



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING POLICY

Professional learning and development is at the heart of an effective and continuously growing teaching profession

(Fullan & Hargraves 2016)

PURPOSE

The purpose of Professional Learning is to support teachers to identify their own areas for growth within the framework of college priorities, established in the Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), and fulfil the Education State declaration that *'All teachers have an obligation to improve their practice'*. Further, through *'Collaborative Professionalism'* teachers can build *'self-efficacy, moral purpose and a willingness to teach to one's best'* so that they can provide improved learning outcomes for all students.

'If we create a culture where every teacher believes they need to improve, not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better, there is no limit to what we can achieve'.

(Dylan Wiliam, Institute of Education, University of London).

Mount Waverley Secondary College also believes that professional learning programs that are targeted and needs-based provide optimum opportunities for professional growth, and improved student outcomes. The aim of the college is to provide opportunities for all staff to further their professional knowledge, skills and/or qualifications, and to further develop their awareness, knowledge and skills in current teaching and learning practices and pedagogies which are synonymous with high performing schools and a high performing learning culture.

Professional learning priorities are accessed through staff meetings, faculty meetings, team meetings, Professional Learning Programs, whole school sessions, specialised groupings, coaching, team teaching, mentoring, VIT support meetings, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and other collegiate activities. All staff are mandated to attend staff meetings and the faculty meetings and Teacher Practice Team (TPT) they belong to.

PURPOSE

- To enhance the capacity of all staff to contribute to the achievement of college priorities and goals, as articulated by the Education State, the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO), the college Strategic Plan and the Annual Implementation Plan
- To provide the appropriate support for teachers and the school community to continually develop their knowledge and skills in current teaching and learning practices to address their needs and context
- To ensure understanding of, and compliance with, DET policies and regulatory protocols - including Ministerial Orders 199 on staff conduct and duties, and Order 870 on child safe standards - and the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Ethics
- To provide and support appropriate career opportunities and succession pathways where required
- To inform performance management processes

Professional learning is informed by the AITSL documentation:

- 'Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of teachers and School Leaders'
- 'Australian Teacher performance and Development Framework', and
- 'National Professional Standards for Teachers'

Professional Learning at Mount Waverley Secondary College, as a high performing learning community, is:

- Focused on **improving student outcomes** and **achieving student learning growth**.
- Focused on school-based learning that may be complemented by external learning opportunities
- Informed by research, data and evidence, internally and externally generated, including:
 - NAPLAN
 - Student Attitudes to School Survey
 - Parent Opinion Survey
 - Staff Opinion Survey
 - Student Teaching and Learning surveys
 - VCE data
 - Staff identified 'Areas of Growth' in pedagogy
- Collaborative so that knowledge, expertise and experience is shared amongst staff. Staff are expected to share professional understandings, knowledge and skills within the college (staff meetings, faculty meetings, team meetings, Professional Learning sessions and other cross curricular team groupings and so on) to improve their own professional development and that of their colleagues
- Directly relevant to the work of staff and linked to college goals and targets, and thus be planned in accordance with the Strategic Plan, team and personal professional learning areas for growth

The implementation of professional learning at Mount Waverley Secondary College will ensure that the professional growth of staff is developed co-operatively, resources are used effectively and evaluation of the program occurs frequently and rigorously.

Examples of professional learning opportunities offered at the college include:

- Whole staff meetings and presentations
- Site meetings
- Leadership meetings
- Faculty team meetings
- PDP and PLC meetings
- Professional Learning Day and Weeks
- Coaching, mentoring, team-teaching and other collegiate meetings
- Classroom sharing, team teaching and celebrations of learning
- Peer Observation
- Access to external opportunities run by organisations such as Bastow and subject associations
- Access to FISO based external opportunities facilitated by a range of presenters and organisations
- Mentoring and Peer Observation opportunities with Mount Waverley Secondary College Learning Specialists

IMPLEMENTATION

The Learning Executive (in consultation with the Executive Team) is responsible for the development of a planned approach to professional learning at Mount Waverley Secondary College.

Professional learning will be developed for the whole college (but not necessarily at a whole staff level) based on the following areas:

- Federal and State Education priorities
- College Strategic Plan
- Annual Implementation Plan priorities
- Whole school professional learning needs
- Faculty area priorities and needs
- Student management priorities and needs
- Projects determined by the Principal and Leadership Team

AREAS FOR GROWTH

As part of the Performance and Development Culture at Mount Waverley Secondary College, all staff (except first year graduate teachers who complete the VIT requirements for full registration) are expected to complete a Performance Development Plan (PDP) which is based on the college Annual Implementation Plan, the National Teacher Standards produced by the Australian Institute for Teachers and School Leaders (AITSL), and is incorporated within their Professional Learning Plan.

The Performance Development cycle is a 12 month process that starts in February of each year and is completed in December of the same year.

Each teacher is a member of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) which is comprised of 5-8 members, and is led by a Leading Teacher or Campus Principal and supported by a Learning Specialist. The process is documented, updated and verified on each staff member's individual EduPay portal, which PLC team leaders/reviewers (acting as delegates of the Principal) have access to and provide feedback and comments, and confirm completion of each stage's requirements.

Details of how the process will operate for each calendar year will be updated to all staff during Term One of each year.

Applications for Professional Learning are assessed by the Learning Executive and Campus Principal responsible for professional learning, all applications for Professional Learning are subject to:

- The funding priorities developed to support the key college goals and priorities
- The available financial resources and Professional Learning budget
Cost effectiveness of the PL - in general, one or two staff members will be sent to a PL to obtain information, resources and skills, and share those with their colleagues
- Support of the relevant team leader (Faculty Head, PLC/TPT, Student Programs, Induction, Principal class team members)
- The range of PL already attended by the applicant
- The relevance of the activity to the applicant's needs, experience, their PDP goals and teaching role or position of responsibility
- Confirmation that the applicant will share their learning with colleagues in a range of avenues
- Confirmation that the applicant has kept a record of the details of the PL (including date, title, provider, relevant AITSL Standards, duration, special needs relevance, and a reflection). This information should be entered on Compass.

It is an explicit expectation that all staff will share their learning after attending a PL activity. This could take the form of *informal* sharing (i.e. in conversations with colleagues, sharing of resources in a staff room, demonstration in a classroom), and should also be more *formal* and demonstrably delivered to groups of peers, such as at:

- A presentation to a scheduled staff meeting
- A presentation at a faculty meeting
- A presentation at a team's meeting
- A presentation at a TPT/PLC meeting
- A presentation at a specially convened meeting for relevant staff members
- A presentation at a session during a Professional Learning Week

INDUCTION

A priority of the Professional Learning Program at Mount Waverley Secondary College is the Induction Program, offered to new and returning staff.

The Induction Program includes

- An Induction Day for new staff in December before they start officially at Mount Waverley Secondary College
- An induction program which runs on a regular basis in Semester One and less frequently in Semester Two (as it is required)
- Allocation of experienced staff to act as mentors and buddies
- Allocation of VIT trained mentors for first year graduate teachers
- A hardcopy of the College Handbook for all new staff (which is also located on the college intranet) which includes materials that are relevant to the day-to-day and cyclic operations and processes of the college
- Access to support from Learning Specialists
- Access to curriculum and other relevant documentation via the college intranet
- A teacher planner which also outlines key information for staff

For those new staff who arrive at the college during the year and have missed the initial induction program, there will be ongoing provision of orientation to Mount Waverley Secondary College culture, structure and processes.

FUNDING AND OPPORTUNITY

The college allocates an annual budget for Professional Learning, the purpose of this is to allow the Campus Principal in charge to manage the portfolio in a fair, equitable and targeted manner. Where appropriate, the principal may authorise further spending where needs are identified.

While there is no set formula for funding or access (outside the 4 Professional Practice Days and other days stipulated under the Agreement) per staff member, the college reserves the right to determine how many and what kind of learning activities a teacher may attend that are dependent upon college funds and resources.

Teachers need to be mindful of the requirements for the annual VIT re-registration process (particularly in regard to 'special needs/disabilities', and individual teacher contexts), however it is not up to the college to either monitor compliance with this, or to source or provide specific PL opportunities to meet these requirements.

Approval for staff to undertake particular PL may not be granted where there are alternate or more appropriate programs, sessions or facilitators that better meet particular college or staff needs, where the PL does not align with either the particular teacher's or the college priorities, or where sufficient staff have already been approved to attend.

The VIT has mandated that, in order for teachers to annually renew their registration to teach, each teacher must undertake a minimum number of professional development hours each year (20 hours), including a component that addresses the special learning needs of the individual students in their classes (no specific time allotment is designated, rather it is 'needs' and 'context' based).

It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure they meet this requirement, and the college will support this through professional learning opportunities. Staff should note, however, that many of the activities which are already a part of the Mount Waverley Secondary College calendar and processes (such as PDPs, TPT, teams Meetings, PLCs, mentoring, classroom and peer sharing, and so on) may actually contribute to meeting this requirement.

RECORDING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Based on the requirements of the VIT, the strategies and evidence ingredients within the processes of each staff member's PDP, and the protocols and priorities of the college, all staff should record all their professional learning (formal and informal).

All staff in PL can be recorded in Compass'. Staff are able to add in any internal or external PL. A PL certificate can be generated on Compass. It is the responsibility of the staff member to record their professional learning.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE DAYS

Professional Practice Days are dedicated times where teachers *"focus on the improved delivery of high quality teaching and learning. The work undertaken on these days will be consistent with Departmental and school priorities and selected from the following areas: planning, preparation, assessment of student learning, collaboration, curriculum development, relevant professional development and peer observation, including feedback and reflection."* (Victorian Government Schools Agreement, 2017) The

Professional Practice Days will enable teachers to collaborate with others to build their capacity as educators to achieve better outcomes for students and to engage in professional learning of their choice within a framework of college priorities and The Education State. It is also an opportunity to build professional practices that enable us to work smarter in regard to our professional obligations as educators.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING REFERENCE POINTS

- Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)
- The Education State High Impact Teaching Strategies
- Education State Literacy and Numeracy Strategy
- AITSL Professional Learning Standards
- Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Collaboration, moderation and planning within a team
- Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
- Key 21st Century Skills: Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Design Thinking, Creative Problem Solving and Communication
- Mount Waverley Secondary College Continuous Assessment and Reporting

SUGGESTIONS EXAMPLES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE DAY ACTIVITIES

- Curriculum documentation and planning
- Peer observation
- Moderation of student work in Years 7 to 10 & VCE
- Bench marking and collation of student work samples
- Assessment of student work as defined by DET
- Continuous assessment and reporting: uploading of comments
- Professional reading day
- Flipped Learning: creation of clips for course work and revision
- Auditing and evaluation of curriculum

MOUNT WAVERLEY SECONDARY COLLEGE INTENTIONS

- The college will endeavour to facilitate the Professional Practice Day times and activities identified by teachers on their google form within the boundaries of school priorities and resources
- Teachers may choose to undertake more than one activity on their selected days

EVALUATION

The Learning Executive and Principal Executive will evaluate this policy as a part of the Strategic Plan Process.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in July 2021 and is scheduled for review in July 2024.