



TITLE: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
PUBLISHED: 2009
IDENTIFIER: PL200907
LEGISLATION: *Education Act 2004 (ACT)*
Public Sector Management Act 1994 (ACT)
Public Sector Management Standards 2006 (ACT)
Government Procurement Act 2001 (ACT)

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The ACT Department of Education and Training (the Department) values professional learning for all staff to enhance their effectiveness and performance in support of better outcomes for all students in ACT public schools.
- 1.2 All staff members will undertake ongoing professional learning that develops their skills, knowledge and understandings.
- 1.3 Central office and schools will provide professional learning opportunities that contribute to the professional growth of all staff members.
- 1.4 Professional learning will address individual, school, departmental, ACT Government and national strategic directions for both teaching and administrative staff located at the Department's schools and other sites.
- 1.5 Professional learning of teaching, administrative and school support staff will model the principles of exemplary practice.
- 1.6 Professional learning will be provided through workshops, seminars, conferences, online learning, informal sharing of information in the workplace, on-the-job training, mentoring, coaching, shadowing programs, work exchanges, career management and development activities, skills training in vocational and tertiary education programs, or other recognised effective adult learning modes.

2 RATIONALE

- 2.1 This policy describes the obligations of central office, schools and individual staff members in the development and maintenance of professional learning practices and programs.

- 2.2 This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Professional Learning Guidelines*.

3 DEFINITIONS

ACT Public Service Learning and Development Framework

A framework that is designed to guide all ACT Government agencies in their provision and promotion of targeted learning and development programs and activities

Department

ACT Department of Education and Training

Induction

A process which facilitates effective transition of new staff members into new employment

New Educator Coordinator

Staff member with responsibility for coordinating support for New Educators at each school

Online delivery

Provision of professional learning through electronic channels, such as email, internet, intranet, discussion forums, and learning management systems

Personal Development Plan

The performance management planning document for administrative and support staff members and building service officers employed by the Department

Principal Appraisal

The performance management process that includes professional learning requirements for school principals

Professional learning

Refers to purposeful, planned training and development activities that enhance the effectiveness and performance of staff members.

Professional Learning Coordinator

The contact person for professional learning activities and programs in each workplace

Professional Learning Priorities

Priorities published on an annual basis that reflect the Department's strategic direction

Professional Pathways Plan

The performance management plan that ACT Government school teachers are required to have in place, which includes proposed professional learning activities.

4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Professional learning should take into account the following principles of effective professional learning, as detailed in the *ACT Public Service Learning and Development Framework*:
- *Evidence-based*: Arrangements for professional learning make use of the best available evidence in relation to the context in which participants are working - including, for teachers, evidence about student learning outcomes, student learning needs and the way students learn
 - *Differentiated*: A variety of professional learning options should be used to meet the diverse range of individual and organisational learning needs
 - *Exemplary*: Professional learning should reflect leading practice in processes and currency in content and should result in new and improved professional practices
 - *Contextually relevant*: A suitable mix of delivery modes should be used to target the learning needs of teaching, administrative and support staff
 - *Personalised*: Professional learning programs should be designed and delivered recognising that individuals approach learning in different ways and learn through a variety of delivery modes, both formal and informal
 - *Appropriate for adult learners*: Professional learning programs should recognise the autonomy of adult learners, the importance of learner self-direction, and the value of professional learning tasks that are relevant to participants' work roles and their broader lives.

5 PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The central office of the Department will:
- ensure that ACT Government commitments, plans, policies and frameworks in relation to staff professional learning are implemented
 - provide and maintain facilities such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning for delivery of Department endorsed professional learning
 - arrange for the induction of all new teaching and administrative staff and the orientation for newly promoted staff
 - report on professional learning activities in the Department's Annual Report
 - ensure that system level professional learning events and significant meetings are advertised through the Professional Learning and Events Calendar.
- 5.2 Directors, principals and managers, in consultation with staff, will provide appropriate support to:
- ensure that professional learning is embedded in school or directorate business plans
 - ensure that professional learning caters for the identified needs of staff
 - provide new teachers and administrative staff with individual, structured, sustained workplace induction programs and support at the commencement of their careers and on transition to new workplaces
 - evaluate professional learning activities and capture data on staff participation in professional learning for use in system reporting purposes
 - ensure that the school or section has a designated Professional Learning Coordinator who acts as a contact point between the school or directorate and the central office

- ensure that each school has a New Educator Coordinator who has responsibility for the induction and support of teachers in their first three years of teaching.
- 5.3 Individuals will identify their own professional learning needs and goals in consultation with their supervisors, and will:
- pursue ongoing professional learning in all aspects of their work
 - critically reflect on their practice and achievements and the impacts on student learning outcomes
 - consider the priorities of the Department and of their school or section in planning their professional learning
 - contribute to the professional learning of colleagues through sharing of information in the workplace and at system level
 - provide evidence of their work-related professional learning in their Professional Pathways Plan (for teaching staff), or Personal Development Plan (for administrative and support staff).

6 FUNDING OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- 6.1 Funding sources for professional learning include:
- school and section budgets
 - Professional Learning Fund (including scholarships)
 - external funding such as Commonwealth grants
 - individual expenditure.
- 6.2 Professional learning funds are to be allocated, managed and reported on as described in the *Professional Learning Guidelines*.

Policy Owner: Director, Curriculum Support and Professional Learning

Related Documents: *Professional Learning Guidelines*

For additional documents, and for current links to online locations of these documents, refer to the *Professional Learning Guidelines*.