

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROCEDURE

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

Functional Category:	Human Resources
Parent Policy:	Employee Development Policy
Approval Date:	November 1, 2018
Effective Date:	November 1, 2018
Procedure Owner:	Executive Director, Workforce Development and Human Resources (WDHR)
Procedure Administrator:	Manager, College Learning Teaching and Development (CLTD)

Overview:

NorQuest College (college) supports the development of its employees' knowledge and expertise to ensure that our programs and services are high quality, relevant and applied. We support employee development through:

- internally provided leadership, management, faculty, and staff development programs,
- externally provided courses, workshops, seminars, and programs,
- attendance at conferences to deliver content or participate
- financial support for coursework, and
- college courses and programs.

This procedure focuses on guidelines and processes for all Professional Development at NorQuest College, excluding Graduate Studies and Tuition Waiver. This includes:

- work time to participate in professional development,
- professional development with department funding,
- and professional development that is fully or partially funded through the College Wide Employee Development Fund (CWEDF).

Authority to establish this procedure is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governor's Policy No. 5](#), which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

Procedures:

College employees seeking professional development support for learning activities, with or without financial implications, will seek approval through the application and process outlined in this procedure. Financial support for costs associated with obtaining professional development will be subject to the eligibility, conditions, and other requirements set out below.

Eligibility

- Permanent and Term employees are welcome to apply for professional development (PD) support.
- All professional development engaged in as an employee at NorQuest College is subject to the procedures under the Employee Development Policy. If you require time to attend the event and/or are seeking financial support a PD application form, pre-approval and proper records management is required.

- Where full funding is not available through the department or division, employees who have served six consecutive months are eligible to apply for additional funding support through the College Wide Employee Development Fund (CWEDF).
- Funding through the CWEDF may be approved for costs associated with course tuition and/or registration fees for workshops, seminars and conferences. Requests for funding related to travel for PD are to be made to the employee's respective department or other funding sources.
- For employees engaged in certificate, diploma, degree and other similar programs, funding requests for tuition will be considered for individual courses, rather than the entire program.
- The Professional Development Committee will review PD applications seeking financial support from the CWEDF during one of the designated review periods. The completion date of the specific PD learning activity will determine in which review period the application is eligible for review.
- All PD activities with travel outside of the province require a signed Travel Authorization form to accompany the application.

Conditions

Employees of the college may request and obtain support for professional development, subject to the following general conditions:

- All applications for PD support (financial, travel, and/or work time), must be submitted in advance for pre-approval.
- The learning activity must be applicable to the applicant's employment, development plan, and/or initiatives of the college.
- Requests for financial support must first be considered by a department or division.
- CWEDF may cover the types of expenses listed below. This list also indicates the priority of decision making when the available funds are over-subscribed.
 - Tuition only toward successfully completed (passing grade) undergraduate credit courses.
 - Tuition only toward successfully completed (passing grade) noncredit courses.
 - Registration fees for workshops or seminars.
 - Registration fees for conferences where the employee has been accepted to present.
 - Registration fees for conferences where the employee is attending.
- A maximum of \$2500 may be disbursed to any one employee from the CWEDF in a fiscal year.
- Financial support of \$2500.00 or more may require a Return Service Agreement (RSA), as described in the next section of this procedure.
- Applications will be processed based on funds available and using established rating criteria. As a result, the total amount requested may not be fully funded.
- Reimbursement for approved funding from the CWEDF occurs after the successful completion of the course(s), workshop or conference.
- The college will contribute annually to the CWEDF. The annual CWEDF amount will be prorated for disbursement over at least four review periods each year. If the funds from one review period are not completely used, they will be rolled over for use in the following review period. Unallocated PD funds will not be carried

forward to the next fiscal year.

- In exceptional circumstances, the Procedure Administrator may waive certain criteria with the support of the Procedure Owner.

Return Service Agreements (RSA)

The following information outlines the conditions that will determine if a RSA is required, the duration of the RSA and the effective date. A link to the Return Service Agreement Template is provided at the end of this procedure.

A RSA is required when

- Professional Development is initiated by the employee to enhance their skill set, credentials and/or professional credibility, and the learning event is fully or partially funded by the college, through department and/or college wide funds given the thresholds indicated below.

Type of PD Learning Event	RSA Requirement
Courses (Graduate, credit, non-credit)	Over \$2500 funded per semester
Conferences, Workshops, Seminars	Over \$5000 per learning event

A RSA is NOT required for

- Professional Development where the college requests or requires the employee to attend a learning event in order to enhance skills and knowledge, for the employee or for the department/division, or to represent the college, and the total amount funded is under \$5000.

A RSA MAY be required if

- the college requests and requires the employee to attend a PD event, and the total amount funded is over \$5000. To determine if a RSA is required, a decision will be made in consultation with the respective signing authority and the procedure administrator.

If a RSA is required, the following guide will be used to determine the **duration** of the RSA.

Total Amount Funded (per semester/learning event)	Duration of RSA
Over \$5000.00	~18 months or more, depending on amounts
\$3500.00 – \$5000.00	12 months
\$2500.00 - \$3499.99	6 months

- The requirement for a RSA will be determined based on the total value of the funding provided from both the department and the CWEDF, per semester (for courses) or for each discrete workshop/seminar/conference.
- When an employee receives new PD funding which requires a RSA and has an active RSA in place, the agreements will run concurrently.
- RSA effective dates begin upon completion of the learning event, or the date of reimbursement, whichever is the latter.
- The procedure administrator and the procedure owner will jointly determine the duration of any RSA over \$5000.

Submitting Requests for Professional Development Support

Actions – Requesting Department Support Only:

- The employee fills out the [Application for Professional Development Support form](#) and submits it to their supervisor for each PD support request for time to attend or for department only funding. If travel out of the province is required, the employee also fills out the Travel Authorization form and attaches it to the application. If the funding request requires a RSA, attach the RSA agreement to the application.
- The supervisor will:
 - verify the eligibility of the request, determine department capacity to provide the support requested, ensure accuracy of budget information, and approve by providing appropriate signature;
 - determine if a RSA is required, and if it is required, discuss the RSA with the employee, and ensure the RSA is attached to application;
 - if a RSA may be required, connect with the procedure administrator for consultation (see the Return Service Agreements section of this procedure);
 - review and sign the Travel Authorization form, if required;
 - and submit the application package to the appropriate Signing Authority for signature.
- For reimbursement, the expense report and receipts are to be submitted to Finance, along with the Travel Authorization form if it is required.
- If a Return Service Agreement is required, submit the original copy of the PD application, along with the signed RSA to the procedure administrator for final signature and filing (see the RSA Template link attached at the end of this procedure).
- If a RSA is not required, submit the original copy of the PD Application to Employee Services for filing and records management.
- The employee is encouraged to retain a copy of the application and RSA for their personal records.

Actions – Requesting Department and/or CWEDF Support:

- The employee determines with the supervisor the funds available at the department level before proceeding with the application for CWEDF support. If travel out of the province is required, the employee also fills out the Travel Authorization form and attaches it to the application. If the funding request requires a RSA, attach the RSA agreement to the application.
- The employee fills out the [Application for Professional Development Support form](#). The additional sections relating to the request for CWEDF funding support will need to be completed. In addition, the following information is to be included with the funding application.
 - For courses, provide a copy of the tuition fee assessment/schedule, description of the course, program description, a personalized program plan (if course is part of a certificate, diploma or degree program), and invoice and/or receipt.
 - For workshops and conferences, provide copies of the

registration fee assessment, description of the learning event (from website or brochure), and available invoices/receipts.

- The employee submits the application to the supervisor, who verifies eligibility of the request, including any amounts that are to be covered by the department.
- The supervisor completes the sections on the application form designated for supervisor input, ensures any department budget information is correct, and provides the appropriate signature. If a Travel Authorization form is required, it will need to be signed. The supervisor submits the application package to the required Signing Authority for signature.
- The employee is responsible for ensuring the application package is completed, signed, and submitted to the Professional Development Committee, as indicated on the application form, by the submission deadline for the review period.
- After the funding application is officially reviewed by the PD Committee, the employee will receive written notification indicating the rating of the application, if the application was pre-approved/approved, the eligible amounts from the CWEDF, and instructions on how to complete the reimbursement process.

Review Process for CWEDF Funding Support:

- The Professional Development Committee will be convened at least four times per year.
- The members of the Committee will review each application using the respective rating scale by the designated review date.
- The PD Committee will determine the approved funding amounts based on the eligibility of the application, the rating of the application, and the available funds to distribute for that designated review period.
 - If there are insufficient funds to support all eligible funding requests, decisions will be made based on the priority list provided in the Conditions section of this procedure.
- The PD Committee Chair will inform each applicant in writing of the status of their application no later than 7 business days after the PD Committee has reviewed the application.

Reimbursement Process from CWEDF

- After successful completion of the learning activity, the employee will initiate the reimbursement process and
 - ensure department funding commitments are paid in full
 - initiate an Expense Report in PeopleSoft
 - create a hard copy of the expense report for the signature of the Manager, College Learning, Teaching and Development (CLTD).
- After the Expense Report has been submitted in PeopleSoft, the employee will connect with the Manager CLTD for
 - the submission of final grades (required for courses)
 - submission of any outstanding receipts
 - the signing of the Return Service Agreement, if applicable
 - final signature of the Expense Report
- The expense report, receipts and other required documents will then be ready to be submitted to Finance for processing.
- The Manager, CLTD submits the original copy of the application package, along with the RSA to Employee Services for filing.

Definitions:	<p>Employee: includes a person who is engaged by NorQuest College to perform a service in accordance with existing terms and conditions of employment, employment contracts or collective agreements.</p> <p>Fee Assessment or Fee Schedule: is a complete listing of the various fees that make up the total cost of a course, workshop or conference. Some post-secondary institutions refer to the fee schedule as a tuition schedule or tuition break-down.</p> <p>Personalized Program Plan: is a complete list of all of the courses and requirements for a given degree, diploma or certificate, the status of each course/requirement (completed or in progress), and the anticipated date/term of completion for outstanding activities. Final grades, sources of funding and tuition costs are optional items that may be included in a personalized program plan.</p> <p>Return Service Agreement: is a written agreement between the employee and employer. It specifies the length of service required by the employee in response to the financial commitment provided by the employer. It also stipulates the required repayment of funds if the length of service requirement is not provided.</p> <p>Tuition Fees: Those fees specified in section 2 of the <i>Public Post-Secondary Institutions' Tuition Fees Regulation</i>.</p>
Related Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Development Policy • Signing Authority Policy • Travel and Related Expenses Procedure • Public Post-secondary Institutions' Tuition Fees Regulation
Related Documentation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for Professional Development Support form • Professional Development Funding Rating Criteria form • Return Service Agreement template • Travel Authorization Form
Next Review Date:	June 2021
Revision History:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. September 2014: New (replaces Employee Development Tuition Reimbursement Procedure) 2. August 2018: New (replaces Professional Development Funding Request Procedure), revisions, and update to document links 3. October 2018: Revisions to RSA information and wording updates