

Human Resources Policy

Health practitioners and dental officers – Professional development allowance and leave

Policy Number: C42 (QH-POL-146)

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Purpose: To outline entitlements and processes for the professional development allowance and professional development leave as outlined in clauses 64, 65 and 66 of the Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 3) 2019.

Application: This policy applies to all Queensland Health (including Queensland Ambulance Service) permanent and eligible fixed term temporary health practitioners and dental officers, who work 15.2 hours or more per fortnight.

Delegation: The 'delegate' is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:

- Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Award – State 2015
- Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2019

Related policy or documents:

- Self-education – FBT fact sheet
- Aggregate and concurrent HR Policy C47 (QH-POL-301)
- Employee complaints HR Policy E12 (QH-POL-140)

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1 Policy

Queensland Health expects all health practitioner (HP) and dental officer (DO) employees to use their professional development allowance for professional development.

Approval for further professional development funding and leave is at the line manager's discretion and is dependent on proof of expenditure of the employee's professional development allowance on approved professional development activities. Appropriate use and management of professional development allowance and leave is detailed in Attachment One.

1.1 Professional development allowance

From 14 September 2015, fixed term temporary employees with greater than 12 month's continuous service as a health practitioner or dental officer are eligible for the professional development allowance (PDA).

All eligible permanent and fixed term temporary employees are entitled to the PDA as follows:

Category	From 17/10/2019	From 17/10/2021	From 17/04/2022
Category A	\$2,320	\$2,378	\$2,437
Category B	\$2,900	\$2,973	\$3,047
All other employees	\$1,738	\$1,781	\$1,826

Attachment Two details the allowances paid at each facility.

The allowance is paid fortnightly through the payroll system and taxed as part of gross income. Payment is made during periods of paid leave but is not to be included when calculating leave loading, penalty rates or overtime. Accordingly, an employee on half pay leave will be paid the allowance at 50%.

Eligible part-time employees working at least 15.2 hours per fortnight are entitled to PDA on a pro rata basis.

It is envisaged that employees will fully expend the allowance in the derivation of income and as such, employees may be able to claim an income tax deduction for eligible self-education expenses they incur using the PDA. Employees are to seek independent financial advice regarding their personal taxation.

The PDA is not included in superannuable salary or in ordinary time earnings (OTE).

1.2 Paid professional development leave entitlement

Paid professional development leave (PDL) is conferred in addition to current entitlements, assistance or Queensland Health obligations as contained in various policies such as conference leave, SARAS and other Queensland Health learning and development initiatives.

From 1 September 2007, permanent employees accrue PDL hours each fortnight at a rate that after one full year of employment, an employee will have accrued three days.

From 18 August 2020, fixed term temporary employees with greater than six months continuous service as a health practitioner or dental officer are eligible for PDL, with the employer to meet reasonable professional development activity costs.

Eligible part-time employees working at least 15.2 hours per fortnight accrue PDL on a pro rata basis.

The PDL is paid at the ordinary rate of pay.

Any component of the PDL entitlement not accessed after two years is forgone. The leave component is not cashable.

When an employee moves temporarily to a classification stream other than the HP or DO stream, their entitlement will be held in reserve in accordance with this policy for a two year period. Such employees will not accrue nor have access to PDL entitlement until they return to their respective HP or DO stream. Records of individual professional development activities should be maintained (refer Attachment Three).

When an employee is permanently appointed to a non-HP or DO classification stream, they forego any accrued PDL.

On the 26 September 2020, a one-off provision was made by the Director-General to acknowledge the contribution of the workforce and the impact on accessing some existing provisions due to COVID-19.

From 1 October 2020 until 31 December 2023, the maximum period of accrual of PDL has temporarily been extended from two years to three years.

From 1 January 2024, maximum PDL accrual will revert back to 2 years.

1.3 Part-time employees

Eligible part-time employees working a minimum of 15.2 hours per fortnight have their PDA and PDL entitlement calculated on a pro rata basis.

The calculation of the proportionate entitlement is based on actual ordinary hours worked, including paid leave, as a proportion of full-time hours.

For example, on 17 October 2021, a non-category A or B HP or DO employee, who works two days per week (30.4 hours per fortnight), has their entitlement calculated on the following basis:

- PDA – $30.4/76$ of \$1,781 = \$712.40 per annum, i.e. \$27.31 per fortnight.

History:

June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy amended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – update references – professional development allowance increased – include fixed term temporary extension of professional development leave accrual – access to professional development leave for fixed term temporary employees updated to align with Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2019, amended from twelve months to six months continuous service as a health practitioner or dental officer – Attachment Two updated to re-allocate Marlborough from Mackay to Central Queensland.
June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – formatted as part of the HR Policy review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - amended to update naming conventions - application amended as a result of changes to the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019 - amended to replace aggregate and concurrent criteria with reference to the Aggregate and concurrent HR Policy C47 (Attachment One, section 5).
October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy review • Policy amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - update references and naming conventions - incorporate provisions for eligible temporary employees - include aggregate and concurrent arrangements.
April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed as part of the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) HR Policy Integration project • Policy not applicable to QAS employees.
February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project. • Policy amended to update references and naming conventions.
April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy amended so section 5 References to reflect Self Education – FBT Fact Sheet • Attachment one amended to correctly reflect districts and facilities.
November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed as a result of the implementation of the Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.1) 2007.

Attachment One – Appropriate use and management of professional development allowance and leave

The following information is provided as the minimum mandatory standard practice, procedure or process to enable satisfactory compliance with this Queensland Health HR policy.

Local guidelines/procedures may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. Any local guidelines/procedures must be consistent with this policy and standard practice and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

Examples of relevant professional development activities include but are not limited to:

- study support additional to that provided under SARAS
- higher education courses or tuition fees
- expenses incurred for conferences, seminars, workshops or forums attended in-person or virtually
- items to support study relevant to clinical practice, e.g. textbooks
- short courses
- professional association professional development events and membership fees
- professional library membership
- reasonable travel and accommodation costs associated with professional development attendance.

The use of PDA is not suitable for:

- payment of registration fees with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (AHPRA)
- attendance at Queensland Health mandatory training
- competency attainment
- activities for industrial relations education leave.

1 Management of professional development allowance

Managers use the performance and development (PAD) process to plan appropriate professional development requirements and opportunities in consultation with the health practitioner (HP) or dental officer (DO).

Queensland Health provides the PDA specifically for employees to use for professional development activities. It is recommended that HPs/DOs and line managers document and review a summary of this expenditure on an annual basis. Managers are encouraged to undertake this review.

Evidence of professional development expenditure within the previous 12 months (to an amount equivalent to the employee's PDA) is to be provided by the employee when requesting additional departmental funding for professional development purposes (refer Attachment Three).

2 Management of professional development leave

Professional development leave (PDL) is an entitlement, and while having regard for the maintenance of service provision, line managers are not to unreasonably refuse employee access to PDL, including ad hoc PDL requests not previously recorded in the employee's PAD

Requests by employees to access PDL to attend virtual, on-line professional development opportunities should not be unreasonably refused.

Leave may be taken on an hourly basis subject to agreement.

All reasonable travel time associated with accessing the PDL is treated as paid work time (rostered hours) on the basis of no more than eight hours at the ordinary rate for each day of travel.

When an employee takes PDL at a time which falls outside of ordinary hours, on a weekend, or at a time that would normally attract a shift allowance, the payment for leave is at single time and does not attract overtime, penalty rates or shift allowance. Managers and employees need to plan PDL to ensure the entitlement is taken and paid at ordinary rate of pay only. There is no entitlement for PDL to be paid at any rate other than single time.

3 Accrual

Employees accrue hours each fortnight, so after one full year of employment an employee will have three days (pro rata for part-time) PDL accrued. The leave entitlement is accrued over a 24 month period, commencing from either 1 September 2007 for existing employees, or the start date for employees who commence after 1 September 2007.

The leave component of the entitlement accrues during periods of permanent full-time and permanent part-time employment and paid leave in the HP/DO streams, as well as the following temporary arrangements:

- temporary employees with greater than six months eligible continuous service.

Employees do not accrue the entitlement during periods of unpaid leave, including proportionate leave (i.e. the purchased leave period).

During periods of half pay leave, PDL accrues at the normal rate, i.e. employees accrue the full entitlement rather than accrue half the entitlement.

In order to allow employees to use their leave entitlements from the date of commencement, employees are allowed to have a negative balance of no more than 24 hours (or a projection of 12 hours for a part-time employee). At the end of the year (i.e. either 1 September or anniversary date) employees are expected to have a nil or positive balance. If an employee has a negative balance at the anniversary date, the leave taken in the upcoming year is adjusted accordingly.

Line managers are to be mindful of the hours an employee is working when approving professional development activities to minimise the risk of employees accruing a large negative leave balance.

4 Travel

All reasonable travel time (as approved) associated with accessing PDL is treated as paid work time on the basis of no more than eight hours single time for each day of travel.

When a HP/DO travels at a time which falls outside of the ordinary hours, on a weekend or at a time that would normally attract a shift allowance, the payment for travel is at the ordinary rate of pay, and does not attract overtime, penalty rates or shift allowance. This also applies when an employee would have been ordinarily rostered to work at that time.

When a HP/DO uses their professional development entitlements, they are not bound by the Queensland Health travel policy. This enables freedom of choice and cost minimisation to HP/DOs, therefore:

- travel bookings cannot be made through the Queensland Health travel hub service for any travel associated with professional development
- HP/DOs are required to book and pay for any travel or accommodation costs themselves
- costs associated with travel, accommodation cancellation or changes are the responsibility of the HP/DO
- travel insurance is the responsibility of the HP/DO and travel is not covered under the Queensland Health insurance arrangements

- approval for overseas travel claimed and pre-approved as PDL does not require any existing permission process.

The employee's line manager determines and approves reasonable travel time. Reasonable travel time constitutes the amount of time spent in transit including time travelling to and from airports, as well as the most economical and practical route to and from an activity (event).

5 Aggregate and concurrent arrangements

Employees working in multiple positions may be engaged in an aggregate or a concurrent employment arrangement. Refer Aggregate and concurrent HR Policy C47.

The professional development package is treated differently subject to the specific employment arrangements, and classification streams.

Engagements are to be considered collectively for the purpose of determining the appropriate employment conditions for each engagement.

Employees engaged in an **aggregate** employment arrangement are assigned a singular Employee ID number that is used to identify them as a Queensland Health employee. As such, any eligible HP or DO will accrue PDL as a singular balance, and paid PDA on a singular employee ID. Eligible employees on higher duties will continue to accrue PDA and PDL.

As the employee has one combined balance, a fixed term temporary eligible employee engaged in multiple temporary engagements of the same stream, will accrue PDA and PDL from the initial eligible temporary engagement, and continue to be eligible to receive the professional development package for the multiple engagements subject to continuous engagement.

Communication between line managers of HP or DO employees engaged in aggregate arrangements are strongly recommended to ensure appropriate monitoring and management of entitlements.

Employees engaged in a **concurrent** employment arrangement are assigned a singular Employee ID number that is used to identify them as a Queensland Health employee; however, they will also be assigned an additional personnel assignment number (PAN) that will be used to identify and link them to each of their individual engagements. As such, any eligible HP or DO will accrue PDL as multiple and separate balances, and paid PDA on each PAN. Eligible employees on higher duties will continue to accrue PDA and PDL.

In the event a fixed term temporary eligible employee is engaged in multiple temporary engagements of the same stream, PDA and PDL will accrue from the initial eligible temporary engagement, and continue to be eligible to receive the professional development package for the multiple temporary engagements subject to continuous engagement.

6 Grievance process

Normal grievance procedures apply to this policy. For further information please refer to Employee complaints HR Policy E12.

Attachment Two – Categories for health practitioner and dental officer professional development allowance

Hospital and Health Service	Facility		
	Non category A and B	Category A	Category B
Cairns and Hinterland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns • Gordonvale • Ravenshoe • Yarrabah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atherton • Babinda • Herberton • Innisfail • Malanda • Mareeba • Millaa Millaa • Douglas Shire (Mossman) • Tully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chillagoe • Croydon • Dimbulah • Forsayth • Georgetown • Mt Garnet
Central Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duaringa • Gladstone • Marlborough • Mt Morgan • Ogmoo • Rockhampton • Yeppoon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baralaba • Biloela • Blackwater • Capella • Cracow • Dingo • Emerald • Gemfields • Moura • Springsure • Theodore • Woorabinda 	
Central West			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpha • Aramac • Barcaldine • Blackall • Boulia • Isisford • Jundah • Longreach • Muttaborra • Tambo • Windorah • Winton
Children's Health Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland Children's Hospital 		

Hospital and Health Service	Facility		
	Non category A and B	Category A	Category B
Darling Downs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oakey Toowoomba 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherbourg Chinchilla Dalby Glenmorgan Goondiwindi Inglewood Jandowae Kingaroy Meandarra Miles Millmerran Moonie Murgon Nanango Stanthorpe Tara Taroom Texas Wandoan Warwick Wondal 	
Gold Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gold Coast Robina 		
Mackay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mackay Sarina St Lawrence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowen Clermont Collinsville Dysart Moranbah Proserpine 	
Metro North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caboolture Kilcoy RBWH Redcliffe Prince Charles 		
Metro South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beaudesert Dunwich Logan Princess Alexandra Queen Elizabeth II Redland Wynnum 		

Hospital and Health Service	Facility		
	Non category A and B	Category A	Category B
North West			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Isa • Burketown • Camooweal • Cloncurry • Dajarra • Doomadgee • Julia Creek • Karumba • Mornington Island • Normanton
South West		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bollon • Dirranbandi • Injune • Mitchell • Mungundi • Roma • St George • Surat • Wallumbilla 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augathella • Charleville • Cunnamulla • Morven • Quilpie • Thargomindah
Sunshine Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caloundra • Gympie • Maleny • Nambour 		
Torres and Cape		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooktown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aurukun • Bamaga • Coen • Hopevale • Kowanyama • Laura • Lockhart River • Mapoon • Pormpuraaw • Thursday Island • Weipa • Wujal Wujal
Townsville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnetic Island • Townsville 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayr • Charters Towers • Home Hill • Ingham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hughenden • Richmond • Palm Island
West Moreton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boonah • Esk • Gatton • Ipswich • Laidley 		

Hospital and Health Service	Facility		
	Non category A and B	Category A	Category B
Wide Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bundaberg • Childers • Gin Gin • Hervey Bay • Maryborough • Mount Perry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggenden • Eidsvold • Gayndah • Monto • Mundubbera 	

Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work
Code of Practice 2022
applies 1 April 2023

Attachment Three – Record of professional development activities

Health practitioners and dental officers are encouraged to complete this activity record on an annual/regular basis, and this is to accompany the employee's performance and development (PAD) plan.

Activity undertaken	Provider of activity	Learning outcome	Costs associated (employee/Queensland Health)
Examples: seminars, conferences, short courses, workshops, tertiary training, professional membership fees	Examples: training provider, university, name of professional organisation	Examples: enhancement of current skill set, higher qualifications	Examples: costs met by employee, costs met by work unit