



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

Compulsory Training - compulsory training is training that Council designates to be necessary requirement of employment. Employees who participate in compulsory training shall not lose ordinary pay. Compulsory training 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.

Selection of staff to undertake training

Selection of participants to receive Council training in accordance with Council's training plan is to be based on 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 Application Form.

The selection process will also take into consideration the capacity of the workplace to schedule and arrange the release of selected employees.

Priority of training

Acknowledging that not all identified training needs will be able to be met within the duration of one financial year or annual training plan, wherever possible, available financial and related training resources will be allocated in the following priority:

- Training necessary for Council to comply with current and future legislative requirements.
- Training necessary to assist the employee in doing their current job to the standards required.
- Training necessary to assist the employees career path development.

Notwithstanding the above, resources may be re-allocated to meet WHS and other statutory training which may result from legislative or technological change.

Training undertaken as a requirement of council (Compulsory Training)

If an employee is required by Council to participate in a structured training program and such program is consistent with Council's training plan:

- The Council shall grant the employee paid leave to attend course requirements where the training is undertaken during ordinary working hours.
- Council shall pay course fees at the commencement of each stage.
- Council shall, at the discretion of the General Manager, either provide transport or pay reasonable travelling expenses to enable employees to attend course requirements.

Non-Compulsory training but consistent with council needs & staff career development

At the discretion of the General Manager, an employee undertaking a course consistent with Council's needs and requirement may be granted financial assistance towards the course fees in question and appropriate leave to attend course requirements.

The relevant staff member must make an application for assistance in writing to the General Manager and state the benefits for Council in the qualifications being gained.

Further, the General Manager's decision is final.

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.

WHS/HR 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.

Assistant General Managers/Managers are responsible for:

- Developing individual learning and development plans for employees 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.
- Timely completion of application forms.

Employees are responsible for:

- 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 WH&S / HR 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).