Procedure 5.04.14 Employee training and development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Strategy and Business Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Officer</td>
<td>Manager</td>
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Introduction

Council provides employee career development and training programs which contribute to delivering our strategic/operational objectives by:

- Assisting employees to formulate career development plans which reflect the individual’s goals and the needs of Council;
- Assisting employees to achieve personal excellence in work performance in a satisfying, non-discriminatory, safe and healthy work environment and ensuring employees and work teams develop appropriate skills to meet current and emerging operational requirements.

Guidelines/Procedure

A training plan is a documented outcome of the planning process outlining the Workforce Strategy, Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and Asset Management Plan (AMP) to identify and meet the current and future skill requirements of its workforce.

The development of training plans occurs annually at two (2) levels:

- A Strategic Corporate Training Plan (STP)

Strategic Corporate Training Plan

The STP is to be reviewed during the first quarter of the year. The Executive Manager | Organisational Development and Governance will coordinate this review which is to include consultation with both the Consultative Committee and the Leadership and Executive Group (LEG).

The STP is designed to support the Resource Strategy/Workforce Strategy and other strategic organisational planning documents. The STP will clearly outline Council’s training philosophy and the training required to meet organisation wide needs including mandatory legislative training and will issues as access, equity, merit, training leave and entry level training.

The STP shall be the major factor when developing individual training plans.

Individual Training Plans

ITP’s will be linked to the STP and to the EPR process. ITP’s will detail the immediate skills/competencies required by the employee to carry out their job over the next 12 months and how those skills/competencies are to be acquired. It may include any training improve current job performance and outline any agreed plans to assist employees prepare for future career path development by broadening their knowledge and experience.

ITP’s should include clear objectives of the training expressed in outcome terms i.e. what skills the individual/s will gain through completion of the training.
The STP’s must be discussed with employees at the time of their EPR interviews to enable organisational requirements to be considered when developing the individual plans. It will be the responsibility of each Group/Executive Manager to ensure this occurs.

ITP’s for the next year – must be completed by August in keeping with the annual EPR process timeframes.

**Attendance at External Courses, Conferences, Seminars and Workshops**

Approval to attend these types of activities may be provided where a course of related activity meets a specified, defined need and value for money is visible.

**Guidelines/Procedures**

Employee attendance at these activities will be considered subject to the availability of funds and the following conditions:

a. Employees must be able to demonstrate attendance at conferences/seminars will be of particular benefit to Council.

b. Attendance at conferences/seminars must be authorised by the relevant Group/Executive Manager. Payments for all Conference expenses are to be made from the relevant departmental budgets.

c. Agreed outcomes of attendance are to be identified prior to authorisation being provided e.g. staff attending conferences/seminars to present information sessions or learning outcomes to other relevant employees.

d. Attendance at approved training courses/conferences/seminars which are to be held overseas must be reported to Council.

e. The General Manager is to approve attendance at the conference/seminars held interstate (excluding ACT)

As far as possible, conference/seminar attendances should be included in individual training plans that are developed each year.

**Travel Expenses relating to approved training and/or approved conferences/seminars**

For information related to travel expenses associated with training courses and/or attendance at conferences/seminars, please refer to *procedure 5.06.11 Travel and Accommodation* that can be located on the BVSC Intranet.

**Staff Education Assistance Scheme**

Council encourages all employees to undertake part-time tertiary study in courses which fulfil employee individual career aspirations while meeting the needs of the organisation.

Applications for financial assistance will therefore be considered on the basis of the following priorities:

- Training necessary for Council to achieve targets and outcomes articulated in its strategic plans.
- Training necessary to assist the employee is doing their current job to the standards required.
- The course of study will assist the employee’s career path development.
- The course of study provides skills and/or knowledge which are expected to be of continuing value to Council.

The financial assistance provided is neither an allowance nor is it an ongoing condition of employment – payments made are intended as a contribution towards costs, rather than a reimbursement.
Guidelines/Procedures

Acceptable Courses of Study

The course must be an accredited course provided through a recognised university or TAFE College. Consideration will also be extended to courses by other recognised institutions and private organisations which are deemed appropriate. However, preference will be given to courses consistent with industry determined competency based standards and within the Australian Qualifications Framework.

The applicant must be able to demonstrate the course of study will contribute to council’s business goals.

Applications for Assistance

Applications for financial assistance under the scheme need to be completed on the Training Form template “Application for Tertiary Education Assistance/reimbursement of Costs”. The template can be found in Word under the HR OH&S tab.

Type and Level of Financial Assistance

Eligibility to receive Council assistance falls into three (3) main categories

Category 1

Traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships or where the employee is directed by the Council to undertake a particular course of study as a condition of employment. Examples of employees and courses in this category are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Description</th>
<th>Type of Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Trainee/Assistant</td>
<td>Library Technicians Certificate (TAFE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee Health &amp; Building Surveyor</td>
<td>Diploma of Local Government (Environmental Health and Building Surveyor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee/Cadet Planner</td>
<td>Certificate IV Local Government Planning Diploma of Local Government (Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Mechanical Apprentice</td>
<td>Certificate III Automotive (Mechanical – Heavy Vehicle mobile equipment) – Plant/earth moving/agriculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Bachelor of Business Studies or Accounting; Certificate III in Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Trainee</td>
<td>Certificate II and III Local government Operational Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and Sewer Trainee</td>
<td>Certificate II and III Water Industry Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadet Civil Engineer</td>
<td>Cadet Environmental Professional</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Category 2 - General positions

An employee who occupies a position where attainment of an additional or higher qualification will enable that employee to:

- Obtain a higher standard in their profession and
- Achieve a higher level of competence in their own position
- Equip them for their future appointment to higher level positions

Designated Skills Shortage Positions

An employee who occupies a position where attainment of an additional or higher qualification will enable that employee to be appointed to a vacancy in a position designated as a skills shortage area.
Designated skills shortages professions are currently: Planners, Health and Building, Risk Management (including WH&S), Accounting and Engineering.

**Additional Education Contribution**

An employee, who commences and completes a degree level course while employed by Council in a designated skills shortage discipline, may be paid an additional education contribution of up to $5,000. This contribution will be paid on the recommendation of the Group/Executive Manager, once the employee has completed three (3) years’ service in a professional level position and is subject to demonstration of professional growth. This payment does not apply to cadetships.

**Category 3**

Employees undertaking courses of study not directly related to their principle employment, but where it is considered by the Group/Executive Manager and LEG that mutual benefits could accrue to Council and the employee by the attainment of the particular qualification.

Eligibility for assistance under this category will be considered where applicants fail to meet all three (3) criteria in Category 2.

**Applications to Undertake Courses**

All employees (with the exception of trainees, apprentices or employees directed to undertake a specific course (i.e. Category 1)) are required to submit an application on the Training form titled **Application for Approval to Undertake a Course of Study**.

This application is to be directed through the employee’s Manager and Group/Executive Manager, and the Manager | Strategy and Business Services, who will make a recommendation to LEG for approval and to determine the relevant category.

The number of employees undertaking University level studies in Categories 2 and 3 will be limited to 15 staff at any one time unless the General Manager determines otherwise.

**Entitlements/Benefits**

Entitlements that apply for the three (3) categories are outlined in Table 3.5 below.

The terms and conditions for cadetships are detailed under the heading Cadetships.

No entitlement exists for any benefit or assistance where an employee is repeating a failed subject, unless authorised by the General Manager.

Council may consider making an advance payment for compulsory course fees where there are financial hardship considerations, on the basis the advance is recovered by payroll deductions by the completion of the semester. If an employee terminates their employment before repaying this advance, the balance will be deducted from any termination pay. Employees who receive an advance will be required to sign a payroll deduction for education fees authority. Employees should request advance payments at least two (2) weeks before the payment date. Each advance must be repaid in full prior to any further advances being made.

Payment of a contribution towards fees, books and other appropriate benefits – as specified in Table 3.5 shall occur on successful completion of all subjects covered by those fees, or proportionately in accordance with the number of subjects passed.

To claim a contribution towards the costs of fees, books and other appropriate costs, employees need to complete the Staff Education – payment of fees template. (Word/ New/ HR templates) and attach verification of results and receipts for all claimable payments. The form should be submitted, on receipt of results, to the Coordinator | Employee Support Services, who will arrange payment.
Additional Benefits

Council may also provide an option where employees can choose either a textbook reimbursement or a contribution towards the purchase of a home computer for the purpose of completing their studies.

In the event Council has contributed towards the purchase of a personal computer and the employee either fails or withdraws from the course, the Council contribution towards the computer is fully payable within three (3) months.

Withdrawal/Variation of Sponsorship

To retain sponsorship in accordance with this scheme, employees must pursue the relevant course continuously until completion, unless they show a valid and substantial reason for a break/deferment of their course. These reasons should be referred to the relevant Group/Executive Manager. Terms and conditions for cadet positions are detailed below under Cadetships.

If an employee defers a subject/s for any period of time, the employee must reapply for acceptance under this Procedure when studies are being recommenced.

However, if after a maximum six (6) month deferment, an employee decides to discontinue the approved course, the employee must repay 50% of any contribution costs already paid by Council. Payment arrangements are to be discussed between the employee and the Group/Executive Manager – and must fully repaid within twelve (12) months of study.

LEG has the authority to suspend or withdraw sponsorship of any employee in the event of the employee’s unsatisfactory progress in their course of study or unsatisfactory work performance. Unsatisfactory progress shall mean repeated subject failures and/or failing to meet the course requirements.

All fees and other expenses paid under this scheme are to be subject to annual review by the LEG.

Cadetships

Council provides cadetships in a range of disciplines including engineering, town planning and environmental science. Cadetships provide the opportunity to study and gain practical training in a structured and supportive work environment.

The cadet is required to enrol in and complete a course of approved study at a recognised tertiary institution. Council pays the tuition fees, and the cadet may be bonded by an agreement to work for Council for a predetermined period of time.

The cadetship will involve external part-time study for Degree level qualifications and the cadet will be employed on trainee wages until graduation. The cadet is assured of obtaining valuable experience on a wide variety of interesting projects. During the cadetship, the cadet will receive time off on full pay for study, and mentoring/tutoring by experienced and qualified staff.

On completion of the approved course of study, the cadet may be offered a full-time position appropriate to the qualifications achieved.

Eligibility

- Students who have completed the Higher School Certificate and have been accepted for entry to an Australian tertiary institution for an approved course of study at the Degree level.
- Students who have already completed one or more years of an approved course of study.
- Existing Council employees (mature aged student eligibility is required to be met)
Cadets will be paid the Award (between T5 and T10) salary rates as outlined at Part B Clause 6 of the Local Government (State) Award 2014.

Cadetships that extend beyond six (6) years will have their salaries assessed in accordance with the normal job evaluation procedures.

**Study requirements**

Cadets are required to enrol in and successfully complete the relevant Degree course.

Cadets are required to study in their own time at home or at the Council offices after normal working hours.

Cadets will also receive regular special study leave and some tuition time from relevant staff.

The study leave is to be taken during normal working hours at the Council offices.

**Work requirements**

The cadet is required to work full-time at Council for the duration of the cadetship.

All other conditions of employment are in accordance with the Award.

**Tuition fees**

At the beginning of each academic year, Council will pay the cost of compulsory tuition fees including HECS but excluding Guild, Student Union or Faculty fees. Council will contribute towards the cost of text books or a personal computer in accordance with the below table (Category 1, Expenses (C)).

If the cadet fails to pass any enrolled subject, the cadetship may be terminated or continued under other conditions. Where the cadetship is continued, Council will not pay the tuition fees for the re-enrolled subject.

**Employment after qualification**

On successful completion of a cadetship, the graduate may be offered a full-time position with Council appropriate to the qualifications gained. If offered a position, the graduate will be bonded by an agreement to work for Council for a minimum pre-determined period. Refer to the section on Bond Conditions below.

**Conditions of Cadetship**

The first six months of employment with Council will be a probationary period, during which time their performance both at work and at study will be closely monitored. At the end of the probationary period, the manager will carry out a formal staff appraisal and performance review. If the Cadet is assessed as satisfactory and meeting all requirements the terms of the cadetship will be confirmed.

Cadets will be entitled to study leave of one (1) day per week at full pay during each academic year up to a maximum of 36 days per year. Study time includes time off for residential schools and exams. Regular study days will normally be taken at the Council offices under supervision.

Arrangements for study time will be subject to approval by the cadet’s supervisor.

If a cadet fails to pass prescribed subjects in anyone year or is reported to be making unsatisfactory progress, the cadetship may be terminated or continued under other conditions.

**Bond conditions**

The cadet will be required to enter into an agreement to serve for the period of the cadetship and where determined a minimum additional period of service following completion of the cadetship.

If a minimum period of service following completion of studies has been determined, this period will depend on the duration of the cadetship as outlined below:
**Duration of Cadetship** | **Minimum Period of Additional Service**
--- | ---
Up to 4 years | 2 years
5 to 6 years | 3 years
More than 6 years | 4 years

Once signed, the agreement is a legally binding contract. If the Cadet’s employment is terminated by Council or by the cadet for any reason during the cadetship and prior to completing any required minimum period of additional service, then the cadet will be required to repay 60% of all tuition fees paid by Council.

Cadets are selected on merit and interviewed by a selection committee. Assessment of the applicants will include the following criteria:

- Academic results
- Aptitude, and
- Skills and abilities

**How to apply**

Submit via the address provided in the advertisement, a written application including addressing any required selection criteria.

The application must be received before the closing date.

Provide details including:

- Name, addresses, phone number, and email or fax if you have one.
- Details of school or other academic results
- Previous and current employment details where applicable
- Copies of references and/or names, addresses and phone numbers of at least two referees
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Attendance at Lectures &amp; travelling time</th>
<th>Study leave &amp; Exam/Pre-exam Leave</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Residential Schools</th>
<th>Block Release</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. (a)</td>
<td>Leave with pay to attend lectures/tutorials as prescribed that fall within normal working hours including reasonable travel time – to a maximum of 2 hours per week (non-accumulative)</td>
<td>Exam Leave: Leave with pay for actual time or exam and where necessary reasonable travelling time. If exam is in afternoon or evening, half day study leave prior to exam if normally working that day. Study Leave: To a maximum of 1 day per semester for TAFE Cert IV or higher. Up to 2 days for uni studies (undergraduate &amp; post graduate) 2 weeks’ notice to be given to supervisor</td>
<td>Council vehicle may be provided if available. If unavailable, refer to Travel and Accommodation Procedure 5.06.11. The Employee travel / training request form is to be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to any travel. This form covers all travel and accommodation arrangements plus advance payment for food costs as per ATO guidelines. NB Maximum payment of $300 per annum for all costs associated with travelling and attendance at compulsory residential schools. Reimbursement of text books to maximum of $300 per annum or $300 towards the purchase of a home computer for education purposes.</td>
<td>50% of all compulsory course fees (excl Union Fees) paid by Council to a maximum of $1250 per annum (no entitlement for repeat subjects). When specific training is required to meet Council’s statutory obligations – Council has the discretion to determine the level of contribution to be made.</td>
<td>Maximum of 5 working days per semester to attend compulsory residential school (subject to verification)</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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### Table: Employee Training and Development

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<td>2. (b)</td>
<td>Leave with pay to attend lectures or tutorials as prescribed which fall within normal working hours including reasonable travel times to a maximum of 2 hours per week (non-accumulative)</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Exam Leave: Leave with pay for actual time of exam and where necessary, reasonable travelling time. If exam is in afternoon or evening, study leave of ½ day prior to exam if normally working that day Study Leave: 1 day per semester TAFE Cert IV or higher. Up to 2 days per semester for uni studies (both undergraduate &amp; post graduate.) 2 weeks’ notice to be given to supervisor</td>
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<td>50% of all compulsory course fees (excl Union Fees) paid by Council to a maximum of $1500 per annum (no entitlement for repeat subjects) When specific training is required to meet Council’s statutory obligations – Council has the discretion to determine the level of contribution to be made.</td>
<td>Maximum of 5 working days per semester to attend compulsory residential school (subject to verification)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Leave with pay to: attend lectures as prescribed which fall within normal working hours including reasonable travel times</td>
<td>Exam Leave: Leave with pay for actual time of exam if normally working that day (but not for repeat subjects) Study leave: - Nil</td>
<td>Reimbursement of text books to a maximum of $200 per annum</td>
<td>50% of all compulsory course fees (excluding Union fees) paid by Council to a maximum of $400 per annum (nil entitlement for repeat subjects)</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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</table>
Staff Exchanges for Career Development

Council supports the principle of sponsoring staff to be trained through employment as part of a temporary secondment placement opportunity with private enterprise, other levels of government and local authorities on a support or reciprocal exchange basis.

Guidelines/Procedures

Employees may submit proposals to participate on a temporary exchange program, or on a temporary secondment basis, with external organisations for the specific purpose of obtaining experience or specialist skills that are not available within Council and which will benefit the achievement of Council objectives.

Proposals are to be submitted through their manager to the Group/Executive Manager and should provide full details of the experience/skills to be obtained together with an outline of the benefits to Council.

The Group/Executive Manager is to prepare a recommendation for the General Manager to consider.