





**Murrumbidgee**  
COUNCIL

# Staff Education and Training Policy

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## **Purpose**

Murrumbidgee Council recognises that staff development is an important part of the working life of each staff member. It is associated with the development needs of the individual and of teams and the achievement of Council's overall strategy.

Council recognises that the calibre and competence of its employees are vital factors in ensuring that it remains a successful organisation. To this end, Council strives to promote employee development through high quality training and learning opportunities both on and off the job.

This Policy sets out what may be offered in terms of support from the Council and what is expected from employees.

## **Scope**

This Policy does not apply to senior staff employees of Council as defined in the Local Government Act 1993. This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

## **Definitions**

*Training and education to meet position description* - is training that Council designates to be necessary requirement of employment. Employees who participate in this training shall not lose ordinary pay. Training and education to meet position description may have to satisfy statutory or Council determined requirements.

## **Policy Statement**

Council recognises that increasing the organisation's efficiency and productivity requires an ongoing commitment to education, training and skill maintenance, development and enhancement. Therefore, Council is committed to:

- Developing a more highly skilled and flexible workforce.
- Providing employees with opportunities through appropriate education and training to acquire additional skills.
- Removing barriers to the utilisation of skills in accordance with Council's training plans.

**NOTE:** this policy must be read in conjunction with Council's Annual Training Plan.

## **Development of the Annual Training Plan**

Council shall design an annual training plan in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award requirements. The training plan is to be based on:

- The current and future skill requirements of the Council.
- The size, structure and nature of the operations of the Council.
- The need to develop vocational skills relevant to Council and the local government industry in general through the utilisation of available internal and external resources.

The training plan shall, where appropriate, provide for training that is consistent with industry specific competency standards. The training plan shall be consistent in identifying the needs of the organisation, and having regard to Council's Workforce Plan.

Participants will receive training in accordance with Council's training plan based and the needs of Council and the employee as identified in the employee's annual performance review or as an outcome of workplace assessment of competency.

Employees may make application for consideration to attend training courses on the Training/Conference Request Form.

## **Education and training will be in the following four categories:**

1. Training and education to meet position description
2. Training that adds value to the individual and organisation
3. Training and education that adds to the value and/or health and wellbeing of the individual
4. Conferences and Professional Development

### **1. Training and education to meet Position Description**

Where the position you hold has a position description that requires you to obtain a certain competency or qualification council will:

- Pay 100% of the tuition of a commonwealth supported programme
- Pay 100% of the tuition even if not commonwealth supported providing there is not equivalent programme which is commonwealth supported, if so 60% of the tuition will be supported.

However If there is an equivalent commonwealth supported programme offered by an institution that adds unreasonable additional costs, in both time and money, these will

be taken into consideration in determining what the percentage of the tuition will be paid.

Council will:

- Provide 152 hour per annum of paid study time leave during ordinary hours in which to complete.
- Reimburse 100% of all stationary and study material (Inc. of textbooks)
- Pay for all travel and accommodation. Travel being the most efficient method of time (taken from study hours), accommodation no less than 3 stars within 2 km of the venue. If an individual desires to take a less efficient travel method, or stay in an alternative accommodation being outside the 2 km or lessor or higher star rating than what council offers, the employee will be responsible for travel costs to and from accommodation and venue, and will be reimbursed an amount equivalent to the travel and accommodation costs Council would provide.

## **2. Training that adds value to the individual and organisation**

Where the individual has decided to undertake further competencies or qualifications council will:

- Pay the equivalent of 50% of the tuition of a commonwealth supported programmes.
- Provide 38 hours of paid study leave allotted during ordinary hours
- Reimburse 50% of all stationary and study material (Inc. of textbooks)

Where there is no equivalent programme offered as a commonwealth supported programme, council will find the closest match within the field of education.

There will be no payment or reimbursement for travel and/or accommodation.

## **3. Training, education and pursuit that adds to the value and/or health and wellbeing of the individual**

Where the individual has decided to undertake a pursuit which has been determined by Council that only adds value to the individual prospects of employment outside of Council or provides for the health and wellbeing of the individual council will:

- Pay 25% of the cost up to a maximum of \$125 per calendar year

There will be no allocation of study leave or reimbursement for travel, accommodation or other expenses.

These pursuits are limited only to legal pursuits for example gym membership, dance aerobics, small motor mechanic or artistic classes

#### **4. Conferences and professional development**

Where as part of professional membership you must complete professional development hours to maintain membership Council will support 75% of those hours per annum by:

- Paying 100% of all tuition, conference fees, travel, accommodation all within ordinary hours (without reducing any study leave) where professional development hours are obtained.

The individual must maximise the obtaining of professional development hours at events attended (i.e. attend prior and post conference workshops to maximise the travel dollars already spent)

Where a Conference is not linked to professional membership the individual may request to attend, at the General Managers or their delegates discretion. If the request is approved Council will:

- Pay 100% of all tuition, conference fees, travel, accommodation all within ordinary hours

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

The development of employees is a responsibility shared between individual employees, managers and the organisation. A shared commitment to learning and development is critical to ensure we meet our strategic objectives and foster a culture of career development for our employees.

##### **HR /IR Officer is responsible for:**

- Providing employees with appropriate learning and development solutions that are relevant to their positions.
- Promptly considering all learning and development requests.
- Ensuring equitable access for all employees.
- Measuring the effectiveness of programs to promote continuous improvement in our employees, providers and processes.
- Providing advice on learning and development opportunities.

##### **Managers are responsible for:**

- Developing individual learning and development plans for employees in the performance appraisal process on an annual basis.
- Demonstrating an ongoing commitment to supporting employees' learning and development.
- Providing resource solutions to allow employees to attend programs.
- Frequently reviewing and discussing employees' learning and development progress.
- Ensuring employees meet statutory and certification requirements.
- Reviewing competencies on a continual basis.
- In accordance with the delegations timely completion and approval of application forms.

**Employees are responsible for:**

- Completing a Training/Conference Request Form
- Assisting managers in identifying their learning and development needs
- Contributing to the development of their individual learning and development plan on an annual basis
- Attending and participating in allocated learning and development programs
- Providing a minimum 5 working days' notice to relevant managers and the HR /IR Officer for changes to attendance for scheduled programs
- Completing evaluating and/or feedback forms as required.

**Review**

This policy should be reviewed every 2 years. The policy may be reviewed and amended at any time at Council's discretion (or if legislative or State Government Policy changes occur).