

EDUCATION AND TRAINING TEAM

Staff Development Policy

A. EDUCATION & TRAINING TEAM

1. *Mandate*

To plan, coordinate and fund training and staff development activities for eligible Olds College employees excluding both independent company contractors and those staff members who are eligible for funding through the Faculty Development Committee. To contribute to the Olds College vision of success, the Education and Training Team will support and assist in the development of a campus wide training plan to assist the College in maintaining current skills in the workplace and in promoting wellness in its employees.

2. *Mission*

- To support and assist in the development of a campus wide training plan for the College.
- To oversee the appropriate distribution of training funds to provide training to as many staff members as possible.
- To evaluate training opportunities (see Procedures).
- To provide opportunities for employees to take advantage of wellness activities.
- To support staff in adapting to institutional and life changes.
- To provide incentive and training for staff to develop and enhance current skills for more diverse functions within the College.
- To respect the input of both the applicant and the supervisor.
- To review applications in the context of value to the College and the individual both now and in the future.
- To encourage shared responsibility for professional development (including department and/or personal contributions).

3. *Team Values*

- Maintain a clear and consistent process.
- Have respect for the opinions of other team members.
- Deal from a foundation of fairness.

4. *Team Members*

The Team Leader will be a representative from the Human Resources Department. Six additional team members will be representative of various perspectives on campus (AME, Support Staff, Faculty, and Contract employees). Membership on the team is determined by an application procedure to the Education and Training Team through the Team Leader. Membership is normally for a two-year term with an option for renewal at the end of the term. Membership will be reviewed by June 30th

of each year. Criteria for membership on the team will include a commitment to its principles and time to devote to its tasks.

B. PROCEDURES

1. *Eligibility*

Regular full-time, part-time, temporary and contracted employees can apply to the team for professional development funding. Independent company contractors and those staff members who are eligible for funding through the Faculty Development Committee are not eligible to access professional development funding.

2. *Types of Professional Development*

Applications for the following professional development activities will be considered:

- (a) Group Activities – Funding may be granted for group activities designed to upgrade skills associated with College operations. Group activities that support the mental and physical health of College employees will also be eligible for funding.
- (b) Individual Funding – Funding may be granted to attend conferences, short courses, seminars, conventions and workshops offered by outside groups on or off campus. Individual activities that support the mental and physical health of College employees will also be eligible for funding (e.g. wellness activities – membership to Olds College Fitness Centre, monies toward participation in hockey, curling, volleyball, badminton leagues, aerobics, etc.).
- (c) Post Secondary Courses – Funding for accredited, or a series of non-credit courses, (college, university, correspondence, certification and industrial courses), which lead to a designation or certification related to working responsibilities, may be approved on the basis of 50% of tuition. Course materials may also be approved on the basis of 100% of the cost. Payment will be subject to the successful completion of the course.
- (d) Development Leaves – Funding *may* be approved for a leave of absence with pay (up to one month) for academic and industrial pursuits substantially related to the individual's employment responsibilities.

3. *General Guidelines for Submissions of Applications*

- (a) All staff eligible for funding will be required to complete an application form and submit it to the Team Leader of the Education and Training Team accompanied by the immediate supervisor's comments as to the need, priority and support (or lack thereof) for the activity.

- (b) Applications should be received by the Team Leader one week in advance of the meeting date. Consideration will be made for late applications. All applicants will be notified as soon as possible after a decision has been reached and the application form will be returned. If approved, the amount of the funding will be indicated. If not approved, an explanation will be given. Applications that have been received after the completion of the activity will not be funded.
- (c) Application funding requests, which exceed \$500, will be approved on a 50% of total cost basis. The department or individual will be required to fund the balance of the total amount of the activity.
- (d) An applicant who requests more than \$1,500 will be required to meet with the Education and Training Team to discuss the specifics of the application.
- (e) The returned application form will serve as the applicant's business travel expenses claim form. Eligible expenses will be paid, as approved, and as detailed in the Travel Guidelines Policy (Policy and Procedures Manual). Claims that exceed the approved amount will be referred to the Team Leader of the Education and Training Team for review.
- (f) Employees who are travelling outside of Canada will be provided with a memo from the Team Leader of the Education and Training Team advising them that they must keep their meal receipts in order to be reimbursed for actual monies spent. Failure to produce these receipts as part of their travel expense claim upon their return will result in the reimbursement at the approved Canadian meal rates as outlined in the Travel Guidelines Policy.
- (g) Approval for 50% of funding (to a cumulative maximum of \$4,500/applicant over a 3 year time period) to support the tuition and cost of course materials for accredited, or a series of non-credit courses, (college, university, correspondence, certification and industrial courses) which lead to a designation or certification, will be given in principle only. Funding will be approved on a course by course, year to year basis. Funds will be released upon proof of successful completion of the course as substantiated by provision of a transcript or certificate.** This proof of successful completion must be submitted directly to the Team Leader of the Education and Training Team within six (6) weeks of completion of the course.***

***In cases of financial hardship, application can be made to the Team Leader of the Education & Training Team who in consultation with the Director of Human Resources will make a decision regarding the receipt of reimbursement for payment of courses prior to the completion of the course. This would be approved with the proviso that if the course was not completed successfully, the monies paid would be owing to Olds College.*

****The Team Leader of the Education and Training Team may be contacted for an exception when grades are not available in this time frame.*

4. Application Approval Criteria

The Education and Training Team will meet bi-weekly throughout the academic year and on an as needed basis during the months of July and August. Individual applications for professional development will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Professional development activity fits short/long term training plans of the individual/College.
- Applicant must be employed by Olds College for 6 months per year (exceptions may apply based upon the supervisor's level of support).
- Activity is directly applicable to job – both currently and in conjunction with future career and professional development plans.
- Proposed activity makes efficient use of training funds.
 - cost of activity
 - alternate locations of activity
 - number of activities funded per individual
 - number of individuals applying for funds for the same activity
- Activity is for training and development, not business.
- Length of time since applicant last applied to the team for funding in current year and the previous amount of monies approved may be considered.
- Level of departmental and/or personal contributions.

5. Guidelines for Approval of Accredited Course and Long Term Funding Requests

Long term funding requests shall be defined as those professional development activities, which span more than one year. These could include long term development activities such as the pursuit of a professional accreditation, post-secondary degree, Master's or Ph.D. Short-term college, university, correspondence and industrial courses, which are related to working responsibilities, are also eligible for funding.

The following approval criteria will be used to determine eligibility for funding:

1. Professional development activity fits short/long term plans of the individual, the department and the College.
2. Professional development activity is supported and endorsed by the applicant's supervisor. This support should be indicated in a written statement.
3. Relevance of the professional development activity to the individual and to the College.
4. Credibility of the credential to be obtained within the applicant's field of work.
5. College, university, correspondence and industrial courses must be accredited.

Funding Requirements:

1. Funding will be approved in principle only on a course by course, year to year basis. Submission of a long term training plan would be beneficial.
2. Funding for 50% of the tuition and the cost of course materials will be approved to a cumulative maximum of \$4,500/applicant over a 3-year period.
3. Funds will be released upon proof of successful completion of the course as substantiated by provision of a transcript or certificate.