



# Professional Development Policy

Policy Area: Human Resources

Approval: Executive Principal

Signature:

Date:

## 1. OVERVIEW

Professional development of staff builds organisational capability and supports the achievement of Sheridan's strategic objectives in education and research.

The purpose of this Policy is to guide executive decisions regarding the professional development of staff employed by Sheridan to ensure alignment with Sheridan's strategic objectives.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Initial approval of policy and later amendments:	Board of Directors
Amendment of procedures consistent with the policy:	Executive Principal
Distribution of policy:	Executive Principal, Academic Principal
Implementation of policy:	Executive Principal
Monitoring and compliance of policy:	Academic Council
Evaluation and recommendations for amendments:	Executive Principal, Academic Principal, Academic Council, Faculty

## 3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all academic and general staff at Sheridan.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

Sheridan's professional development activities will be governed by the following principles:

- The executive will identify the key areas for professional development to meet Sheridan's strategic objectives in teaching and learning, scholarship and research.
- Within the context of Sheridan's strategic objectives, professional development will assist academic and general staff to meet the professional, legislative and occupational responsibilities of their employment, including:
  - engagement in scholarship and active in research (as defined by the 2015 Higher Education Standards Framework);
  - advancement of staff capabilities in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL), research and subject content knowledge; and
  - facilitation of career development, building change capability and developing leadership potential.
- Staff members will be provided with fair, balanced and constructive evaluation of progress in their roles, identify potential areas for professional development and be provided access to relevant professional development activities.
- Sheridan will promote values that contribute to staff participation in their performance improvement and influence their own development.

- Professional development activities will be designed to promote role effectiveness and satisfaction. Staff achievement is to be celebrated and will be held in high regard.
- The effectiveness of professional development activities shall be measured against indicators linked to Sheridan's strategic objectives.
- An annual budgetary allocation amounting to at least 5% of tuition income must be set aside for professional development. However, funding of individual activities should not be regarded as an automatic entitlement.
- Professional development activities shall be reported annually to the Academic Council and the Board of Directors.

## 5. FORMS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Examples of professional development include, but are not limited to:

### Internal professional development

An internal professional learning program will be offered to academic staff each year based on the strategic Sheridan Quality Teaching, Learning and Research Focus Areas. Casual academic staff will be paid to attend internal professional development days.

Some professional development opportunities are provided automatically via Sheridan, and staff members are simply informed that they qualify for such opportunities. In such instances, no formal application for PD funding is required. Examples of this might include research methodology, scholarship of teaching and learning or the use of new computer software or technology used at Sheridan.

### External professional development

This award would be offered to individuals to improve their professional capabilities. Funds may be used to attend seminars to foster pedagogical excellence and the enhancement of teaching competency. It is expected that the seminars would be facilitated by a local tertiary education expert. Sheridan will detail the scope and cost of the seminar as well as the qualifications of the facilitator.

Seminars could focus on pedagogical, androgogical and professional skills such as the following:

- assessment methods, setting examination papers, examining research
- actively engaging students
- students as learners
- ESL learners
- research-informed teaching
- learning in relation to workforce preparation
- student evaluations
- teaching in flexible (including distance) mode
- teaching in the light of the Sheridan's educational philosophy and quality teaching and learning priority areas
- induction of new faculty research supervisors, faculty reviews and career pathways
- use of IT and educational technology in the classroom,
- supervision of research candidates
- field work supervision
- negotiating ethics protocols for research students
- disciplinary content
- course development
- student support services and wellbeing
- relevant legislation, including but not limited to ESOS, HESF, WHS, and SASH legislation.

### Study leave support

These funds are designed for people with limited exposure to overseas contexts and whose circumstances might make it difficult to meet the expenses. It would favour staff in early stages of their careers, mostly for their first period of leave. The grant could also meet the cost of later leave periods.

Criteria for award would be based on the professional development benefits of the study leave, rather than necessarily a research project.

### Visiting fellowships

Visiting scholars are an important source of stimulation and often under-used. The incidence of visitors can be a measure of the vibrancy of scholarship in an organisation. Funds can be set aside to encourage and support visitors. Such visitors should be people of standing and able to make an appropriate contribution to the academic development of Sheridan.

Sheridan is encouraged to cooperate with other institutions in the funding and hosting of visiting scholars. The visitor must be demonstrably making a direct and substantial contribution to the Sheridan by way of teaching, joint research, research supervision, professional development of staff. The funds are not to be made available for someone simply using Sheridan as a base to conduct research in or visit Australia.

## 6. REPORTING

Professional development activities undertaken by the staff of Sheridan will be reported annually by the Teaching and Learning Committee to the Academic Council and Board of Directors.

## 7. GUIDELINES FOR USE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

To ensure transparency and fairness, the following specific guidelines are provided on the use of PD funds.

1. The guiding principle of the Professional Development Fund is that it exists to assist staff members to develop in such a way that they are more able to help Sheridan fulfil its vision, mission and goals.
2. Those employed at Sheridan on a 0.4 FTE basis or greater have a higher priority in the allocation of funds, though at its discretion, the Academic and/or Executive Principal might approve the allocation of funds for casual staff members or those employed less than 0.4 FTE.
3. Members of the academic staff on sabbatical leave are given priority in the allocation of funds. This is to enable them to meet the relevant travel, registration and accommodation costs linked to the approved goals of their sabbatical leave.
4. While staff members are encouraged to attend conferences, preference is given where the staff member is an active conference participant (for example, via presenting a paper).
5. Faculty members should seek the support of the Dean of their department for the proposed professional development activity.
6. The benefit to Sheridan of the event should be demonstrated before funding is approved. For example, a member of the academic staff might be able to point to a paper that is likely to be published as a result of conference participation, while a member of the general staff might be able to point to a skill that will be gained that will enhance their work at Sheridan. Other recognised benefits could include the improved profile given to Sheridan, the forming of strategic relationships, or the motivation provided to staff through associating with peers. The enrichment of members of its staff is also of benefit to Sheridan.

7. As funding for professional development might be contested (there being insufficient funds to meet all proposals), the Academic and/or Executive Principal is to prioritise the strategic value of each proposal.
8. To assist the Academic and/or Executive Principal in this task, proposals should be submitted a minimum of one month before the proposed professional development activity, and earlier where possible..
9. All staff members are encouraged to be proactive in their professional development. Each staff member's annual review will include a discussion of possible PD opportunities that the staff member could apply for.
10. Though this document focuses on funding professional development opportunities, the Academic and/or Executive Principal might also grant assistance towards professional development via non-monetary means (for example, by approving time off during work hours to attend workshops).
11. Applications for amounts up to \$250 can be approved by the Executive Principal on the recommendation of the applicant's Dean or the Academic Principal.
12. Where a staff member believes the management team has treated their PD application unfairly, they have a right to appeal to the Chair of the Sheridan Board of Directors.
13. Where the Executive Principal applies for professional development funding, approval is given by the Board of Directors.
14. Participants in professional development activities will be expected to report back to their relevant supervisor and/or colleagues to disseminate the content of their learning.
15. Retrospective applications for professional development funding (ie applications received after the professional development activity) will not be considered by the administration.

## 8. APPENDIX: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

<b>Document Title:</b>	Professional Development Policy
<b>Source Documents:</b>	<i>Adapted with permission from:</i> Vose Seminary Professional Development Policy
<b>Associated Internal Documents:</b>	Governance Manual 2021 - 2025 Strategic Plan and Business Plan Teaching and Learning Plan Staff Handbook Sheridan Quality Teaching, Learning and Research Focus Areas
<b>Associated External Documents</b>	TEQSA Guidance Note on Scholarship Higher Education Standards Framework, 2015
<b>Authorised Officer:</b>	Executive Principal
<b>Approved by:</b>	Mr Darren Smith
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	24 August 2020
<b>Next Review Before:</b>	Aug 2023

## Professional Development Policy

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Version Date</b>	<b>Authorised Officer</b>	<b>Amendment Details</b>
0.01	30 May 2011	N/A	Draft prepared for Sheridan College and Vose College of Higher Education
0.02	29 Jan 2013	N/A	Revised by Sheridan College Board subcommittee for Sheridan College Board of Directors
1.00	02 Mar 2013	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Submitted to TEQSA for Sheridan College HEP registration: Attachment 7.2b Professional Development Policy
2.00	23 Aug 2018	Executive Principal	Section 4: Reference to "National Protocols" updated to "2015 Higher Education Standards Framework"
2.01	24 Aug 2020	Executive Principal	Revised by Academic Council; Changed Sheridan College to Sheridan Institute of Higher Education; add details of internal professional development
2.03	4 Nov 2020	Executive Principal	Revised and simplified for Board of Directors.
2.04	7 Dec 2020	Executive Principal	Minor edits following advice from Board of Directors.