



RHODES UNIVERSITY

POLICY TITLE:	Staff Development Policy
DATE OF APPROVAL:	Staff Development Committee 29 April 2009 Support Staffing Committee 24 June 2010
DATE OF APPROVAL BY SENATE:	18 th March 2005 / 27 August 2010
DATE OF APPROVAL BY COUNCIL:	6 th October 2005 / 09 September 2010
COMMENCEMENT DATE:	1 st October 2000 /
REVIEW DATE:	Every three years, next review by January 2013
TRANSLATION into isiXhosa required:	Yes
LAST REVIEWED	December 2009

RESPONSIBILITY:

IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING:

- HR Director with regards to staff development of all support staff and academics in their roles other than teaching and research
- Dean of Teaching and Learning with regard to staff development associated with the academic teaching role
- Director of Research Office with regards to staff development associated with the academic research role

REVIEW AND REVISION:

- HR Director in consultation with the Director of Research Office, Deputy Vice-chancellor: Research & Development and the Dean of Teaching and Learning via the Support Staffing Committee

REPORTING STRUCTURE: (note each line is separate and in the same order as above)

- HR Director → Support Staffing Committee → Senate → Council
- Dean of Teaching and Learning → Vice-Chancellor → Support Staffing Committee → Senate → Council
- Director of Research Office → Deputy Vice-chancellor: Research & Development → Support Staffing Committee → Senate → Council

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 POLICY DECLARATION:

Higher education today is undergoing significant transformation due to global as well as national changes and pressures. In dealing with the main issues confronting the University, all staff need to be dedicated, confident and competent and where relevant, pro-active, in their fields of knowledge or expertise, the educational process and/or in the management of staff. This is achieved through providing developmental opportunities for staff and recognising that the capability and commitment of employees, at all levels and in all roles, is critical to the institution's efficiency and effectiveness.

Consistent with the Mission and Vision statement of the University, Rhodes is striving to create an organisational culture where all staff strive for excellence and where development is seen as critical to the achievement thereof. To do so, staff must be reflective practitioners concerned with the evolving character of their work and their own development needs, engaging in life-long learning. In turn, staff must be supported through the provision of appropriate opportunities and resources, active removal of barriers to development and recognition for engaging in personal development.

2.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of staff development has four inter-related considerations.

1. Staff development aims to increase individual effectiveness and efficiency by encouraging and supporting staff to achieve individual work and career goals.
2. Through enhancing the competence of staff, staff development will enable and assist employees to achieve the aims and objectives of the job, of their department/division and therefore, the University.
3. Investing in staff development will enhance the commitment of staff.
4. The provision of quality staff development opportunities will not only help the University retain staff but also be pivotal in attracting new staff to the institution.

2.3 DEFINITIONS:

Annual Training Report (ATR)	This is a report required by the Education Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) that reflects on what actual staff development has taken place in the institution, against the commitment made in the Workplace Skills Plan.
Workplace Skills Plan (WSP)	This report required by the Education Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) reflects the staff development that the institution is proposing to do in the next annual cycle.
The University	Refers to Rhodes University
Training	Activities focused on acquiring and improving specific competencies to improve performance in current jobs and positions in line with the goals and targets of the University.
Managers	For the purposes of this policy, Managers within the University include the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Heads of Departments/Division/ Institutes and Units as well as Section Managers and supervisors i.e., any individual who is responsible for the supervision or management of other staff.
Development	Education, training and development activities focused on personal and professional development of University staff.
Support Staff	Staff not directly involved with the teaching and research functions of the University.
Transfer of Learning	Transfer of learning ensures that what is learnt in a formal setting away usually from the job finds its way back into the workplace and actually impacts the way the job is done by the individual.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 THE ACTIONS AND PROCESSES BY WHICH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY WILL BE ACHIEVED:

3.1.1 PRINCIPLES and PRACTICE

In demonstrating its commitment to staff development, Rhodes University will endeavour to ensure that the following principles inform the practice and procedures of staff development. Examples of the current practice are provided.

(a) STRATEGIC ROLE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development must play a strategic role in helping the institution affirm its mission of being a centre of excellence for higher education. To this end, development needs shall be articulated in terms of organisational aims and objectives.

This is the primary responsibility of the Director: Human Resources in consultation and assisted by the Research Office and the Dean of Teaching & Learning who must explore the staff development implications of institutional strategy. This is incorporated in the annual workplace skills plan submitted to the Education Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA).

(b) NEEDS DRIVEN

Staff development must be needs driven rather than being dictated by what is available or desirable. Determining needs involves being both proactive and responsive. Staff development should be proactive in seeking to provide opportunities for staff to update, extend or acquire new skills or knowledge within an environment of continually changing demands. It should seek to determine these needs in a systematic manner by looking at the challenges of the external and internal context of the institution. However, staff development should also be responsive in addressing specific needs of individual members of staff where appropriate.

Needs are currently identified:

- *from the strategic objectives of the institution,*
- *in liaison with managers*
- *in liaison with the staff.*

Currently no formal performance management system exists which identifies needs at the individual level in a more proactive way.

(c) RESPONSIBILITY

It must be recognised that the responsibility for the development of any one member of staff is shared by the University, the individual's manager and that individual. Failure to uphold this responsibility on the part of any one of the three parties will result in not only hindering the development of that individual but also the development of the institution. Accordingly, appropriate mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the different responsibilities are met by these parties.

The University is responsible for the effective provision of opportunities for staff development on a sustainable basis. Within the institution and reporting to the Vice-Chancellor or DVC Research & Development and the Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Director: HR, this responsibility falls primarily to the Human Resources Division who will also be guided and assisted by the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) and the Research Office.

The **Human Resources Division** is concerned with the training and development of support staff as well as that of academic staff on matters other than teaching and research.

The Dean of Teaching and Learning and staff of the **Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL)** provide leadership and support to all relevant staff groups in relation to the development of teaching and learning.

The **Research Office** focuses on the research development needs of primarily academic and research staff.

Managers, together with the HR Division, CHERTL and the Research Office, share responsibility for ensuring the development of staff. Managers must be held accountable for encouraging and assisting staff to take advantage of the opportunities provided, guiding them in their career development, facilitating their access to development opportunities in line with their career development and institutional needs, implementing development strategies to address problematic performance (where appropriate) and ensuring the transfer of learning.

Ultimate responsibility for the development of work-related skills and knowledge rests with each member of staff. Staff are expected not only to undertake initial developmental activities upon joining the institution but to engage continuously in identifying and meeting their own further needs and in response to institutional demands. Where appropriate, they are expected to share their own work-related expertise with others so that the benefits they bring to the University and to other staff can be maximised. Staff are also encouraged to contribute to the development of others e.g., through mentoring and counselling.

The Support Staffing Committee, reporting to Senate and Council, is an overarching structure that monitors the contribution of the above areas and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff development contributes to the realization of the vision and mission of the University
- Promoting excellence in staff development
- Advising Senate and Council on the formulation and implementation of University policy, systems and programmes for effective staff development
- Ensuring consistency in principle, if not practice, in the design, implementation and evaluation of skills development policy, programmes and systems across academic and support staff
- Raising awareness of the importance and need for effective staff development
- Assisting in the identification of development priorities
- Ensuring the provision of quality, effective training and development programmes
- Assessing the effectiveness of policy, programmes and systems relating to staff development

This committee meets twice a year and is chaired by the Registrar of Finance & Operations. It includes all three agents involved in staff development as well as a cross section of staff and management. It meets the legislative requirements of a Training Committee as outlined by the Skills Development Act.

Consideration of staff development issues takes place in

- 1 Teaching and Learning Committee
- 2 Joint Research Committee
- 3 Support Staffing Committee

The Support Staffing Committee provides the overarching structure for the above committees and ensures the compilation of the relevant SETA skills reports.

(d) FLEXIBLE PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES

In addressing staff development needs, a flexible and creative approach to providing the necessary opportunities must be taken. As a result staff development should not be defined too narrowly as it can encompass a wide variety of activities including but not limited to attendance at relevant courses, workshops and conferences; undertaking self-directed study, research, academic and study leave; networking; receiving guidance on-the-job such as mentoring and coaching; having opportunities to take on more responsibility, to practice new skills or apply new knowledge as well as processes such as developmental appraisals and establishing personal development plans. The nature of the training and/or development opportunity should be contingent on the individual concerned as well as the type of training or development needed based on job demands and the cost effectiveness thereof.

The Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning provides:

- *one on one consultations with staff*
- *workshops to departments which guide them in implementing sound teaching and learning practices appropriate to their contexts*
- *programmes leading to formal qualifications (e.g. Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDHE), Masters in Education, PhD in Higher Education Studies,)*
- *formal short courses for staff (e.g. The Assessors' Course) and*
- *informal short programmes (e.g. The Lecturers' Orientation Programme)*
- *administers funds for ad hoc teaching opportunities related to teaching and learning*
- *runs workshops on the supervision of post-graduate students.*

The Research Office

- *recommends changes to the nature of study leave for academics to continue with their professional development and together with the Deans, the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor approves applications for study leave and assesses compliance with leave conditions*
- *accesses and administers funds for academics to attend research conferences*
- *may provide funding for academics to do qualifications at other academic institutions.*
- *Supports time-out opportunities for academics to complete qualifications and develop a research profile.*

The HR Division provides:

Staff development training

- *Staff development funding for ad hoc skills training and further study towards a qualification Staff training certificate courses e.g Supervision, Office Administration, variety of computer literacy courses*
- *Career Development Advice*
- *Adult Basic Education & Training*
- *Matric programme*
- *Induction of new academic and support staff*
- *Head of Department (HoD) Induction, including provision of a resource guide of HoDs*

In addition, staff can also study at Rhodes University either completing a single course, Honours, Masters or PhDs.

(e) SOUND PRACTICE

Effective staff development means the application of principles of good practice in the fields of training and development, academic development and research as well as keeping up to date with advances in these fields and in the relevant legislation.

Quality assurance initiatives in this area include:

- *Ensuring that staff facilitating development opportunities are appropriately qualified*
- *Design of curricula using outcomes and in some cases against unit standards, where feasible and/or desirable*
- *Use of appropriate facilitation methodologies including active learning strategies*
- *Where feasible, appropriate assessment of learners against course outcomes, providing formative and summative feedback*
- *Evaluation of courses/workshops and facilitation including peer reviews*

The University's Short-Course Policy governs the necessary quality assurance requirements. This policy ensures consistent practice in terms of the teaching and learning policies of the University namely, the Evaluation Policy, Assessment Policy, Curriculum Development Policy.

The University, on an annual basis, submits its two SETA reports namely, the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) and the Annual Training Report (ATR) (previously referred to as the implementation report).

All staff involved in the provision of staff development engage in ongoing development activities themselves.

(f) INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES

Within reasonable resource parameters, the University aims to ensure that staff have the maximum possible opportunity to engage in staff development initiatives. This involves the investment of resources such as money (e.g. through the availability of development funds, employing staff to run in house training programmes) and time (e.g. study leave, leave for examinations, managerial guidance and support).

(g) EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN ACCESS

In providing staff development opportunities, the University aims to ensure the maintenance and active promotion of equal opportunity. All staff should have access to appropriate staff development bearing in mind that such development must be relevant to the job or future service, the institution and the individual's current level of career development. Prioritising the development needs of staff will also require consideration such that staff may not always have automatic access to opportunities within the time period desired. Furthermore, preference will be given to staff who have not already benefited from the range of staff development opportunities.

Academic and support staff involved in development activities are tracked by gender, race and occupational category. These kinds of statistics are provided to the ETDP SETA in the Annual Training Report submitted.

In addition programmes that seek to contribute to the employment equity strategies of the University include:

- *Mellon Foundation Accelerated Development Programme for academics*
- *Kresge Foundation Accelerated Development Programme for academics*
- *Clerical Support Staff internships*
- *Catering Support Staff internships*
- *Kuyasa Internship programme for the disabled*
- *Graduate internships*
- *SETA internships e.g. Mining Qualification Authority's funding of academic posts in Geology*

(h) REMOVAL OF BARRIERS TO STAFF DEVELOPMENT

It is critical that barriers to staff development are identified and where possible, eliminated through the implementation of appropriate mechanisms. Such barriers may include management resistance, staff apathy, financial constraints, and lack of available time to train and timing of training. It is also important that barriers are not inadvertently created when offering training and development opportunities.

One of the tensions experienced by particularly young academic staff is whether, upon appointment, to participate in the Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDHE) or to pursue a further research qualification. Many of these academics find it difficult to accommodate options. CHERTL takes academic time commitments into account in the organisation of seminars for the PGDHE and workshops run. The Research Office also has a time-relief programme to address the difficulty that academics have in completing a further qualification. The HR Division actively approaches managers to identify barriers to training and to offer possible solutions on how to work around these. Staff can also approach the HR Division to for assistance with their managers in this regard.

(i) INFORMATION

Staff should be informed of staff development initiatives on an ongoing and timely basis.

Staff are informed of development opportunities via the following channels:

- *Electronic e-mail circulars: Top-list and HoD-list*
- *Circulars*
- *Letters sent directly to staff (e.g. Lecturers' Orientation or Management Courses) or e-mails*

- *Institutional newsletter: Rhodos*
- *In meetings held with staff and managers to talk about specific opportunities*
- *Brochures*
- *In one on one discussions with staff, particularly career related discussions*
- *Orientation for support staff and academic staff*
- *Talks to staff with the express purpose of talking about a particular development opportunity.*

Where necessary and relevant, the above communication is translated into IsiXhosa.

(j) RECOGNITION

Whilst it is acknowledged that development should in itself be rewarding, staff engaging in their own development need to be recognised for doing so.

Staff who are awarded a Masters or PhD since their employment at Rhodes are given a Thomas Alty Award. A Vice-Chancellor's Award is given to a member of staff who has acquired a Bachelor or Honours degree or a recognised professional qualification, and matric or NQF level 1 (grade 9) qualification. The HR Division runs an annual award ceremony to recognise those who have completed certificate courses. This is usually attended by someone from senior management. Participants' managers are also invited to attend.

(k) STAFF DEVELOPMENT LINKED TO CAREER PROSPECTS

Staff development must be linked to career prospects within the University. Bearing in mind the constraints of promotional prospects at the university, possible career paths (both in terms of upward promotion and different jobs in other sections of the university) should be identified and communicated to staff.

In the case of academic staff, the personal promotion procedure clearly outlines the relevant qualification needed to progress to a higher level

(l) DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STAFF

Special attention should be paid to the development of new staff. All new staff must receive appropriate training, development and guidance whilst on probation through initiatives such as induction, mentoring and appraisals.

All staff are given the opportunity to go through a formal induction and orientation process although this does take different forms for different staff and may take place at different times. In the case of support staff, the HR Division works with managers and supervisors in ensuring that new staff receive an appropriate induction as it relates to their job profiles. Formal mentoring schemes do exist (e.g. in the Support Staff Internship programme and the Mellon and Kresge Foundation Programme for Accelerated Development.

(n) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

All staff are expected and encouraged to participate in staff development initiatives directed at improving their effectiveness and efficiency as well as that of the University. Involvement in

particular staff development initiatives is usually voluntary. However, where involvement in training and development is required due to specific job responsibilities or demands, attendance will be required.

The voluntarism model exists in most instances. Policy training is made compulsory when necessary e.g. Chairpersons on Support Staff Selection Committees are required to undergo training before they are allowed to serve as chairs.

(o) **INTEGRATED HUMAN RESOURCE SYSTEM**

The development of staff should be part of an integrated human resource system where the procedures of recruitment and selection, merit awards and promotions, probation/tenure and staff development are taken into consideration when determining and implementing this policy on staff development. At best, the different practices should complement each other but at the very least, due care must be taken to ensure that these are not in conflict with each other.

3.2 REVIEW PROCEDURE:

Adherence to the policy is indirectly reviewed on an annual basis via the Workplace Skills Plan and Annual Training Report. Formal review of the policy would be initiated by the HR Director in consultation with the Director of Research Office and the Dean of Teaching and Learning. Thereafter, the policy will be reviewed by the Support Staffing Committee, before proceeding to Senate and finally to Council for approval.