (e.g. Graduate Certificate in Higher Education). Sessional academic staff members may also receive support for a relevant teaching qualification (e.g. Graduate Certificate in Higher Education).

4.14 The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the CEO and President on recommendation of the Academic Dean. The maximum level of support is reimbursement of tuition fees on successful completion of all the requirements of the degree/diploma/certificate on provision of the academic transcript.

4.15 Academic staff receiving financial support to complete an award program must continue employment with the Institute for at least 12 months after completion of the award program. An academic staff member who receives financial support and who does not continue employment with the Institute for a period of 12 months after receiving that support, may at the discretion of the Institute be required to reimburse any support provided.

Attending Conferences and Seminars (Domestic)

4.16   Full time, part-time and casual academic staff, irrespective of their length of service with the Institute, may apply to receive Conference leave and financial support (registration fees, travel and accommodation etc.) which will normally be restricted to one approved conference annually. Support to attend conferences will be contingent on minimal disruption to the academic staff member's teaching responsibilities. Preference will be given to those academic staff presenting a paper or leading or discussing in a session or demonstrating a clear contribution to their scholarly activity or teaching.

4.17   The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the President and CEO on recommendation of the Academic Dean.

4.18   Academic staff will be required to present the conference/seminar paper(s) to other staff members or present a report on the conference/seminar attended.

4.19   For reimbursement of financial support, the staff member must submit all original receipts and a statement of expenses incurred. Any amount spent outside the pre-authorised amount will be borne by the staff member.

Attending Conferences and Seminars (International)

4.20   Full time, part-time and casual academic staff members presenting papers at an international conference may be eligible for support if the presentation is seen as being of significant value to the Institute, including through the development of individual scholarship.

4.21   The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the President and CEO on the recommendation of the Academic Dean. Priority of support will be given to academic staff members who have not received this support in the past three (3) years.

4.22   Academic staff will be required to present the conference/seminar paper(s) to other staff members or present a report on the conference/seminar attended.

4.23   For reimbursement of financial support, the staff member must submit all original receipts and a statement of expenses incurred. Any amount spent outside the pre-authorised amount will be borne by the staff member.

Attending Professional Body Professional Development Events

4.24   Academic staff members may be eligible for support for attending professional development events offered by a relevant professional body. Academic staff are encouraged to maintain and develop their professional skills by attendance at relevant professional development events.

4.25   The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the President and CEO on recommendation of the Academic Dean. The maximum level of support is for the full reimbursement of professional membership fees.

4.26   Academic staff will be required to provide a written report of the professional development event attended.

Attending In-house Professional Development Activities

4.27 The Institute will offer at least two in-house PD activities annually (most commonly during each trimester). The nature of in-house PD activities will normally be related to Learning and Teaching-based PD activities designed to develop the academic staff member's understanding of pedagogical issues and the scholarship of teaching related to the Institute courses and students.

4.28 Responsibility for the design, delivery and reporting on in-house PD activities rests with the Academic Dean.

Reporting

4.29 The Institute will annually report to the Academic Board on:

- An annual plan of professional development activities for academic staff.

- The professional development activities undertaken by academic staff to meet their obligations.

- The scholarly activities undertaken by academic staff.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks the policy will be:

- internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval the Academic Board or other delegated authority;

- externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;

- internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every five years from the date of approval (if not earlier); and

- referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requirement(s) and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed responsible officer of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- RMIT University, *Professional Development Policy*, December 2013

- CQUniversity, *Staff Study Support Procedures*, December 2013

- Victoria University, *Professional Development Policy and Procedure*, 2018 (Professional Development and Performance Planning Policy / Document / Victoria University Policy Library (vu.edu.au))

- Charles Darwin University, *Professional Development Policy*, 2022 (Professional Development Policy / Governance Document Library (cdu.edu.au))

- TEQSA, Guidance note: Scholarship, Version 3.0, 2022 (Guidance note: Scholarship | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	March 2014	Initial issue	AB
2.0	June 2018	Aligning with new HESF standard and restructured academic leadership.	AB
3.0	September 2023	Internal Review The Professional Development (International) Policy has been included in this policy.	AB
3.1	February 2026	Internal Review to remove under 18 student obligations after change in policy	EMT
Related legislation/ regulation/standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standards Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) Fair Work Act 2009 (Clth) **Victorian Legislation** Accident Compensation (Occupational Health and Safety) Act 1996 (Vic) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (General) Regulations 2017	

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
		Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Vic)	
		Compliance Code Psychological Health (Vic)	
		Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	
		Disability Act 2006 (Vic)	
		Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	
		Gender Equality Act 2020	
		Health Records Act 2001 (Vic),	
		Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 (Vic)Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)	
		Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)	
		Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)	
		Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025 (Vic)	
		Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic),	
		Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)	
		Spent Convictions Act 2021 (VIic	
		Queensland	
		Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)	
		Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)	
		Disability Services Act 2006 (Qld)	
		Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2023 (Qld)	
		Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014 (Qld)	
		Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Provisions Act 2009 (Qld)	
		Health and Wellbeing Queensland Act 2019 (Qld)	
		Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)	
		Human Rights Regulation 2020 (Qld)	
		Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)	
		Information Privacy Regulation 2025 (Qld)	
		Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)	
		Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)	
		Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (Qld)	

Note.

AB = Academic Board.

EMT = Executive Management team