SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING FOR EXTERNAL COURSES AND CONFERENCES (PROFESSIONAL SERVICES STAFF) GUIDELINE

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<td>First Approved by:</td>
<td>Melva Crouch, CAO</td>
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Responsible Division & Unit: Professional and organisational Development Services, Human Resources Division

Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this guideline: Application Form for Supplementary Funding

Relevant Legislation & External Documents: Not applicable

Audience: Internal – UOW Staff Only

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1 Introduction / Background

1. The University of Wollongong recognises each professional services staff member's need for a fulfilling and rewarding career. The opportunity to update current skills and gain new skills and knowledge which will add value to the staff member's role or the University's future workforce needs is fundamental to this recognition.

2. Staff members are supported and assisted in the planning and achievement of their career and professional development goals through:
   a. in-house development programs provided by the University;
   b. formal study supported by the University;
   c. secondment within the University;
   d. job opportunities attracting Higher Duties Allowance;
   e. opportunities to work on special projects;
   f. on-the-job or external programs supported by individual workplaces; and
   g. external programs and opportunities supported by the University.

3. The development of specialist and highly technical skills cannot be fully accommodated within the in-house development programs provided by the University. Often the only avenue for staff to develop these skills is through external training and development programs in the form of short courses, conferences, or workshops.

4. While Faculties and Divisions need to make provision to support the development of their professional services staff financially and administratively, Professional & Organisational Development Services can in certain circumstances provide additional funding towards the cost of professional services staff attendance at professional development courses and conferences.

2 Definitions

1. An external course refers to a structured training course which is offered by a training provider external to the University of Wollongong. For example, it may:
   a. be a short, one-off course (for example, a half day or full day workshop);
   b. take place over a period of time (for example, half a day per fortnight for six weeks);
   c. be an intensive three day workshop;
   d. be a training course offered via on-line delivery e.g. webinar or elearning program (these applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis);
   e. involve course fees of more than $500.

2. The principal objective of the course/conference must be to develop, maintain or improve employment related skills of an employee.
3. Supplementary Funding is not granted for payment of tertiary educational studies i.e. Certificate 1 through to University Degrees. Assistance with the cost of such study may be available under the Study Allowance (Professional Services Staff) Policy.

3 Scope

1. Members of professional services staff applying for Supplementary Funding for an external course/conference may be either full-time or permanent part-time. Staff on a limited term contract of 2 or more years (with a term of at least 12 months remaining) are also eligible to apply. Applications made by staff who do not meet this criteria may be considered by the Manager, Professional and Organisational Development Services.

2. Professional services staff from Level 1 to Level 8/9 are eligible to apply.

3. Staff applying for Supplementary Funding are only eligible to apply if they have the approval of their Head of Department/Unit.

4. Staff are eligible to receive Supplementary Funding once every two years.

5. Supplementary Funding is only available towards the course/conference fees. It does not cover associated travel and accommodation expenses.

Faculty/Unit Support and Relevance to Professional Development

1. It is expected that the Manager of Department/Unit will consider seriously any application for attendance at a course or conference. The staff member's career and professional development needs and plans from the annual development review process (Performance Planner/Agreement) will be taken into account, along with UOW strategic direction and future workforce needs.

2. The applicant's Department/Unit is responsible for meeting additional course/conference fees and associated costs not covered by the Supplementary Funding.

3. Where PODS cannot offer funding assistance, the Faculty/Unit may consider funding the course/conference attendance in full.

4. Where training is essential to the staff member's ability to perform the core functions of their position, the Department/Unit would be expected to cover all costs (e.g. the gaining of a licence to operate equipment).

4 Application Process

1. Applications are considered three times a year. Applications are called for in February, June and October.

2. Funding periods are:
   • 1st Round— for courses/conferences to be held between April and July- Closing date for applications February 28
   • 2nd round – for courses/conferences to be held between August and November - Closing date for applications 30 June
   • 3rd round – for courses/conferences to be held between December and March (the following year) – Closing date for applications 31 October.

   Note: applications are called for in advance of the course/conference.
3. Applications are to be completed and forwarded to PODS no later than the closing date for the round in which the course or conference will take place.

4. Application forms for Supplementary Funding may be accessed from the PODS website.

**Allocation of Funding**

5. Expenditure claimed must be for course or conference registration fees only. The course or conference must take place within the current funding period.

6. Successful Supplementary Funding applications will receive up to 75% of the course/conference fees to a maximum of $1000 per application.

7. Available funds are limited, so applicants should not expect that funding will always be granted nor that they will receive the full 75% of course/conference fees.

8. Where all applications cannot be funded due to limited resources, funding will be reduced at the discretion of the Manager, PODS.

9. If a successful applicant is not able to attend the proposed course or conference the Supplementary Funding must be returned to PODS. The work area cannot use the funding for someone else to attend the course/conference.

**Consideration and Approval**

10. The following considerations will be taken into account when allocating funding:
   a. the application has demonstrated the value of the course/conference to their work and career development;
   b. the application has the approval of their Manager of Department/Unit to attend the course/conference;
   c. UOW strategic directions and future workforce needs
   d. whether the course/conference has been identified in their Performance Planner/Agreement
   e. the amount of funding the unit/faculty has received over the past 12 months.

11. Funding is approved and allocated by the Manager, PODS.

12. Successful applicants will be advised within 3-4 weeks of the closing date for the round of funding.

**Report on Course/Conference**

13. As a way of communicating and sharing the value and learning from the course/conference successful applicants are required to:
   - write a report on the value and key learnings from the course/conference within three weeks of the course/conference (this will be posted on the PODS website); or
   - present a report at a TechNet or AdminNet event (if relevant) or
   - undertake a similar activity to the above if approved by the Manager, PODS.
5 Roles & Responsibilities

1. Manager – ensure they are satisfied of the value of the course/conference to the applicant’s professional development.

2. Staff member – complete application form and submit with relevant time frame. If successful submit course/conference report to PODS within three weeks of attendance at course/conference or present report.

3. PODS Manager – assess applications against policy, determine funding allocations and transfer funds to relevant account.

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<td>1</td>
<td>110615</td>
<td>Melva Crouch, Chief Executive officer</td>
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