

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### PURPOSE

The Shire of Quairading recognises the importance of having a skilled workforce that is competent and capable of responding to the needs and expectations of the community. The Shire of Quairading will endeavour to always appoint to its positions those persons who are best qualified and/or experienced to carry out the duties expected of the position and acknowledges that employees require ongoing training to meet these expectations.

### SCOPE

This Policy applies to all fulltime and parttime employees employed by the Shire of Quairading as well as apprentices and trainees. Not covered by this Policy are the Executive Management positions employed under contract, casual staff members, other employees contracted by the Shire of Quairading or employees on leave without pay.

The Policy covers external short courses (online or on location) and extends to tertiary or post graduate studies only in terms of provisions for study leave. Attendance at conferences is not covered by this Policy.

### POLICY

- (1) The Shire of Quairading will fund an annual training budget to provide regular opportunities for employees to upgrade and enhance their skills.

Training needs will be determined through a skills review at the end of an employee's probationary period including the creation of a Professional Development Plan. Professional Development Plans shall be reviewed at least every twelve months in conjunction with regular performance reviews, but employees are encouraged to seek out development opportunities that are immediately relevant to their role within the Shire of Quairading on an ad-hoc basis.

- (2) Employees are required to request written approval from their department's Executive Manager for any external professional development opportunity using the Employee Course Request Form.

- a. Costs stated in the Employee Course Request Form must be supported by written quotes.
- b. Approval will not be given retrospectively and must be attained before applying for any development opportunity with the provider or booking any accommodation.
- c. All reasonable costs associated with the attendance of an approved short course for the purpose of professional development will be covered by the Shire of Quairading.

- (3) Accommodation and Travel

- a. Where accommodation is required to attend a training opportunity, it is the employee's responsibility to determine the most reasonable option taking into account price and distance from training venue.
- b. Where an employee travels to and from the training venue or accommodation using their own vehicle, the Shire of Quairading will reimburse for kilometres travelled using

the “Cents per Kilometre Method” with the rate being regularly reviewed by the Australian Taxation Office.

- c. Cost for public transport to and from the training venue or the accommodation will be reimbursed as it is incurred.
- d. Where food is not provided, the Shire of Quairading will reimburse the employee for reasonably incurred costs upon presentation of receipts.

#### (4) Attendance

- a. Employees approved to attend short courses as part of their professional development will do so during work time.
- b. If attendance is required on a day when the employee would normally be taking a “Roster Day Off” (RDO), staff will accrue the time and may elect to have the time paid out at normal (single time) rates.
- c. Staff employed under a Hybrid Working From Home Agreement may attend online short courses from home.

#### (5) Responsibilities

- a. It is the Executive Manager’s responsibility to provide reasonable opportunity for professional development and to approve any request for training that is in line with an employee’s Professional Development Plan unless there is a legitimate reason to deny the request.
- b. It is the employee’s responsibility to attend training opportunities agreed upon during the skills review process and approved by the Executive Manager, and to provide the Human Resources department with documentation for the successful completion of any training undertaken as part of their professional development.
- c. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to keep as record any course completion documentation provided by an employee in accordance with the Shire of Quairading’s Record Keeping Policy and to provide the Executive Manager with relevant information for the review of the employees Professional Development Plan.

#### (6) Employees who

- a. fail to complete a training course successfully,
- b. abandon a training course prior to completion or
- c. do not attend training paid for and organised by the Shire of Quairading,
  - (i) either reimburse the Shire all monies paid for course fees, accommodation, travel and meals;
  - (ii) or repeat the training course at their own expense.

- (7) Employees who leave the Shires's employment for any reason other than Redundancy or Termination less than 12 months after completion of a training course funded by the Shire will be asked to repay 100% if less than 6 months, 75% if between 6 and 12 months of the
- a. course fees,
  - b. accommodation,
  - c. meals,
  - d. travel, and
  - e. wages
- paid by the Shire in relation to the employee's participation in that and any other training course within those timeframes.
- (8) Tertiary or Post Graduate Studies
- a. Fees  
Any employee entering into a Tertiary or Post Graduate Program that is not part of a training contract with the Shire of Quairading, will be entirely responsible for all associated course fees and other costs.
  - b. Time
    - (i) The Shire of Quairading will provide a full-time employee with time off with pay (Study Leave) of up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week.
    - (ii) If an employee is studying online, Study Leave will be granted equivalent to (8)b.(i) as if the employee is attending campus.
    - (iii) Part time employees will receive pro-rata Study Leave.
    - (iv) Approved Study Leave must be taken in the employee's usual hours of work, does not accrue from week to week and does not cover travel time.
  - c. Block Leave
    - (i) Courses requiring block participation instead of weekly attendance will receive an amount of leave based on a maximum of 5 hours of Study Leave per week (pro-rata for part time employees) over the course of the semester/trimester.
    - (ii) If the block participation period exceeds the amount of Study Leave allowed, employees will be required to take some other type of leave to make up the total absence.

## **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

*Local Government Act 1995*

*Equal Opportunity Act 1984*


*Workforce Plan 2018-2022*

*Strategic Community Plan 2021-2031*

*Customer Service Charter*

*Corporate Business Plan 2023-2027*

*Employment Contracts*

Record of Policy Review						
Version	Author	Council Adoption	Resolution	Reason for Review	Review Date	CEO Signature
01	Marion Haeusler	27/07/23	018-23/24	New Policy	Jul 2025	
02	Marion Haeusler	29/02/24	154-23/24	Policy Review	Feb 26	