



Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Policy

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CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy outlines requirements pertaining to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of University employees as mandated by various professions councils. As an ethical practice, all professionals are required to continually engage in lifelong learning in order to update their knowledge, skills, and ethical attitudes for ethical and competent practice. As per the University's Strategic Goal 3 (2024-2028), the University aims to 'attract, recruit, retain and develop quality academics and professional support staff' and 'to maintain accreditation statuses of academic programmes' (Strategic Objective 1.4.1). In addition to the current aim to improve the University employees' academic qualifications, attendance of CPD activities provides an opportunity for University employees to acquire up-to-date knowledge and skills relevant to their fields and thus provision of quality education to students.

Performance Agreement Contracts, required to be prepared and signed by all University employees, already include provisions for Continuous Professional Development as one of the University's values. An employee who therefore does not satisfy the CPD requirements as stipulated by their respective professions' council shall be deemed non-compliant and not fulfilling their performance agreement. The monitoring system in place at the University (such as the University's Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan) requires enhancement at a Departmental or Divisional level to ensure compliance to continuous professional development. A policy to guide the CPD implementation is therefore needed.

This Policy outlines the requirements for the CPD, the responsibility of the University employees, support from the University and the University's monitoring system. This Policy is not a stand-alone document and should be read in conjunction with policy documents outlining CPD requirements by respective professions councils as well the University's policies, but particularly with:

- a. The University Strategic Plan
- b. The University Annual Performance Plan

- c. The University Recruitment and Placement Policy
- d. The University General Academic Rules
- e. The Assessment Policy: Students Learning
- f. The Teaching and Learning Policy
- g. The Academic Quality Assurance Framework

2. **DEFINITIONS**

Compliance: Attaining the number of CPD points per cycle as required by various professions councils

Continuous Professional Development (CPD): The process by which natural persons registered with their respective professions councils continuously enhance their competence throughout their professional careers and it encompasses a range of activities including continuing education and supplementary training (South African Pharmacy Council, 2009).

Continuous Professional Development Activities: Type of exercises that are accredited to bear CPD points. These can include conferences, lunch-hour talks, review of journal articles, etc.

Performance Agreement: An agreement between the employee (staff member) and the employer (the university) in terms of the key performance areas aligned to the employees' job description and duties

Professions Council: The regulatory body that maintains and publishes a public register of properly qualified members of the professions. This includes but not limited to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), South African Nursing Council (SANC), South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC), South African Council of Educators (SACE), South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/Council), and so forth.

3. **RATIONALE OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Universities are charged with the responsibility to train and prepare students who should be able to deliver the best, ethically sound and competent services to the members of the public. The teaching staff as well continually engage with the

public during students practicals and as part of their community engagement and research, as part of their core responsibilities. It is therefore imperative that professionals in the employ of the University keep abreast with the latest developments in their area of specialization for their own professional development. As an ethical principle of beneficence, the teaching staff would therefore be able to demonstrate educational instructions that protect the public and promote wellbeing among all members of the public.

4. WHO SHOULD ATTEND CPD ACTIVITIES

4.1) All professionals employed by the University who are mandated to register with any professions council for their practice to be recognized and sustained by their councils, including:

4.1.1) Academics, support staff, managers at all levels and any other University employees who meet the criteria specified in 4.1 above.

4.1.2) Employees appointed on a full-time, part-time or contractual basis or as joint appointees.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each professions council stipulates the number of CPD points required for its professionals to maintain registration with the relevant professions council. Each council further stipulates the conditions, for example, cycle for accrual of such points, recognized activities for earning CPD points, the manner in which points are allocated and accreditation of CPD activities.

Failure to attain the required number of CPD points within the stipulated cycle results in the practitioner's name being revoked from the professions council register. Such professionals are deemed 'non-compliant' and are therefore prohibited from practicing their profession. The affected professionals would then be required to satisfy the conditions for restoration as specified by the relevant council before being reinstated in the councils' register. Professionals that are judged non-compliant by their professions council shall therefore also be

considered non-compliant to their employment performance contract. In all relevant divisions, the system will be initiated whereby staff will be evaluated for compliance and the requisite measures must be stated to address non-compliance.

6. TYPES OF CPD ACTIVITIES RECOGNIZED BY VARIOUS PROFESSIONS COUNCILS

Each professions council stipulates the activities recognised as CPD points bearing, which may include but not limited to:

6.1) Once-off activities such as:

- Breakfast or lunch meetings or presentations;
- Formally arranged hospital or inter-departmental meetings or updates;
- Formally organised special purpose lectures that are not part of a business meeting;
- Conferences, seminars, symposia, formally recognised refresher courses and short courses.
- Participation in professional boards, professional task teams, technical committees, communities of practice, sector activities, etc.
- Development and designing of curricula and policies pertaining to the relevant field.

6.2) Activities that are managed within rules of an accredited structure such as:

- Review of an article/chapter in a book/journal;
- Principal author/co-author/editor of a peer-reviewed publication or chapter in a book;
- Principal presenter/author/co-author/co-presenter of a paper/poster at a conference or congress;
- Symposium/refresher course.

6.3) Formal programmes that are planned and offered by an accredited training institution such as:

- Postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates that are recognised as additional qualifications by the relevant professional board;
- Short courses that are CPD approved.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE

7.1) It is the responsibility of the University employee to familiarize themselves with the CPD requirements as per the professions council they are affiliated to.

7.2) It is the responsibility of the employee to identify their skills gaps and apply for funding through the relevant division within or outside the University, to attend CPD accredited activities.

7.3) It is the responsibility of each employee to acquire the required CPD points within the stipulated cycle as determined by their professions council.

7.4) Each employee shall keep their own portfolio of evidence for CPD activities attended and submit to their respective professions councils as and when required to ensure compliance.

7.5) Each employee shall similarly submit their proof of compliance to their line manager on an annual basis.

8. SUPPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY

8.1) It is expected that Faculties shall apply for CPD accreditation of all research conferences, research days, spring lectures and other equivalent activities to support University employees in earning CPD points.

8.2) It is expected that Faculties and other relevant divisions at the University shall offer or identify CPD-linked activities, especially to assist with CPD points as determined by various professions councils.

- 8.3) The Office of the relevant line manager shall continually monitor compliance of staff members to the CPD requirements of the respective professions councils.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Although it still remains the responsibility of the professions council to monitor compliance, the office of the relevant line manager shall as well embark on a monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that University employees, as described in section 4 above are CPD compliant. The monitoring system aims to ensure that staff members remain compliant as an indication that they are keeping abreast with the latest developments in their fields of specialization and are therefore providing ethical and best tuition to students.

The monitoring system will include submission of CPD activities attended, number of points earned, as well as a certificate or any equivalent from the professions council that indicates the compliant/non-compliant status. The portfolio of evidence shall be submitted as part of the performance contract to be submitted by employees at the end of each year or as required by a specific professions council.

MONITORING TOOL

Period	CPD points earned	Sources	Status	If non-compliant, plan of action

Status: Indicate whether an employee is compliant or non-compliant

1. Please attach a certificate or equivalent for the professions council as evidence of compliance/non-compliance.
2. Failure by the employee to submit this monitoring tool will be deemed as an employee being non-compliant.

10. CONCLUSION

The University has professionals in its employ who have to regularly demonstrate competence in their professions as required by their professions councils. While the University has to provide a conducive environment and support for the development of all its professionals, it is equally important for professionals themselves to take charge of their professional growth.

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