



<b>POLICY:</b>	Learning and Development Policy
<b>FIRST DRAFT:</b>	ET 2017#13, ET 2018#09
<b>ADOPTED:</b>	UR2018#04
<b>AMENDMENTS:</b>	
<b>REVIEW:</b>	October 2023

# **Learning and Development Policy**

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

1.1 Mary Immaculate College recognises the importance of having a skilled workforce in order to achieve its strategic and operational plans and is committed to promoting learning and development opportunities for all staff members.

1.2 All policies, guidelines and protocols of Mary Immaculate College, will reflect the Colleges commitment to the promotion of equality and will be fully compliant with the provisions of prevailing equality legislation

## **2.0 Scope of Policy**

2.1 This Policy applies to staff learning and development activities and supports, other than supports and activities that are provided for under the Academic Staff Research Support and PLOA Policy.

2.2 This Policy is applicable to all learning and development activity occurring from commencement of the 2017/18 Academic Year.

2.3 Learning and Development comprises training and learning initiatives aimed at developing an individual's qualifications, knowledge and skills base for the performance of duties and for their professional growth and development.

2.4 The purpose of the policy is to

- Provide a framework for learning and development that ensures that all staff develop the necessary competencies and skills to support delivery of the College's strategic and operational plans.
- Provide information to all employees on details of how to access information on different types of learning and development opportunities available within the College.
- Set out the College Policy and procedures on:
  - funding assistance in respect of accredited external education courses
  - study and exam leave entitlements for staff
  - learning and development opportunities available to all staff

2.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academic Staff Research Support and PLOA Policy

## **3.0 Responsibilities**

3.1 All employees are encouraged to avail of learning and development opportunities provided by the College. Employees who wish to avail of the opportunities provided have a responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Policy.

3.2 It is the responsibility of line managers and heads of department to encourage and assist staff under their direction to identify learning and development

opportunities which would be of benefit to them to their department and to the College and to facilitate, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the attendance of staff at learning and development events.

3.3 It is the responsibility of the HR Office to organise learning and development events to meet staff training needs, to administer funding supports for academic programmes.

3.4 It is the responsibility of Executive Team to consider and approve applications for funding supports for academic programmes in accordance with the provisions of this Policy

#### **4.0 Accredited Academic Programmes**

4.1 The College will provide support to staff to undertake and complete accredited academic courses in the form of fees support subject to a career limit of €15,000 per employee, in addition to granting study/exam leave. Supports will only be provided for courses which are (a) directly related to the employee's current role or for professional development within the employee's current career trajectory and (b) for which there is an identifiable benefit to the College. The funding limit is applicable to support provided under the Learning and Development Policy and the Academic Staff Research Support and PLOA Policy.

4.2 Staff who wish to apply for support to undertake an accredited academic programme must complete the Application for Accredited Academic Course before the 10<sup>th</sup> of April of the year they intend to commence their course of study.

4.3 Applications must be submitted in the first instance to the Head of Department/Line Manager who will forward the application to the Human Resources Office with their recommendation.

4.4 The Director of Human Resources will submit applications to the Executive Team which will consider and make a decision on the applications on the basis of the applicants submission, the recommendations of the Head of Department/Line Manager and Director of Human Resources and resources available. The decision of Executive Team will be communicated to the applicant by the HR Office.

4.5 Reimbursement of fees can be claimed on successful completion of each semester of the course, on production of receipts and subject to evidence of satisfactory progress.

4.6 Where a staff member resigns from MIC within three years of completion of such a course, funding received must be repaid to the College as follows:

Staff who leave:

0-12 months after completion	-	100%
12-24 months after completion	-	50%
24-36 months after completion	-	25%

4.7 Where funding has been claimed and the staff member does not satisfactorily complete the course, the full value of any funding provided will be repaid to the College.

4.8 Staff undertaking an approved course of study may be granted 5 days paid leave for study and exam attendance for each year of the programme. Where an employee undertakes a programme over a period which is greater than the normal programme duration then study/exam leave will be granted in respect of the normal programme duration only, i.e., if an employee takes 4 years to complete a programme which has a normal duration of 2 years then the employee will have an entitlement to a maximum 10 days study/exam leave regardless of the length of time the employee takes to complete the programme.

4.9 Documentary evidence of the exams schedule must be provided by the staff member when applying for study/exam leave.

## **5.0 External Short Training Programmes**

5.1 Staff members who wish to attend training programmes for events which are of short duration may make an application to attend same through the HR Office. The applicant must provide details of the programme, including cost and confirmation that their Head of Department/Line Manager has approved their release to attend.

5.2 Applications for attendance at short courses will be considered in the context of relevance to the employee's role and available funding.

5.3 Applications for attendance at short courses abroad must have the approval of the College President.

5.4 Fees and expenses for attending short programmes must be claimed through Agresso. In no circumstances will fees or expenses be reimbursed for attendance at programmes in respect of which the employee has not received prior approval.

## **6.0 Training Programmes Delivered In House**

6.1 A number of learning and development programmes and activities are provided within the College delivered by external providers or by College staff. Details of such programmes are available on the College portal or are notified via e-mail communication from programme organisers.

6.2 All staff will be invited to identify learning and development requirements by participation in periodic training needs questionnaires.

6.3 Staff will be invited to express an interest in attending in house programmes and attendance will be confirmed subject to any limitations on numbers and the relevance of the programme to the individual's role.

6.4 In order to ensure that the maximum number of staff can attend events of interest to them and that costs are not unnecessarily incurred, staff who receive approval to attend a course and do not subsequently attend without adequate notice or

good reasons will not be permitted to attend further non mandatory or discretionary training events for a period of 12 months.

## **7.0 Evaluation**

7.1 To ensure that there is an appropriate and meaningful return on investment, monitoring and evaluation of learning and development initiatives will be undertaken to assess individual and organisational benefits.