

PROFESSIONAL STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Approving Authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the Professional Development policy for all professional staff.
Responsible Officer	President and CEO
Next Scheduled Review	August 2026
Document Location	R:\Managers\OIHE\Policies
Associated Documents	Child Safety Policy and Procedure Human Resources Policy and Procedure (Manual) Records Management Policy and Procedure Professional Staff Professional Development Procedure Strategic Plan

1. PRINCIPLES

Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as “the Institute:”) encourages and supports staff professional development including participation in programs to enable all staff to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities. 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.

The Higher Education Standards Framework requires that staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and supervisory roles in higher education courses and units of study have the knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field which is informed by continuous research and scholarship. It is also imperative that professional staff have skills in modern industry based skills appropriate for the modes of delivery, the needs of the student cohort, current systems and technology, legislation including the TEQSA Threshold standards, the ESOS framework and the Victorian Child Safe Standards. This policy is aimed at the capacity building of the Institute’s staff in these areas.

The policy makes staff aware of their personal obligation to maintain their skills and pursue their professional development goals and sets out the roles of managers and supervisors at all levels in relation to encouraging and supporting professional development of staff.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all governing board members, full-time, part-time, sessional/casual and contracted professional staff, homestay hosts, homestay agents and student welfare providers and all persons engaged in child connected work in Institute environments.

3. DEFINITIONS

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 its staff members 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 full-time and casual staff and may be delivered by internal or external professional development experts or involve self-directed learning.

Professional Development

Professional development refers to skills and knowledge developed in learning, teaching and scholarly activities.

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 encompasses:

- professional development programs provided by the Institute or other relevant organisations,
- 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 Board or other committees and working groups.

Professional Staff

Professional Staff -means an employee employed in a capacity other than as an academic staff and includes employees engaged in clerical, administrative and technical work.

Victorian Child Safe Standards Professional development obligations

The Victorian Child Safe Standards (Standards) are a set of mandatory requirements to protect children and young people from harm and abuse. The Standards set out professional development obligations to ensure that all staff, volunteers and persons engaged in child connected work are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 The Institute ensures that all professional 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)***.
- 4.2 The Institute shas a culture of continual professional development and life-long learning that:
- is aligned to the Strategic plan
 - Institute values and other priorities identified from time to time,
 - is the shared responsibility of individual employees, teams, supervisors, Heads of Department 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.
- 4.3 All Institute staff have an ongoing obligation to maintain and enhance their skills and capabilities relevant to their role and responsibilities with the Institute and to achieve their career aspirations. Professional staff must be committed to maintaining and enhancing their skills and capabilities to support the operation of the Institute.
- 4.4 The Head of Department is responsible for supporting professional development activities professional staff including:
- Developing and implementing cost-effective methods to support the professional development needs of staff.
 - Evaluating the outcomes of staff professional development and providing feedback to the staff they supervise in relation to professional development that have 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 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 activity annually, and casual staff are expected to attend a minimum of one in-house activity annually.
- 4.6 The Institute provides 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 Institute staff are given the opportunity to engage with the Institute’s staff performance and development review process.
- For full-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 Threshold standards.
 - 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 these obligation.
 - The Institute ensures all staff, volunteers and any other persons engaged in child connected work including homestay agents, homestay hosts and student welfare providers complete training annually to meet the Institute’s child safety professional development obligations.
- 4.9 Full-time professional staff with a minimum of two years continuous employment with the Institute may apply to receive support for award programs or accredited training with relevance to Institute activities.
- 4.10 The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the President and CEO on recommendation of the Head of Department. The maximum level of support is reimbursement

of tuition fees on successful completion of all the requirements of the qualification on provision of the academic transcript.

- 4.11 Professional 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. A 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

- 4.12 Professional staff may receive Conference or Seminar leave and financial support (registration fees, travel and accommodation etc.) which will normally be restricted to one approved event annually. Support will be contingent on minimal disruption to the staff member's responsibilities.
- 4.13 The level of support (financial, study leave or leave of absence) will be determined by the President and CEO on recommendation of the Head of Department.
- 4.14 Professional staff will be required to present the conference/seminar paper(s) to other staff members or present a report on the conference/seminar attended. 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 In-house Professional Development Activities

- 4.15 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 PD activities designed to develop the staff member's understanding of the Institute's services, compliance obligations and student needs.
- 4.16 Responsibility for the design, delivery and reporting on in-house PD activities rests with the Head of Department.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the HES Threshold Standards the policy will be:

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by Governing Board, or the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the HES Threshold Standards approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every three years from the date of approval (if not earlier); and
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable HES threshold Standard 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 \(cdu.edu.au\)](#))

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
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) 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standards The Victorian Child Safe Standards Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 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 (Cth) Victorian Legislation Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (VIC)		

	Spent Convictions Act 2021
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Note.

AB = Academic Board.

Appendix 1: Professional Development Application Form

	Professional Development Application Form								
Staff Member Details									
Full Name:									
Position Title:									
Application Details									
Provide details of the award program, conference, seminar, professional body event, other professional development or scholarship activity (include dates of conference and country/city held)									
Expected outcomes from being involved in the award program, conference, seminar, professional body event, other. Include title of the paper and award and its benefits to improving teaching practice, disciplinary knowledge and engagement with scholarship									
Relationship of award program, conference, seminar, professional body event, other to current position and its value to the Institute									
Assistance Requested:									
Finance	Attach all details including course fees, conference fees, accommodation, travel and other expected expenses. \$								
Leave	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">PD</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Annual</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Total</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>leave(days/hours)</td> <td>(days/hours)</td> <td>(days/hours)</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	PD	Annual	Total		leave(days/hours)	(days/hours)	(days/hours)	
PD	Annual	Total							
leave(days/hours)	(days/hours)	(days/hours)							
Staff Member's Signature: _____ Date: _____									
Recommendations / Comments									
Amount of financial assistance: \$									
Amount of Leave approved (days):									
Approved	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>								
Signature Head of Department:	Date:								
Signature President and CEO:	Date:								

Signature

Accounts Manager:

Date: