



## FUNDING OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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<b>Version:</b>	Final				
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>This policy describes the criteria and procedures for members and staff seeking funding from the Council for professional development activities.</p> <p>It includes the Council's processes for budget allocation and payment of training costs.</p>				
<b>Applies to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of NSW</li><li>• Appointees to Impaired Registrants Panels, Performance Review Panels, Professional Standards Committees, the Nursing and Midwifery Tribunal</li><li>• HPCA staff working directly on Council business who wish to apply for Council funding for learning and development activities overseas. For all other HPCA staff applications for learning and development, Council approval is not required and the process for approval specified in the NSW Health, Learning and Development Policy (PD 2006_066) applies.</li></ul>				
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<b>Related legislation, Awards, Policy and Agreements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nursing and Midwifery Council Learning and Development Policy</li><li>• HPCA Official Travel Policy</li><li>• HPCA Member Remuneration and Payment Policy</li><li>• NSW Health Learning and Development Policy (PD2006_066)</li><li>• NSW Health Learning and Development Leave Policy (PD2005_255)</li><li>• Personnel Handbook</li></ul>				
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<b>Approval date:</b>	3 October 2013				



## FUNDING OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The Nursing and Midwifery Council of New South Wales places significant value on the professional growth and development of members of the Council, committees and panels and staff of the Health Professional Councils Authority (HPCA) who work directly with the Council.

### PURPOSE

This policy describes the professional development activities the Council may support and the procedures for members and staff seeking funding for such activities.

It includes the Council's processes for budget allocation and payment of training costs.

It does not relate to group activities provided by the Council, the HPCA or other bodies to which members are invited, or to mandatory training, such as the Council's online professional development program. It does not relate to learning and development activities of HPCA staff other than when applying for funding for travel overseas.

### MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

All learning and development activities for which Council funding is sought must have direct relevance to the Council and its responsibilities under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)* (the Law) and the issues facing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

Support for and approval of staff training is made according to relevant HPCA, NSW Health and NSW Government legislation and policies.

All overseas travel must be endorsed by the Council and approved by the Ministry of Health.

### KEY DEFINITIONS

**Members** includes any member of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of NSW, a Council governance committee or an associated regulatory body, and is inclusive of all membership categories and positions held. It also includes Section 150 Inquiry delegates, interviewers, panellists, assessors, experts and other ad hoc participants in Council activities.

**Staff** includes permanent employees working in a full-time or part-time capacity, at all levels of the HPCA who work on Council business.

The **Law** means the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law No 86a*.

## **FUNDING**

### **Sources of funding**

Each year, the Council will determine the budget available for professional development. The budget will be determined by past expenditure and any priority learning and development needs that may be identified through individual or Council-wide evaluation, planning or review.

The Council also has an Education and Research Account which the Council may expend for education and research purposes relevant to its regulatory functions. At the end of each financial year, the Council will determine whether the professional development expenditure should be debited from the Education and Research Account, or funded from the Training budget line item. (Under the Law, expenditure from the Education and Research Account requires approval by a two thirds majority of Council members).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

The Council believes that it is essential that Council decision-makers have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities under the Law. All members and staff are encouraged to attend professional development activities that support their Council related responsibilities and to further their individual learning and growth. To achieve this, the Council's competency based education program, induction sessions and other events organised by the Council and HPCA aim to develop knowledge and skills relevant to Council's regulatory functions.

This policy relates to Council support for activities that complement these programs. This includes activities that an individual member or staff may identify and make application. or that the Council may identify as a priority need or activity. In this latter case the Council may call for expressions of interest from members and/or staff to attend.

Individual professional development which may be eligible for funding includes support to attend an external course, conference or other relevant activity to meet a specific knowledge gap or identified need. In some circumstances, educational activities that contribute to meeting the continuing professional development standard for registration may also be considered, but only when the education has relevance to the work of the Council.

For HPCA staff it includes overseas study or travel related to professional development.

In addition to the activities covered by this policy, the Council will, in general ,provide funding for staff training and skill development to ensure ongoing efficient, effective and high quality service provision to enable the Council to meet its functions and objectives.

Applications for funding must not relate to:

- membership of professional organisations
- mandatory training.

### **Selection Criteria**

The following criteria should be addressed when applying for funding and will be used for assessing applications:

1. The relevance of the activity and the applicant's responsibilities in relation to the objectives of the Law and/or the Council's strategic plan.
2. The applicant's potential for growth and development in their current or future role(s), or that supports career goals.
3. Length of service and active contribution to Council business.
4. Expertise relevant to and/or contribution to the event, including if presenting or participating in a formal capacity.
5. Ability to increase contribution to the Council as a result of attendance or participation.
6. Knowledge and skills that will be met.
7. Other financial support options available to attend.
8. Whether the applicant has previously received funding from the Council.

### **Application procedures**

Applicants must submit all relevant information on the Council's professional development application form (Attachment 1), including program details, all costs and related expenses and address the selection criteria. A copy of the program information, flyer or other documentation about the activity must be attached.

Applications involving travel and payment of expenses must comply with the HPCA Official Travel Policy and the HPCA Member Payment and Remuneration Policy (applies to all members).

Applications should be submitted as far in advance as possible to enable the approval process and confirmation to be completed in time. This is particularly the case where travel is involved, and a long lead time is required for overseas travel applications.

### **Approval**

Applications will be considered on merit taking into account the estimated cost and available funds in the Council budget.

Applications will be assessed according to the selection criteria and any other professional learning or other priority that the Council may determine at the time.

Staff applications for overseas travel will be assessed in line with the applicant's learning and development needs identified through the HPCA performance management program but must also be approved by the Council. Staff should discuss their training needs with their supervisor. Routine training does not require

approval by Council and is approved by the Executive officer and the Executive of HPCA in line with the NSW Health Policy (PD 2006\_066).

Applications received as a result of a call for expressions of interest by the Council will also be assessed against the selection criteria.

Full or partial funding may be provided for an activity or an application may be refused. The Executive Officer, or Council, may seek additional information from the applicant if necessary to assist in the approval process.

All overseas travel must be endorsed at a Council meeting and be approved by the Ministry of Health. Applicants should not accept an invitation to attend or participate in an activity involving travel without prior approval. A formal brief will be submitted to the Ministry if the Council supports the application.

### **Levels of funding**

The following table includes the maximum funding levels that may be approved and the approval processes that apply.

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Maximum funding</b>	<b>Approval process/authority</b>
HPCA Staff	All overseas education and travel	At a Council meeting
Council member	\$1,000	Executive Officer in consultation with the President
Council President	\$1,000	Executive Officer in consultation with the Deputy President
All Council members	Above \$1,000	At a Council meeting
Members of decision-making bodies	\$500	At a Council meeting

### **Confirming attendance**

Once approval has been given the applicant is responsible for confirming their attendance and seeking travel or other arrangements to be made. This must be done in accordance with the HPCA Official Travel Policy, whereby all travel arrangements, including flights and accommodation are made by the HPCA.

Staff must comply with NSW Health learning and development policies, complete the HPCA Learning and Development application procedures and submit the approved forms to the Administration Manager.

### **Inability to attend approved activity**

The Executive Officer must be notified as soon as is practicable if for any reason attendance at the approved activity is not possible. The Executive Officer may:

- identify a replacement member or staff to attend
- investigate cancellation policies
- seek a refund of monies paid
- request reimbursement of the total or a proportion of expenses, or
- defer attendance if possible.

### **Feedback to the Council**

A written summary of the critical issues, key messages and learning outcomes arising from the activity must be provided to the Council within one month after the event. A longer timeframe may be negotiated with the Executive Officer if necessary. The written report will be included in the next available Council meeting agenda papers and may be provided to other members and staff for information. The Council may also request a presentation or attendance at a meeting to facilitate information exchange.

A report may not be required if the activity was widely attended by other Council members.

Participants are also encouraged to share their experience and learning with colleagues.

### **Information provided to the Council**

The Council will be notified at the next available Council meeting of the professional development activities that have been approved in the preceding period.

This may include a request for approval for the funding to be transferred to the Education and Research Account (which may otherwise be sought annually).

### **Other reporting requirements**

All overseas travel must be reported in the Council's Annual Report. A summary of professional development activities attended will also be included in the Annual Report.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Nursing and Midwifery Council – Learning and Development Policy (HP12/1638)
2. HPCA Official Travel Policy.
3. HPCA Member Payment and Remuneration Policy.
4. NSW Health, Learning and Development Policy
5. NSW Health, Learning and Development Leave Policy
6. NSW Public Service Commission, NSW Personnel Handbook.



## APPLICATION FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Section A	Details
Name:	_____
Current position(s) on Council (or other):	_____
Length of service:	_____
Contact details:	Phone: _____
	Email: _____

Section B	Details
Name and type of activity (conference, course, workshop):	_____
Organising body:	_____
Dates &/or times (inclusive):	_____
Venue:	_____

Please attach all relevant information pertaining to the activity.

Funds sought:

Estimated Costs	Amount in \$AU
Registration fee*	
Travel expenses**	
Accommodation expenses**	
Meals and incidental expenses**	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	

\*\* Expenses will be reimbursed up to current approved rates in accordance with the HPCA's Official Travel Policy and Member Payment and Remuneration Policy on presentation of receipts.

\*Are you eligible for membership or other discount rates? Yes  No  N/A

Are you receiving or applying for financial assistance for this activity from another organisation? Yes  No

If yes, Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organisation \_\_\_\_\_

**Section C** **Assessment Criteria**

Please address all criteria. Information provided will assist with an objective assessment of your application.

**1. What relevance does the activity have to the functions of the Council, the objectives of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)* or the Council's strategic plan?**

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**2. What relevance does the activity have to your own professional development?**

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**3. How will your attendance benefit the Council? What associated benefits, networking and related opportunities will result from your participation?**

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**4. Do you have a formal role in the professional development activity?**

- Paper or poster  Panel member  Chair   
 Other  N/A

Provide details:

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**5. List any previous financial support you have received from the Nursing and Midwifery Council for professional development activities**

Name	Dates(s) attended	Financial assistance received

**Section D Undertaking**

I agree to:

- Attend (or otherwise participate in) the funded activity or event.
- Inform the Executive Officer if unable to attend or participate.
- Submit a written report to the Executive Officer within one month outlining the critical issues and key messages discussed and learned and including a reflective statement of my learning outcomes.
- Provide all receipts of expenses or other documentation required by the HPCA's Official Travel Policy and Member Payment and Remuneration Policy (as appropriate).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Office use

Date received	Approved by (Name and title)	Date approved