

Professional Development

Number:	1.3.5
Responsible Executive:	President
Approval Authority:	Senior Leadership Team
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Category:	Administration

PURPOSE

Coquitlam College (the College) supports and encourages ongoing professional growth and learning opportunities for all employees. This policy outlines the principles and processes for professional development activities that enhance job performance, instructional quality, institutional effectiveness, and career advancement.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the College.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The College is committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and supporting employees in developing skills and knowledge that strengthen their individual performance and the overall effectiveness of the institution.
2. Professional development activities supported by the College must:
 - a. Align with the College's strategic and operational priorities;
 - b. Improve subject matter expertise, pedagogy, educational administration, or institutional operations;
 - c. Advance the employee's current role or potential career progression within the College; and
 - d. Contribute to the College's academic or administrative excellence.
3. Employees are encouraged to engage in opportunities for learning and collaboration, both internally and externally.
4. All employees will have equitable access to PD opportunities, subject to eligibility, available resources, and operational requirements.
5. The College reserves the right to limit the number of concurrent education leaves or the level of funding support based on institutional priorities and budget availability.
6. All professional development activities requiring funding support must be approved in advance through established processes.
7. Professional development must not reduce or replace required instructional hours or job duties. Instructors attending PD activities during scheduled class times are responsible for making appropriate arrangements to ensure instructional hours are maintained within the same academic semester.
8. Employees are accountable for attending approved PD activities, submitting required documentation, and sharing learning outcomes where appropriate.

PROCEDURES

Eligibility and Funding

9. Eligible professional development (PD) activities may include:
 - a. Conferences, workshops, or seminars;
 - b. Credit-bearing post-secondary courses, certification, or micro-credentials;
 - c. Graduate studies;
 - d. Education leave;
 - e. Online courses or webinars relevant to the employee's responsibilities; and
 - f. Research or publication activities.
10. Employees are eligible to apply for PD funding after completing one full year of employment.
11. Full-time employees may apply for up to \$500 annually. Funds reset at the beginning of each academic year (September) and do not carry forward. Part-time employees may be eligible for limited funding, subject to approval and available resources.
12. PD funds may be used to cover registration fees, tuition, and required educational materials. Travel, accommodation, and per diems are only covered if expressly pre-approved.
13. Time spent on approved PD activities must normally occur outside of assigned work hours unless pre-approved as part of the funding request.

Education Leave

14. Employees may apply for Education Leave of up to 12 months to pursue studies or training that enhance their professional development and capacity to contribute to the College.
15. Requests for Education Leave must be submitted in writing to the President at least three months in advance and must:
 - a. include a rationale explaining the relevance of the program to the employee's role or the long-term benefit to the College; and
 - b. receive approval from the President or designate.
16. Requests will be evaluated based on their alignment with the College's strategic objectives and operational needs. The College reserves the right to determine the level of support provided or to decline a request.
17. Approval may also take into account factors such as the employee's length of service, relevance to assigned duties, and the potential value of the leave to the College.
18. Upon return, employees are expected to provide evidence of participation or completion and, if requested, share their learning with colleagues through a presentation, report, or mentoring activity.
19. Time spent on Education Leave does not count toward length of service at the College.

Approval and Reimbursement

22. All requests for funding must be submitted on the College's Professional Development Application Form and include details of the activity, dates, location, and estimated costs.
23. The Application Form must be reviewed and approved by the employee's immediate Supervisor or Department Head.

24. Final approval is required from a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the President, as appropriate. Education leave requests require approval from the President or designate.
25. Applications should be submitted prior to registration and at least four weeks before the activity.
26. Employees are responsible for covering all upfront costs. Reimbursement will be provided upon submission of:
 - a. proof of attendance or completion, if applicable; and
 - b. original receipts or other approved documentation of expenses.

Post-Activity Requirements

27. Upon completion of a PD activity, employees must:
 - a. Submit proof of completion or attendance; and
 - b. Where appropriate, share learning with colleagues.
28. The College will support employees who wish to share knowledge by facilitating departmental workshops, resource development, or other dissemination methods.

Tracking and Reporting

29. The Human Resources department will maintain records of all professional development activities supported by the College, including applications, approvals, fund disbursement, and completion certificates.
30. Supervisors and Department Heads may request a summary of PD participation to support performance reviews and departmental planning.

DEFINITIONS

Education Leave: An approved period of unpaid leave granted to an employee to pursue studies, training, or professional development related to their role or the College's strategic objectives.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [1.3.6 Instructor Hiring Policy](#)
[3.1.2 Employee Professional Standards and Conflict of Interest](#)