Academic Staff Professional Development

Purpose

This policy details the commitment the University makes to the professional development of academic staff and the professional development opportunities that the University provides for such staff.

Policy

The University is committed to providing its academic staff with the opportunity to become excellent teachers and leading scholars and researchers in their fields, and to developing their managerial, leadership and technical abilities. Its strategies for achieving these goals include the provision of staff development programmes and high quality professional development advice and support.

The University will provide academic staff development and training programmes and other opportunities to assist staff members in meeting their short term needs and advancing their long term development objectives.

The following principles apply:
- Appropriate professional development is to be available for all staff.
- Orientation and induction; mentoring; training as a lecturer/tutor; training for academic heads; and development in academic leadership, are important for the development of good practice.
- Professional development needs should be considered whenever new technology, policies or procedures are being introduced.
- The expertise of the University’s own staff should be used where appropriate, and such contributions should be recognised.
- Improved performance will be recognised by the University, including in the context of continuation and promotion decisions.

Responsibility for professional development is shared between each individual and the management of The University of Auckland.

Definition

Professional development includes: technical skill development to help academic staff to teach or research more effectively; mentoring to provide staff with advice and support and a sounding board for self review and appraisal; and work culture development. Professional development comprises both formal programmes (such as courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, retreats, research and study leave) and informal development activities (such as one-to-one support, informal peer review, work assignment, and inclusion in groups and networks).

Audience

All academic staff of the University employed on a full-time or part-time basis for a period of at least one year.

Temporary academic staff in the case of some professional development commitments and activities.
Relevant Legislation

Employment Relations Act 2000
Human Rights Act 1993
Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

Legal Compliance

The provisions in the Academic Staff Collective Agreement 2008-9 referred to in Appendix 1 apply to Academic Staff.

The University is committed to professional development related to the Treaty of Waitangi, equal employment opportunities, human rights, and employment relations.

Procedures

Central Services

The Staff Professional Development Committee (SPDC) advises the Vice-Chancellor’s Staff Advisory Committee on the central provision of professional development opportunities. Staff representatives on the SPDC are expected to play an advisory role in the annual process of setting priorities regarding central services.

The Centre for Academic Development (CAD) and the Staff Organisation and Development Unit (SODU) in Human Resources will assist all staff to achieve high standards in key aspects of their work. They will provide services that address the needs of all staff, the policies and priorities of The University of Auckland, international research into 'best practices,' and the Treaty of Waitangi.

Professional Development in Faculties and Departments

Deans of Faculties and Academic Heads are responsible for encouraging the growth of, and participation in, professional development activities.

It is desirable that professional development programmes both address and anticipate needs. The appointment of academic leaders, for example, should be determined sufficiently far in advance for preparatory training to be possible.

Professional development supported by faculties and departments should be planned and provided for in annual budgets. It should also be related to other management processes, such as Academic Performance Reviews, Department Reviews, and teaching, course and programme evaluation processes.

Academic staff should normally discuss professional development opportunities with their Academic Head before enrolling for a course, workshop or conference.

Academic Practice

The Centre for Academic Development is responsible for providing professional development and support for University staff in the academic aspects of their role. The Academic Practice Group focuses on services that address the scholarship of teaching and learning and supervision skills, including the mandatory courses for new-to-teaching and new-to-supervising academics and some events specifically for Maori academics. The eLearning Design & Development Group provides elearning research, learning design, web development, the production of materials and customised evaluation services for all staff involved in courses that include elements of elearning. This Group also offers IT Literacy and elearning workshops and seminars for all University staff.

Research Development

The Research Office, Faculty Research Committees, Departments, SODU and CAD will collaborate to provide professional development on research leadership, the supervision of research staff, writing research proposals, writing and publishing papers, health and safety, information management and retrieval, management of research funds, computers in research, etc.
**Treaty of Waitangi and Equal Opportunity**

Workshops regarding University policy and practices related to the Treaty of Waitangi, and to equal employment opportunity issues such as recruitment practices and leadership development for target groups, will be provided as appropriate by CAD, the EEO Manager and SODU in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellors Maori and EO.

**Human Resources and Administrative Development**

SODU will support professional development related to staffing policies and procedures (eg. appointment, continuation, promotion, study leave, health and safety, and conditions of service).

SODU will support professional development in financial management and organisational development to improve procedures, structures and information systems.

**Personal and Professional Development**

Generic professional development will be provided by SODU to address the needs of all staff. Examples may include time management, problem solving, stress management, communication skills, and career planning.

**Leadership and Management Development**

SODU, the Vice-Chancellor's Office, and Faculties will provide a support and development programme for leaders and managers. Included will be University policies, structures and procedures, skills in applying academic and general staff collective agreements, management and development of staff, and planning and resource allocation.

**Provision of Professional Development Opportunities**

It is the policy of the University to provide the majority of professional development opportunities through CAD and SODU. However, Academic Heads have the discretion to approve and support their academic staff to attend professional development opportunities outside the University, where such courses are particularly relevant to the staff member's employment. The Department or Faculty may meet part or all of the cost of attendance at external courses.

Internal providers of professional development, will continually evaluate the developmental process offered, make changes as a result of these evaluations, and report regularly to the SPDC.

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**Authorised by:** Vice-Chancellor

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**Appendix - Extracts from the Academic Staff Collective Agreement 2008-9**

### 5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

#### 5.1 Orientation Programmes

The employer, through the Staff Organisational Development Unit, will provide orientation courses on The University of Auckland, its mission, goals, strategies and the expectation it has of its staff. New employees appointed from outside the University will be expected to attend these courses. A representative from AUS will be included in the presentation. In addition, Faculties, Schools and Departments will provide further induction programmes for all new employees in their area.

#### 5.2 Staff Development Programmes

The employer undertakes to provide staff development programmes in which the employee may participate.

### 12 TUITION FEES

12.1 Where the employee holds a University funded appointment as a full-time permanent or temporary full-time staff member appointed for a minimum period of 12 months and is enrolled for a degree or diploma course within the University relevant to the staff member’s work, he/she may claim payment for tuition fees for up to two courses per annum or the equivalent of
30 points in total in accordance with the financial provisions determined by the employer. Alternatively for a full-time academic staff member enrolled for a PhD, the University will pay the PhD Tuition Fee for a maximum of six years. Tuition Fees for enrolment in EdD, DOCFA, DMus will be considered by the Employer as for PhD enrolments.

Where the employee holds a part-time appointment for a minimum period of 12 months the employee may claim payment of tuition fees in the same proportion that the appointment bears to full-time, eg. a half-time appointee may claim half of the full-time fees remission.

12.2 Payment of tuition fees for an employee holding an appointment funded by an outside organisation eg. H.R.C, will be subject to the financial provisions of the grant supporting the appointment.

12.3 Fees for staff attending Centre for Continuing Education courses which will benefit their Department may, subject to the approval of the Head of Department, be paid from departmental funds.