

Policy Number: CS-1312-2005
Policy Title: Professional Development for Staff
Policy Owner: Chief Human Resources Officer
Effective Date: June 13, 2005
Last Revised: January 13, 2016

In light of COVID-19, please note the following changes to the Professional Development for Staff Policy effective April 20, 2020 and until further notice:

- Section 7 - Educational Tuition Assistance Program – During this time, no new tuition assistance applications will be approved. Where a person has already begun their studies and the request and application has already been approved by their manager and Human Resources, the College will continue to pay for courses towards that approved credential.
- Section 9 - Professional Development Leave – You may apply for a PD Leave during this time. Please note that no new tuition assistance applications will be approved. If not previously approved, you will not be eligible to receive financial support from the College should you wish to pursue a leave.
- Professional Development in the way of conferences or other expenses have been suspended as part of budget restrictions until further notice.

1. Purpose

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.

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.

At the leadership level, it is also to enhance capacity to development and coach employees to enable them in reaching their potential.

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

2. Application and Scope

This policy applies to full time and part time employees (where applicable). For further details, bargaining unit members should also consult their respective Collective Agreements; Administrative staff should also consult the Terms and Conditions for Administrative Staff.

3. Definitions

“Professional development” includes conferences, workshops, seminars, courses, on line learning, diploma, designation or degree completion, coaching, mentoring, field trips (i.e.: to acquaint employees with operations of their institutions), work experience (i.e.: to provide opportunities for employees to observe and experience ongoing development in a workplace that is relevant to their College employment responsibilities e.g.: job shadowing or cross training), participation in professional organizations and meetings, developmental leaves, intra-college professional development activities, research projects.

“Individual learning plans” refers to a plan developed as part of the Development and Performance Management process which identifies individual learning objectives as well as the strategy for achieving those objectives.

4. Principles

Mohawk 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 department goals and College wide strategic priorities, enhances the leadership capacity within the College.
- **Collaborative and collegial:** values and utilizes the expertise of staff to support learning from each other; develops common language around best practices across disciplines.
- **Responsive to the ever changing needs of our Students and the College:** ensures alignment of staff 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:** assists staff in having a meaningful role in identifying individualized learning needs, setting personal growth goals, selecting professional development opportunities and evaluating their progress.
- **Connects current theory to practice:** supports exploration, research, construction and application of new knowledge and skills relevant to their role or career plan.

5. Accountability and Compliance

5.1 Accountability Framework

This policy has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

5.2 Compliance

The Chief Human Resources Officer is responsible for monitoring this policy to ensure compliance on a regularly defined schedule.

6. Rules

- 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 and department plans.
- The applications procedures and forms for professional development are established, maintained and, from time to time, modified by the Human Resources Department, which will post current procedures and forms on MyMohawk.
- Applications for professional development that assist in the achievement of objectives that support the College strategic plan, the Academic plan and the Student success or required designations will be given highest priority.
- 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. 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.

7. Educational Tuition Assistance Program

The Educational Assistance Program has been developed to foster a learning environment for full-time staff by providing financial assistance for certificate, diploma or degree programs and Professional or Trade Association courses taken outside Mohawk College with the ultimate goal of contributing to Student success.

7.1 Criteria for Approval

Educational goals and outcomes must align with the College's strategic priorities, the Academic Plan, Student success and the employee's current role. Funding for tuition assistance is not available for employees receiving a D & PMP rating below "Fully Effective". Specific Leadership development may provide for alternate financial supports.

Please see MyMohawk for the Staff Educational Tuition Assistance Application form and the Payroll Deduction Application and Promissory Note.

7.2 Eligible Programs

College Certificate or Diploma Courses (at institutes other than Mohawk College)

- Mohawk College will reimburse 50 % of tuition for each course successfully completed to a lifetime maximum of \$10,500.

Undergraduate Degree

- Mohawk College will reimburse 50 % of tuition for each course successfully completed to a lifetime maximum of \$10,500. Courses or programs must be offered by degree-granting institutions.

Graduate Degree (Masters or Doctoral Degree)

- Mohawk College will reimburse 50 % of tuition for each course successfully completed to a lifetime maximum of \$10,500. Courses or programs must be offered by degree-granting institutions at the university level.

Professional or Trade Association Courses or Programs

- Mohawk College will reimburse 50 % of tuition for each course successfully completed to a lifetime maximum of \$10,500.

7.3 Tuition Reimbursement

Two financial options are available for staff participating in the Education Assistance Program. Reimbursement can be either lump sum reimbursement upon successful completion of the course or an interest free loan from the College repaid via payroll deduction.

- **Lump Sum Reimbursement**

Upon successful completion of the course or program, the College will reimburse the employee 50 % of the tuition allowable (considering the lifetime maximums). Please see Attachment B for the procedure and APPLICATION FOR STAFF TUITION ASSISTANCE FROM.

- **Interest Free Loan – Tuition Payroll Deduction Program**

Staff can apply to receive an interest free loan for full tuition amount (excludes ancillary fees, books or materials). The employee will be required to repay the loan through payroll deduction over a 4 month period (8 bi-weekly or semi-monthly pay periods). Payment of the tuition fees will be made by the College directly to the educational institute. The employee cannot have more than 2 tuition loans at the same time. This program will be administered in accordance with any government laws and/or regulations including those applicable to taxable benefits under the *Income Tax Act*. Please see Attachment B and the Application for Staff Tuition Assistance Form along with Promissory Note Application Form.

8. Mohawk College Funded Credit Courses – Tuition Fee Reduction

Mohawk College Employees are provided with an opportunity to participate in Mohawk College funded credit courses at a reduced cost as outlined below:

- **\$20 per Seat Fee**

All actively employed full time and part time Mohawk College employees and partial load and sessional and Continuing Education Faculty are eligible for the \$20 per seat fee. The tuition fee excludes any ancillary fees or course material fees.

- **50 % Seat Fee Reduction**

All Mohawk College Retirees are eligible for the 50% seat fee reduction. Ancillary fees and course material fees are not discounted.

Note: Tuition Fee reduction is not available to those employees whose primary relationship with the College is that of a full-time student.

9. Professional Development Leave

9.1 Academic

Full time Academic members who have been members of the bargaining unit for a period of 6 years or more are eligible. Leaves are normally for a period between one to twelve months. Please refer to the Academic Employees Collective Agreement.

9.2 Support Staff:

Full time members of the Support Staff bargaining unit of the College who have completed six years of service with the College are eligible. Leaves are normally for a period between one to twelve months. Please refer to the Support Staff Collective Agreement.

9.3 Administrative Staff:

Full time Administrative staff who have completed six years of service with the College are eligible. Please refer to the Terms & Conditions of Employment Administrative Staff.

9.4 Application

The Professional Development Leave Application Form is available on MyMohawk on the Human Resources Tab under Professional Development.

10. Internal Secondment

Full time employees interested in an internal secondment opportunity should discuss their interest with their manager at the time of an annual Development and Performance Management review. Where a vacancy is advertised internally for a specified period of time and an eligible employee is selected as a preferred applicant, the employee may be seconded from their current position for the duration of the vacancy. Professional development internal secondments activities must align with the College's strategic priorities, the goals within the Academic plan and Student success.

11. Responsibilities

11.1 Management Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of managers to:

- Review and monitor College strategic plans and priorities annually as part of the planning and budgeting process and to cascade strategic plans to operational plans which form the starting point for the individual Development and Performance Management plans.

- Dedicate the time, resources and directions for the Development and Performance Management Planning process. Consult with and coach their staff with respect to the available means of staff development and their particular developmental needs. Recognising any specific difficulties concerning the provision of time and resources for general staff development, it is recommended that through the annual budget process, departments and service areas allocate 1.5 % of their general staff salary budgets, in addition to notional costs of time, to general employee development.
- Prioritize professional development activities, combining individual needs with other College, divisional or department PD needs (i.e.: health and safety training, technology change, legislative changes) to produce an overall annual PD plan and identify funding necessary for each department/school as an input to the annual Budget planning process. It is recognized that plans need to retain some flexibility for PD needs identified during the fiscal year.
- Within that context, approve fair and equitable resource support of employees' professional development (both time and funding). All professional development must be aligned with the College's strategic priorities, the Academic plan and/or contribute to Student success.
- Ensure transparency regarding desired outcomes and a plan for learning application to build competencies required to perform the employee's current job.
- Ensure all new employees receive position-specific and College orientation and training required for the work the new employee will undertake.
- Provide employees with paid professional development days in accordance with collective agreement provisions.

11.2 Employee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the employee to:

- 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 or leave.
- Participate in training and development activity deemed essential by the College (e.g.: WHMIS).
- Attend 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.

11.3 Human Resources Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Human Resources to:

- Advise and assist employees with their individual learning plans as requested. This service is generally provided by Human Resources Consultants or Organizational and Professional Development.
- Advise and assist managers in their role in employee professional development.

11.4 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. It is expected that these programs will be in collaboration with the functional departments in the College.
- Provide seminars, workshops, e-learning and other development activities that address the shared learning needs at little or no cost to schools and departments.
- Administer a budget for HR sponsored professional development initiative.
- Partner with other areas of the College that provide training to help with design, development and delivery or to promote the training offered by other areas.
- Provide a centralized source of information for employees about PD available within the College.

11.5 Centre for Teaching and Learning

- Responsibility for administering faculty development programs and support with respect to teaching excellence rests primarily with the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
- In partnership with CTL, Schools are encouraged to develop customized, specific programs for their own disciplines.
- Administer guidance, support and training for faculty in pursuit of sustained teaching excellence and offer diverse pathways for professional growth.
- Support faculty members in the development of Professional Portfolios which cover teaching, research and engagement activities.

11.6 Employment Stability Committees

- Responsible for discussing and agreeing to training and development strategies, and use of funds related to employment stability, including internal secondment opportunities.

12. Policy Revision Date

12.1 Revision Date

January 2019

12.2 Responsibility

The Chief Human Resources Officer will review this policy every three years or earlier when required.

13. Specific Links

Support Staff Collective Agreement

Academic Employees Collective Agreement

Terms and Conditions of Employment for Administrative Staff

Application for Staff Tuition Assistance

Interest Free Loan Application and Promissory Note for Loan Re-Payment

Professional Development Leave Application