

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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## 1. PURPOSE / DOEL

The objective of the policy is to encourage employees to engage in or to continue studies in order to:

- 1.1 develop the skills and level of academic achievement of the Eden District Municipality workforce –
  - 1.1.1 To improve the quality of life of employees, their career prospects and labour mobility, and
- 1.2 increases the levels of investment in education and training in the Eden District Municipality, and that the return on that investment be improved;
- 1.3 encourage Managers –
  - 1.3.1 To facilitate active learning in the workplace, and
  - 1.3.2 To provide employees with opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge; ***within the ambit of the Work Skills Plan which is aligned with the Integrated Development Plan.***
- 1.4 encourages employees to participate in training programmes;
- 1.5 improves the advancement of previously disadvantaged employees;
- 1.6 meets the objectives determined by career paths, learnership contracts and progression policies
- 1.7 establishes a pool of suitable candidates in order to support, inter alia, Succession Planning Policy.

## Eligibility for Study Assistance

- i. Every employee shall be eligible for study assistance subject to the provisions of this policy
- ii. Priority shall be given to employees from designated groups in order to enhance skills development in terms of employment equity measures provided for in the Employment Equity Policy of Eden District Municipality.

- iii. In order to determine the eligibility for study assistance, a panel consisting of the Executive Manager Support Services, Manager: Human Resources, Skills Development Facilitator, Employment Equity Manager, a representative of the Education, Training and Development Committee and one member each of the trade unions shall consider the applications. In their determination this panel should look at equity targets, skills, career pathing and any other special needs/circumstances that might arise. The Municipal Manager has the final approval of a bursary application.

## **2. DEFINITIONS / DEFINISIE**

The following definitions and principles will apply to the Council's Bursary Scheme:

- 2.1 Career path** is the plan mutually agreed upon between the employee and relevant manager, or the Manager's nominated representative, in terms of which the employee's skills, knowledge and/or academic qualifications will be improved within a specified period of time in order for the employee to function effectively and efficiently in the working environment.

The employee's progress will be evaluated in terms of mutually agreed upon levels of productivity, proficiency and performance within the specified time periods. The relevant Manager is responsible for the provision of the required experiential training. Academic studies must be dealt with in terms of the study assistance policy.

- 2.2 Employee development courses** are voluntary programmes that develop the employee's general skills and knowledge, through: e.g.

- Seminars
- Workshops
- Courses
- Conferences
- Presentations

- 2.3 SAQA Act:** the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (No. 8 of 1995) – as amended

- 2.4 LGSETA:** the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority

- 2.5 Skills Development Act:** the Skills Development Act, 1998 (No. 97 of 1998) – as amended

**2.6 Skills Development Levies Act:** the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (No 9 of 1999) – As amended

**2.7 Eden DM** Eden District Municipality

### **3. POLICY / BELEID**

#### **3.1. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK:**

- 3.1.1 The Municipal Systems Act
- 3.1.2 The Skills Development Act
- 3.1.3 The Skills Levy Act
- 3.1.4 Council decisions
- 3.1.5 The MFMA
- 3.1.6 Individual contractual agreement with beneficiaries
- 3.1.7 The Employment Equity Act
- 3.1.8 The Further Education and Training Act 1998
- 3.1.9 All other collective agreements of SALGA

#### **3.2. ADMINISTRATION:**

- 3.2.1 The administration of the scheme is executed by Human Resources.
- 3.2.2 The administration of the budget is executed by the Department of Financial Services.

#### **3.3 QUALIFYING:**

- 3.3.1 All officials of Eden District Municipality, who wish to further their studies by means of correspondence courses or by attending after hour classes, subject to the conditions contained in the scheme, qualify for partaking in the scheme.
- 3.3.2 Bursaries will be linked to the contract of employment.

#### **3.4 GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS:**

All applications must be assessed / prioritized, subject to availability of funds, in accordance with the following criteria:

##### **Priority 1**

Employees who want to study towards their first qualification (ABET including) up to and including NQF level 4 (Grade 12).

##### **Priority 2**

Employees who must obtain a qualification in order to meet the requirements of the post that they currently occupy.

##### **Priority 3**

The priorities as identified in the relevant Workplace Skills Plan, Integrated Development Plan and Employment Equity Plan (including people with disabilities).

**Priority 4**

Employees who are currently in receipt of a bursary and must still complete their qualification.

**Priority 5**

Employees who are studying for self-development within the context of local government, ***will be considered and measured against the following criteria:***

- ***Whether the course is relevant and aligned to the core business of the organisation (and therefore would benefit Council as well as the employee)***
- ***Whether this is a suitable form of investment in the employee's development, having due regard to funds available and other available forms of training and education.***
- ***Preference will be given to employee's enrolling for courses from the lowest educational level to the highest;***
  - First – Basic Education***
  - Second – Certificate courses***
  - Third – Diploma***
  - Fourth – Degree***
  - Fifth – Post Graduate Studies***

**3.5 APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

**In the recommendation of the line manager, it must be stated that the application conform to the under mentioned criteria requirements.**

That the field of study have relationship or applicable in the functions and activities of the district municipality;

That the study field has direct relation with the post which an official in services of the district municipality occupy;

That an official's current level of achievements and eagerness to improve and develop is indeed fair and deserve the financial support;

That the studies are taken on a part time basis;

That the field of study lead to obtaining the qualification which conform to the needed requirements.

3.5.1 An official whose intention is to study must approach his/her line manager in this regard.

- 3.5.2 The task of the line manager is to get some advice from the Human Resources or to refer the official to the Human Resources for guidance.
- 3.5.3 A motivated recommendation, together with the necessary documents must be sent to the department's head of the relevant official.
- 3.5.4 That a written application be made on a prescribed form of the district municipality.
- 3.5.5 That the written agreements which are entered into between an official and district municipality with regard to the scheme is correct and fully completed.
- 3.5.6 That the human resources approve the nature and field of studies.

### **3.6. DURATION**

The duration of studies may not be longer than what is recommended or determined by the rules, regulations or academic period of the relevant institution.

### **3.7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

- 3.7.1 The bursary amount is determined by the total amount owed to the institution for the academic year, as well as in terms of under mentioned clauses 3.7.3 and 3.7.4.
- 3.7.2 The bursary amount must be used for study purposes as stipulated in paragraphs 3.7.3 and 3.7.4.
- 3.7.3 The district municipality grants financial support only in terms of the under mentioned. –**
- 3.7.3.1 Registration fees
- 3.7.3.2 Class/tuition fee
- 3.7.3.3 Examination fees
- 3.7.3.4 Books or prescribed material which will remain the property of Council.
- 3.7.3.5 Print, internet and binding costs attached to thesis/lectures.
- 3.7.3.6 Travelling and subsistence expenses.
- 3.7.4 Tendering of proof for compulsory class attendance for distance tuition is required before payment can be made.
- 3.7.5 *For Internal courses, Council will provide funding through the provisions of the Work Skills Plan.***

## NQF LEVELS AND THE TOTAL PERCENTAGE AWARDED FOR A BURSARY

NQF LEVEL	BAND	QUALIFICATION TYPE		% OF BURSARY AWARDED
10	<b>HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	Post-doctoral research degrees Doctorate		50%
9		Masters degree		100%
8		Professional qualifications Honours degrees		100%
7		Diplomas National 1st Degrees		100%
6		Higher Certificates		100%
5		National certificates and Occupational Awards		100%
<b>FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE</b>				
4	<b>FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	• National certificates		100%
3				
2				
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE</b>				
1	<b>GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	Grade 9	ABET Level 4	100%
		• National certificates		100%

### **3.8 In the case of lectures payment is only made-**

- 3.8.1 If written proof of the study leader is submitted whereby the purpose and necessity is shown
- 3.8.2 for two occasions per year
- 3.8.3 The district municipality reserve the right to withhold the claim if the expenses attached to the claim are deemed to be out of order,
- 3.8.4 Payment direct to the officials is made only in the case where the application form accompanied by necessary proof documents/receipts
- 3.8.5 The first payment is made after the submission of registration proof.
- 3.8.6 Further payments will be made only on receiving of report/results from the relevant institution in order to monitor the progress of an official.

### **3.9 TRAINING PROVIDERS**

Study assistance excluding conferences, seminars and workshops will be granted only in respect of studies at institutions accredited by a body contemplated in Section 5(1)(a)(f)(bb) of the South African Qualification Authority Act.

### **3.10 CONTRACTUAL LIABILITY**

The employee will be required to enter into an agreement with Eden DM for admission to the study assistance scheme and to remain in the service of the Eden DM for a period equal to which study assistance was granted. The service requirement shall run after acquiring the qualification. If the employee has received study assistance for a period of 3 (three) years, the second year of study shall be deemed to be the fulfilment of the service requirement pertaining to the 1<sup>st</sup> year of study. The above liability is not applicable in instances of death, ill health, incapacity or retrenchment. Short causes contract for 12 months and pro payment within 12 months.

#### **In terms of employment after studies:**

The Municipality may, after the Bursar/Learner has complied with all the requirements of the qualification and after conclusion of the period of study or extended period of study, if applicable, consider the Bursar/Learner for placement in any capacity for which the Municipality may consider the Bursar/Learner suitable, at the sole discretion of the Municipality, guided by service delivery needs. The Bursar/Learner shall continue to serve the Municipality full time for a continuous period of one year for each individual year of study or part thereof with regard to which bursary monies was paid to or on behalf of the Bursar/Learner within the period of study.

#### **In terms of repayments:**

Should the Bursar/Learner be obliged to repeat and complete successfully any outstanding course modules the Bursar/Learner will be required to do so at his/her own cost.

#### **Bursar/Learner:**

The Bursar/learner must:

- Work for the employer as part of the learning process;
- Be available for and participate in all learning and work experience required by the programme;
- Comply with workplace policies and procedures;
- Complete any timesheets or any written assessment tools supplied by the employer to record relevant workplace experience; and

- Attend all study periods and theoretical learning sessions with the training provider and
- Undertake all learning conscientiously.

### **General**

Should the Bursar resign/be discharged from the service of the Municipality before the expiry of the Agreement and the Municipality has cancelled the contract, any moneys due to the Bursar by the Municipality, including any moneys, may be withheld and set off against any outstanding moneys due to the Municipality by the Bursar in terms of the agreement.

If any of the Bursar's obligations in terms of agreement cannot be fulfilled due to his/her death or if such obligations cannot be fulfilled due to the Bursar's incapacity due to any mental/physical disability for the refund of any moneys which may be due in terms of agreement shall lapse.

### **3.11 BUDGET**

The submission of the budget for the scheme is a responsibility of Human Resources in collaboration with the Education, Training and Development Committee.

### **3.12 CHANGING OF STUDY FIELD**

In the case of changes in study course, or registered subjects, an application must be directed via the department's Head to Human Resources. Valid reasons and comments must be provided thereto.

### **3.13 STUDY LEAVE (A period of leave for employees to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities through formal training or qualifications (examinations/assessments/learnerships/skillsprogrammes/tradetests/apprenticeships). This refers to paid or unpaid leave given to employees who need to take time off to study for and/or take an examination.)**

**Special leave is granted under the following conditions:**

**Examination:** the day before examination and the day on examination.

Class attendance / undertaking practical / lectures / research / thesis:

Maximum of 20 days per year, calculated on a 50/50 basis.

Employees, who are required to study during working hours, must submit written proof that the study in the specific field is not available on a part-time basis after working hours, or through distance tuition.



## **STUDY AND EXAMINATION LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEE'S STUDY PRIVATELY**

Employees undertaking courses of study privately and on a part time basis, which in the opinion of the Municipality will be of benefit to the Municipality and to the employee, may, subject to the convenience of the Municipality be granted paid study leave to attend such courses. The number of leave days will be in accordance with the Collective Agreement on Conditions of Service with regard to absence for obligatory course/study requirements.

Paid leave for purposes of writing examinations for approved courses will be granted on the basis of the day of the examination and a working day preceding it. Proof of registration and an examination timetable need to accompany the application for leave, as per Collective Agreement on Conditions of Service.

### **3.14 ADVERTISEMENTS**

Circulars should be sent out during October month so as to afford officials who intend to study further time to make application for study bursary. During the execution of clause 4.14 the district municipality should also indicate the study fields in which there is a shortage.

### **3.15 FULL TIME STUDIES**

**Full- time studies will only be granted under the following circumstances:**

- 3.15.1 That the qualification which the candidate wishes to enroll for is a scarce or critical skill within the municipality,
- 3.15.2 That by obtaining the qualification it will assist the municipality with its Employment Equity objectives.
- 3.15.3 That the course or skills program is not available on part-time basis.

### **3.16 GENERAL**

- 3.16.1 When an employee exceeds the prescribed number of years for the period of the course, he/she must submit an written application for the extension of the duration at Human Resources, with the provision that no study assistance will be granted.
- 3.16.2 An approval of an application for the extension, rest with the Municipal manager.

3.16.3 The awarding of the bursary gives an official no automatic preference in terms of advertised/vacant/promotions post.

3.16.4 In the case of an official whose services are terminated with District Municipality through restructuring such official is exempted from any contractual obligations.

3.16.5 Referencing to males include females.

3.16.6 A Learner ship Agreement must be in the prescribed form, in terms of the Skills Development Act, and registered with the LGSETA.

### **3.17 CHANGES**

Any changes in the scheme, without proper notice, can be deemed as suspension of the agreements.

## **4 PROCESS / PROSES**

### **4.1 RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibilities for the conclusion of the study application rest on the following officials.

#### **4.2 Applicant:**

Must familiarize him/herself of the content of the scheme.

Must make sure that the study field is relevant to the scheme

Must make sure that all documents are complete and correctly furnished.

Must make sure that all documents are submitted on time.

Must see to it that the authorization of the bursary is attained.

#### **4.3 Line Manager**

Must familiarize him/herself of the content of the scheme

Must make sure that the study field is relevant to the scheme

Must make sure that all documents are complete and correctly furnished.

#### **4.4 Head of Department**

Must familiarize him/herself of the content of the scheme

Must make sure that the study field is relevant to the scheme

Must make sure that all documents are complete and correctly furnished

Approve the application

#### **4.5 Human Resources**

Must familiarize itself of the content of the scheme

Must make sure that the field of study is applicable according the scheme

Must make sure that all documents are complete and correctly furnished,

**4.6 Municipal Manager**

Signs the agreements

Send agreement back to Human Resources for recordkeeping and filing of the original at the registration

Approve or disapprove application for bursary

**4.7 Finance**

Pay the bursary

Keep the records of expenditures incurred

Help the Human Resources with the submission of the budget

**4.8 Registration**

File the agreements

**4.9** Determination of eligibility rests with the panel.

**5 APPLICABLE FORMS / TOEPASLIKE VORMS**

Application for financial assistance part-time studies

Route form

Study contract

**6 APPROVAL**

DC 744/12/14