



Professional Development Policy for Staff & Managers

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Approver(s):	Vice-President, Finance & Administration

1. Purpose

OCAD University (“OCAD U” or “the University”) is committed to supporting employee professional development opportunities that enhance the performance of both the individual and the University. Employee professional development is supported within the context of the University’s designated budget for these opportunities. The purpose of this policy is to:

- support employee development to ensure that employees maintain their acquired skills and job qualifications;
- provide opportunities for employees to add to and improve their skills to support future advancement with the University;
- promote shared accountability between the employee and the University for the employee’s professional development; and
- ensure fairness and equity in the application of employee professional development opportunities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent OPSEU Unit 1 staff, exempt staff, and administrative managers.

This policy is not intended to support professional memberships or conferences, which may be funded through departmental budgets, and does not cover personal development or personal interest courses.

3. Policy

DEFINITIONS:

Training Support: refers to funding of registration fees and other associated costs for training seminars or workshops in support of work-related goals.

Tuition Reimbursement Support: refers to reimbursement of the tuition portion of fees paid by employees to accredited institutions for work-related courses and/or OCAD U credit courses.

Work-related Courses: those courses that are relevant to the employee’s current role with the University or enhance the employee’s opportunities for future advancement within the University.

OCAD U Credit Courses: those courses offered as part of OCAD U’s undergraduate credit curriculum. These do not include Continuing Studies or non-credit courses.

The University will provide training or tuition reimbursement support by reimbursing an eligible employee up to 100% of tuition fees for the successful completion of courses in recognized and accredited institutions. Such professional development opportunities are normally identified in the employee's annual performance review and development plan. Employees are responsible for payment of any additional costs not covered by this policy, i.e. ancillary fees, books, materials and equipment costs, etc.

Where the University formally requires an employee to take a work-related course in order to update the employee's qualifications for the employee's current job, the total cost of such course shall be paid by the University. All other terms of this policy will apply.

The University will reimburse permanent full-time employees and/or their spouses or children for successful completion of a combined total of three (3) OCAD University undergraduate credit courses in one (1) fiscal year for credit, provided that classes do not interfere with the employee's work schedule. Normal academic and admissions requirements will apply.

Under this policy, all requests for professional development are to be submitted in advance of registration and must be supported by the employee's managerial supervisor.

Employees are normally expected to take courses outside their regular working hours. Where an employee is required to write an examination during work hours for a work-related course, the employee will be granted time off without loss of pay for this purpose.

4. Professional Development Committee for Staff & Managers

Requests for professional development will be reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the Professional Development Committee for Staff & Managers. The Committee will consist of:

- the Assistant Director, Human Resources or designate (Chair);
- two additional managers (not submitting personal requests for professional development that year).

In reviewing requests, the Committee shall consider the following criteria: relevance to employee's current work and organizational priorities; funds available; and funds allocated to the employee to date.

5. Procedure for Allocation of Professional Development Funds

1. In accordance with development goals formulated in the employee's performance review and development plan, an employee completes a professional development request form. Forms are available in the Human Resources office and on the OCAD U website.
2. A completed form, supported by the managerial supervisor, is submitted to Human Resources by May 1st for Professional Development requests for the following fiscal year.
3. The employee's request is forwarded to the Professional Development Committee for Staff & Managers for review and approval.
4. The employee is formally notified of the Committee's decision with respect to their request, and may proceed to register for the professional development opportunity.
5. With respect to training support, the employee submits a cheque requisition to Human Resources.
6. With respect to tuition reimbursement support, upon completion of a course, the employee submits proof of passing the course along with receipt of payment by no later than May 31st of the fiscal year in which the course was taken. Tuition reimbursement will be processed via separate cheque or added to the employee's pay depending on whether the course is deemed a taxable or a non-taxable benefit as defined by Revenue Canada.
7. OCAD U will not reimburse employees for courses not successfully completed.

Requests for professional development received after May 1st or those less than \$500, may be evaluated and considered by the Assistant Director, Human Resources or designate, contingent on remaining funds available.