

Professional Development Fund Guidelines

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1. **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 The University supports the professional development of academic and professional staff and will administer Professional Development Funds in pursuit of this aim.
- 1.2 Professional Development funds are accounts established by the University to be used for staff professional development; that is, to improve, develop and update knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies in research, teaching, community engagement and administration where the outputs from these improvements and developments benefit the individual and advance the strategic priorities of the University.
- 1.3 Professional Development Funds must be used for activities directly related to a staff member's duties in the University.
- 1.4 The University retains ownership of all Professional Development Funds and assets purchased with those funds unless agreed otherwise by the Vice Chancellor.

2. **APPLICATION**

- 2.1 These guidelines apply to academic staff (level A to E inclusive) and other staff as determined in section 2.2 who are employed in a full- or part-time continuing or fixed-term contract of at least one year's duration.
- 2.2 At the discretion of the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate, Professional Development Funds may be allocated to professional and senior staff and/or as part of contractual arrangements in the recruitment of new staff. In the recruitment of new staff, the transfer of professional development funds into the University and treatment of those funds will be in accordance with these guidelines, unless the staff member's employment agreement specifies otherwise. The employment agreement must specify the conditions or arrangements for the use of the funds where they differ from these guidelines. Approval by the Vice Chancellor is required where the ownership of funds is negotiated as part of contractual arrangements (refer 1.4 above).

2.3 These guidelines apply across the University. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture may vary these guidelines. Any variations must be clearly documented.

3. FUNDING SOURCES AND OWNERSHIP

3.1 The University or a staff member may transfer different types of funding into Professional Development Funds to provide the staff member with financial support to maintain and develop their professional skills, knowledge and expertise.

3.2 Subject to 3.3 below, funding that may be transferred into Professional Development Funds includes:

- Unit, Institute or Portfolio allocation of specific professional development funds
- University Supported Researcher Scheme funds
- University Teaching Awards
- Professional Experience Program funds
- Vice Chancellor's Awards for Excellence
- Early Career Researcher (ECR) awards
- awards for research and excellence
- allocated funds for University programs for ECRs and Research Leaders
- incentive schemes (e.g. rewards for quality publications)
- surpluses from University consultancies and contract research
- income from offshore teaching above load
- marking payments
- awards from external bodies as a result of University activities
- other funds as approved by the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture.

3.3 Funds from activities such as offshore teaching above load and marking payments referred to in 3.2 above are assessable as income for taxation purposes. A staff member may sacrifice this income in return for other benefits such as professional development. In order to sacrifice this income and that it not be assessed for income tax purposes, a choice must be made by a staff member before the amount is earned. To be eligible to transfer income from these activities into Professional Development Funds, a written agreement must be in place between the staff member and the University prior to the commencement of work. A template is set out in Appendix A and is to be used to record the written agreement.

3.4 Internal and external research grant income is not related to professional development and may not be paid into Professional Development Funds.

3.5 Professional Development Funds are owned and controlled by the University unless negotiated otherwise with the Vice Chancellor or specified nominee as part of contractual employment arrangements.

4. ACTIVITIES AND EXPENSES

4.1 Professional Development Funds must be used only for activities directly related to a staff member's own professional development and expenses incurred in:

- research
- teaching

- community engagement
 - administration
 - professional development activities as set out in the staff member's performance plan.
- 4.2 Activities undertaken and expenses incurred within the activities specified in 4.1 above must be consistent with University strategic priorities.
- 4.3 Approval to undertake professional development activities and incur expenses associated with professional development activities must be obtained by a staff member before the activity or expenditure occurs. Approval of activities and expenditure shall be in accordance with the *Vice Chancellor's Authorisations Framework*.
- 4.4 Professional development activities and expenses may include reasonable:
- attendance at domestic and international conferences, including registration/conference fees, accommodation and food
 - travel, where the travel is for professional development in regard to teaching, research, community engagement or administration, including expenses such as airfares and car hire to reach conference venues
 - attendance at workshops, seminars, courses, exhibitions and other professional development activities to improve teaching and research
 - purchase of books, journals and subscriptions for development of research and teaching
 - membership of professional organisations for research, teaching, community and academic engagement or administration
 - purchase of IT hardware (e.g. computers, printers) and software to assist in teaching and research activities
 - assistance with developing skills for research, teaching, community engagement or administration (e.g. editorial assistance for writing)
 - research assistance with respect to carrying out research activities to derive research publications or other research outputs
 - support for research students' development through funding workshop and conference attendance
 - supplementation of funds provided for professional development (e.g. a staff member may supplement funds they have been awarded for Professional Experience Program leave).

Other professional development activities and expenses may be approved at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor or specified nominee.

Any taxation incurred by the University in relation to activities and expenses referred to above will be deducted from the relevant Professional Development Fund.

- 4.5 Professional Development Funds must not be used for activities and expenses that:
- are not directly related to a staff member's own professional development
 - are not associated with the carrying out of duties and activities required of the staff member's position
 - are personal in nature
 - do not comply with approved expenses in other university policies, procedures and guidelines
 - are inconsistent with the Code of Ethical Conduct.

Activities and expenses for which Professional Development Funds must not be used include:

- marking of student work (such expenses would be met by Academic Units)
- employment of sessional/casual staff to teach or mark
- airline club membership
- upgrading of airline travel or hotels
- meals separate from conferences or workshops
- purchase of testing material, for example, for teaching (such expenses would be met by Academic Units)
- making overseas visits for teaching purposes
- travel (including car hire) for purposes other than in 4.4 above.

5. PERIOD TO EXPEND FUNDING

5.1 Funding Accumulated as at 30 April 2008

To assist with the implementation of these guidelines, staff members will have a period of up to three (3) years to acquit moneys in Professional Development Funds as at 30 April 2008. Pre-30 April 2008 money remaining as at 30 April 2011 will be transferred out of a staff member's Professional Development Fund and used for other purposes as determined by the Vice Chancellor and relevant Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate.

In very exceptional circumstances the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate may determine that some or all remaining monies will not be transferred out of a Professional Development Fund. In these circumstances there must be clear documentation to determine the time period to acquit monies and the reasons for not having been able to do so.

5.2 Funding Accumulated From 1 May 2008

All new moneys deposited into Professional Development Funds from 1 May 2008 onwards must be acquitted within three (3) calendar years from the date they are deposited. Moneys remaining after three (3) calendar years will be transferred out of a staff member's Professional Development Fund and used for other purposes as determined by the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate.

In very exceptional circumstances the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate may determine that some or all remaining monies will not be transferred out of a Professional Development Fund. In these circumstances there must be clear documentation to determine the time period to acquit monies and the reasons for not having been able to do so.

5.3 Unspent Funds on Leaving the Service of the University

Unless specified to the contrary in a contract of employment, any monies remaining in Professional Development Funds at the time a staff member ceases to be employed by the University remain the property of the University.

6. TAXATION

Operation of Professional Development Funds should not result in Fringe Benefit Tax liabilities, but if a liability is incurred it will be deducted from the relevant Professional Development Fund in accordance with Vice Chancellor Authorisations relating to taxation payments.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES AND/OR AUTHORITIES

Responsibility for the application of these guidelines rests with the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise/Chief Academic Officer/Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture as appropriate.

8. CROSS REFERENCES

- Code of Ethical Conduct
- Research and Consultancy Guidelines (under review)
- Intellectual Property: Ownership & Management Policy
- Professional Experience Program Policy (HR – 9)
- University Travel Procedures
- Credit Card Policy and Handbook
- Offshore Teaching Remuneration Guidelines

Approved: April 2008

Amended: February 2020

Professional Development Fund Sacrifice Agreement

I agree that should I become entitled to income from offshore teaching above load and marking payments, the amounts will be transferred to a Professional Development Fund which is to be used for professional development activities in accordance with the Professional Development Fund Guidelines as varied by the University from time to time.

Limitation on amount (delete if not applicable)

I further agree that the maximum amount subject to this Agreement shall be \$ _____ per calendar year.

I understand:

- this agreement only applies to future activities I undertake after the date of this agreement.
- this agreement is subject to the final discretion of the University and remains in place until withdrawn by me or the University in writing.
- amounts sacrificed under this agreement are not payable to me during or on cessation of my employment or this Agreement.

Signed

Signed

----- Staff Member

----- Executive
Dean/Director: Research Institute or
Central Unit

----- Date

----- Date

