2.3.1 Continuing Professional Development for Staff

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Policy area:	2.3 Staff Support and Development
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Terminology

KWETB encourages continuous learning for all staff and supports and provides opportunities for development of skills, knowledge and competence via three contexts:

1. **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** refers to centrally funded and self-directed, independent studies detailed in KWETB's Learning and Development Policy. The Human Resources Department are responsible for receipt, administration, processing and record keeping for all CPD Applications and Activity.
2. **Professional Learning and Development (PLD)** refers to all other PLD activities. These may be centrally organised by the PD team or provided through external agencies. Examples of PLD activities include the following, DigCap PD programme, KWETB PD events, courses on the KWETB Microlearning Platform, Communities of Practice (CoPs), online learning, in-person workshops, this list is not exhaustive.
3. **Organisational Directed Training and Development** and/or Compliance Training. KWETB may direct specific training to certain categories of staff or all staff, this is managed locally and/or coordinated by the relevant department generally within the OSD Division.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that a culture of learning is fostered, promoted and supported for all staff working in KWETB. The success of KWETB in delivering high quality FET provision is dependent on our people. KWETB work hard to recruit people of the highest calibre however it is also essential, as a learning organisation, that we support our staff in their roles and to continually develop their knowledge, skills and potential.

Scope

KWETB is committed to the education, learning and development of all staff. This procedure applies to all FET Provision. There is an integrated single policy for Learning and Development across the organisation, furthered with FET specific PLD coordinated and facilitated by PD Co-ordinator.

Preamble

Staff in KWETB's FET services are encouraged to engage in ongoing and continuous learning and development which is accessible, promoted, transparent and available in accordance with the KWETB Learning and Development Policy. To further support culture of learning for all staff across all provision a KWETB Learning and Development Strategy 2024-2027 is currently under development.

Agencies and Provision

KWETB staff are encouraged to engage with all relevant agencies such as ETBI (National PLD Hub) and SOLAS (Professional Development Strategy for Staff Employed in ETBs), the Teaching Council of Ireland and KWETB provided PLD programmes.

KWETB also liaise with Further Education Support Services (FESS) who schedule a calendar of events for FET staff. Staff who participate in Continued Professional Development (CPD) and PLD programmes are encouraged to share their learning with other staff, team members and colleagues.

Reporting

Under the Statement of Strategy, all KWETB staff organisational training/PLD which is centrally organised and/or delivered by FET Systems and Support team is captured across the organisation on a quarterly basis review through a PD tracker. This feeds into an organisation wide report which is issued to Senior Management Team for consideration, measurement of impact and recommendations.

KWETB engage in reporting on PLD activities to SOLAS as required.

Applying for CPD

KWETB staff may make applications for CPD funding for the following types of programmes:

- Undergraduate Certificate (yearlong) (Level 6)
- Undergraduate Diploma programme (Level 7)
- Undergraduate Degree Programme (Level 7/8)
- Post-graduate Certificate/ Diploma Programmes (Level 8/9)
- Masters Programmes (Level 9)
- Doctoral Programmes (Level 10)
- Other skills programmes where fees are in excess of €500

- Fees under €500 should be considered locally

Applicants must refer to the KWETB Learning and Development Policy in advance of making an application for grant aid.

Approval of CPD

Funding is supported for programmes that:

- Are directly related to the post that the applicant is fulfilling in KWETB
- Are related to the Centre/Service Development Plan
- Are relevant to the objectives of KWETB's Strategic Plan
- Provide a positive benefit to the organisation and the staff member's career progression objectives

Approval of applications for CPD will be subject to facilitate participation without unduly affecting provision to learners/impacting the service provided and to available funding. CPD may take the form of participation in a programme of education or training delivered by a higher education institution (HEI); specific training associated with KWETB's Statement of Strategy or in mandatory training. Specific target groups of staff may be required to participate in specific CPD to enhance their knowledge, skills and competence relevant to a specific job description or industry need or where it is identified that there is a specific skills gap.

In order to avail of support, applicants must have completed a minimum of one year's satisfactory service with KWETB or have successfully completed a probationary period.

Staff will be encouraged to participate in specific international projects which are linked to Statement of Strategy and Quality Assurance objectives. There are specific arrangements for these instances of CPD.

PLD & Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning (TEL)

Technology is a feature of everyday teaching and learning that enhances learning experience and classroom practice and facilitates Universal Design for Learning. KWETB's PD Virtual Hub, a Team site is managed by the PDTEL Team communicates and shares details of learning opportunities and links to external PD opportunities, support resources, FET PD Video Channel and KWETB Learn (Microlearning Platform).

Staff are encouraged to participate in the Digital Capabilities Professional Development (DigCap PD) which is a 6-month programme of PLD for KWETB FET Educators aligned to the European Framework for Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu).

Procedure – 2.3.1 Continuing Professional Development

The CPD Funding Application Process

1	Line Managers should circulate the KWETB policy for learning and development to staff about opportunities to avail of CPD support during staff meetings throughout the year, and ensure that key deadlines are included in relevant calendars and schedules.
2	Prospective applicants should refer to the Learning and Development policy in full before making an application for grant aid.
3	The AEO should circulate a reminder of the application deadline to all staff in January every year, giving details of key dates for submission to the Line Manager for approval signatures.
4	The Line Manager should review the application and approve or seek further clarification.
5	The applicant should submit a fully complete and approved application on CPD Grant Aid Claim Form B to Human Resources (HR) prior to April 30th.
6	SMT should assess applications for grant aid assessed based on the specific criteria detailed in the policy.

7	Funding decisions should be made by the Directors of KWETB (OSD, FET and Schools) in conjunction with the Chief Executive, depending on
	    a. Available funds
	    b. How the applicant meets the criteria
	    c. Whether the applicant is subject to formal retraining or redeployment/organisational necessity
	    d. Whether previous applications have been supported or not

8	HR should notify applicants in writing by HR of the outcome of the application and of the amount approved, detailing the drawdown process and conditions of the grant. Amounts of grant aid are defined in the KWETB learning and development policy and may vary from time to time.
9	The Chief Executive should sanction statutory or mandatory CPD which should be fully funded.
10	Successful Applicants may be requested to give lectures/talks to staff where required and furnish outcomes of research and copies of these to KWETB.

11	Successful Applicants who leave KWETB within three years of completion will be required to refund KWETB's grant aid as follows:
	    a. Within 1 year: 75% of all costs
	    b. Within 2 years: 50% of all costs
	    c. Within 3 years: 25% of all costs.

12	During the programme, staff other than teachers and special needs assistants may avail of study leave, which is detailed in the Learning and Development policy.

Procedure to Apply for CPD Funding

Adapted from Appendix D: KWETB Learning and Development Policy

1	The staff member should look at their course of interest and see if it fits with the terms of the KWETB Learning and Development Policy.
2	The staff member should complete the CPD funding application form in full and attach all relevant information to support the application. Taking care to outline the following: - How the course meets the criteria outlined in point 2 of the policy. - The full details and information on the course including course certification, content, cost and duration and amount of grant aid requested. - A plan to minimising the course's work and attendance impact on their role. - Details on any other funding applications or rebates that will be sought to support the course.
3	The staff member must ensure all necessary approvals and recommendations at point 5 and 6 on the application form are completed.
4	The staff member should submit the form to HR for CE and SMT consideration and final approvals.
5	Forms are compiled and brought by HR to the SMT for Final Decisions/CE. Authorisation.
6	HR write to the applicant to advise of the final decision of SMT.
7	Where funding was granted the staff member can submit a CPD Grant Claim form to access monies in line with the policy and funding agreement.

Link to other Policies/Procedures

2.1.5	Information to Staff
2.3.1	Learning and Development
2.4.2	Staff International Activity