

# Learning and Development Procedure

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

<b>Functional category</b>	Human Resources
<b>Parent policy</b>	Employee Development Policy
<b>Approval date</b>	December 19, 2023
<b>Effective date</b>	December 19, 2023
<b>Procedure owner</b>	Vice President, People and Culture
<b>Procedure administrator</b>	Director, Culture and Development

## Overview

Authority to establish this procedure is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governors Policy No. 5](#), which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

This procedure focuses on guidelines and processes for Professional Development (PD) at NorQuest College (college), including:

- work time to participate in professional development,
- PD Spending Accounts,
- Tuition Waivers for courses at NorQuest College,
- Business Critical Training Fund, and
- Learning and Development (L&D) Fund.

**NorQuest College is an organization that supports ongoing learning.**

The growth and advancement of NorQuest College is a shared responsibility among NorQuesters, their leaders and the College. Encouraging the growth of employees through learning and development contributes to NorQuest's collective impact, learning agility, and adaptability. When every member of our organization invests focus and effort into learning consciously, continuously, and courageously, we advance our strategy and our purpose.

Together, NorQuest College and NorQuest employees co-invest in learning and development. Leaders support and encourage team members to learn continuously. Activating the Grow-Lead-Contribute Touchstones allows us all to make impacts that benefit learners.

**Principles of NorQuest College's Approach to Learning and Development:****1. Access**

- All employees have access to learning and development opportunities while working at NorQuest College.
- The Learning and Development Fund (L&D Fund) is a college-wide fund established to distribute a set amount of funds each fiscal year for employees with Permanent or Term status.
- Additional sources of investment and funding (i.e., Individual PD Spending Accounts; Tuition Waiver; Business Critical Training).

**2. Collaborative Decision Making**

- Learning and development aims to include professional learning opportunities that are both personally relevant and align with college priorities.
- Employees and leaders work closely to establish priorities for learning and development, and to engage in ongoing conversations about it.

**3. Shared Responsibility**

- All employees take responsibility for investing in ongoing learning and development, to stay current and to develop personally and professionally.
- Leaders have the responsibility to encourage and support ongoing learning and development with each person who reports to them.
- Sharing learning accelerates our growth. Employees are asked to share key learnings from their learning and development with relevant NorQuesters and/or via relevant channels (e.g., MS Teams, etc.).
- All employees develop a Learning and Development plan each (fiscal) year,

adapting and sharing the plan throughout the year in conversations with their leader.

### Learning and development is ongoing and occurs informally and formally:

Category	Examples
<b>Day-to-day work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While fulfilling our roles and responsibilities and in carrying out projects and assignments that stretch us</li> <li>• In regular performance conversations and checkpoints between employees and their leaders</li> <li>• In taking initiative and action to fix, improve, iterate and reimagine processes and experiences</li> <li>• In completing Onboarding and Compliance requirements such as digital security, Code of Conduct, OH&amp;S training, etc.</li> <li>• In staying current with NorQuest happenings (via NQ Unscripted, In the Loop e-newsletter, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Individual L&amp;D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent (e.g., self-initiated and self-guided reading, podcasts or audiobooks, research, webinars, etc.)</li> <li>• Group or Community of Practice (e.g., Conversation Circles, Action Labs, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Internal L&amp;D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal offerings (e.g., College Culture Day, Learning Days, LRN Offerings, Speaker Series, etc.)</li> <li>• NorQuest’s <a href="#">Internal Opportunities Career Portal</a> (e.g., short-term assignments within NorQuest to gain new skills and perspectives).</li> </ul>
<b>External L&amp;D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courses (credit and non-credit via post-secondary institutions).</li> <li>• Conferences, workshops, courses offered by external organizations.</li> </ul>
<p>As a guideline, all employees are asked to invest in their learning and development by completing <b>three (3) or more days of learning and development each fiscal year</b>.</p> <p>Apply for L&amp;D Funding or document Individual PD Spending Account claims in the <a href="#">Learning and Development Hub</a>.</p> <p>Complete a <a href="#">Tuition Waiver Request Form</a> if applying for NorQuest courses within our Faculties or Continuing Education.</p>	

## Procedure

Sources of Funding Available to Support Learning and Development include:

- Learning & Development Fund
- Individual PD Spending Accounts
- Tuition Waiver
- Business Critical Training Fund

	<b>Learning and Development Fund</b> <b>L&amp;D Fund</b>	<b>Individual Professional Development (PD) Spending Account</b>	<b>Tuition Waiver</b>
<b>What it is</b>	A college-wide fund established each fiscal year to support post-secondary course-based credit and non-credit learning, and conference/workshop registration fees.	An individual spending account (for perm employees only) to invest in ongoing learning and development.	Employees access NorQuest College credit and non-credit courses, including for audit, and have college tuition and mandatory fees waived.  Tuition waivers are available if and when extra seats exist in a course.
<b>Available to whom</b>	Permanent and Term Employees	Permanent Employees	Employees with 6 months of continuous service.

	<b>L&amp;D Fund</b>	<b>PD Spending Account</b>	<b>Tuition Waiver</b>
<b>What it can cover</b>	<p>Role-aligned learning and development opportunities.</p> <p><b>Tuition fees only</b> for credit and non-credit <u>coursework</u> at post-secondary institutions. (maximum \$2500 per fiscal year)</p> <p><b>Registration fees</b> for conferences, seminars, training, or workshops by any provider, including post-secondary institutions. (maximum \$500 per fiscal year)</p>	<p>Post-secondary course or program fees (tuition, application/registration, student fees).</p> <p>Registration fee (conference, seminar, training, workshop).</p> <p>Course books and materials for professional courses/conferences or for self-directed professional learning.</p> <p>Travel costs (transportation, accommodation, meals) for formal learning events.</p> <p>Professional memberships and accreditation costs related to current role.</p> <p>Not included: Personal interest courses, technology hardware, personal travel expenses, internet services, purchases for dependents.</p>	<p>NorQuest College courses including credit courses, non-credit courses within Faculty and Continuing Education and Partner Solutions programs.</p> <p>Note: Some non-credit cost recovery courses at NorQuest may not be available for tuition waiver.</p>

	<b>L&amp;D Fund</b>	<b>PD Spending Account</b>	<b>Tuition Waiver</b>
<b>Maximum per fiscal year</b>  <b>July 1 – June 30</b>	<b>Total cap of \$2500 per employee</b> from the Learning & Development Fund. This includes allowable registration and/or tuition fees.	<b>Individual Contributors</b> \$500 per fiscal year; can bank for up to 5 years.  <b>Managers I, II, III</b> \$1000 per fiscal year; can bank for up to 3 years.  <b>Deans and Directors</b> \$1500 per fiscal year; can bank for up to 3 years.	Maximum of one, credit or non-credit, course per term. Subject to space availability <u>after</u> fee-paying learners are enrolled.  These exceptions will require supervisor support and role alignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To waive the 6-month service requirement</li> <li>• To take more than one course in a term.</li> </ul> Exception requests: Supervisor must email Procedure Administrator two (2) or more weeks before start of term with the request.  If approved by the Procedure Administrator, the email is attached to the Tuition Waiver form when submitted to <a href="mailto:enrolment@norquest.ca">enrolment@norquest.ca</a> .

	L&D Fund	PD Spending Account	Tuition Waiver
<b>How to access it</b>	Apply and manage L&D Fund applications and PD Spending Account info via the <a href="#">Learning and Development Hub</a> .		Complete and sign the <a href="#">Tuition Waiver Request Form</a> .
	Preferably, do the application prior to the learning: Add a “+ New Item” on the Learning & Development Hub, detailing the plans to your learning event. Attach a fee schedule, invoice or receipt showing the itemized tuition fee and/or registration fee.	Before claiming on Alberta Blue Cross, record the expense in the L&D Hub: Add a “+ New Item” on the Learning & Development Hub, detailing your plans to access your PD Spending Account.	Supervisor will determine if the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employee is eligible, and</li> <li>• course is not disruptive to normal operations.</li> </ul>
	Leaders will receive notification of details submitted. Please review and when details are aligned, click “Supervisor Awareness” to advance the application to the L&D Fund Administrator.		
	Director, Culture and Development will review and process. For reimbursement after course completion, <b>submit an Expense Claim in PeopleSoft Finance. Attach to the Expense Claim:</b>  1) proof of successful course completion and  2) itemized receipt/proof of payment.	<b>Claim expense via Alberta Blue Cross</b> For reimbursement, log into Alberta Blue Cross, and choose Submit a Claim, then “Professional Development Spending Account.”  <b>Provide specific detail in the “Claim Description” field.</b>	Employees submit the completed Tuition Waiver request form to <a href="mailto:enrolment@norquest.ca">enrolment@norquest.ca</a> .  <b>Important:</b> An employee cannot first enroll (hold a seat) in a course and then request a Tuition Waiver. The applicant must submit the Tuition Waiver request and await confirmation two (2) days before term start. Enrollment is not guaranteed, since priority is given to fee-paying learners.

	<b>L&amp;D Fund</b>	<b>PD Spending Account</b>	<b>Tuition Waiver</b>
<b>Additional notes</b>	L&D Funds may be approved or declined by the Procedure Administrator in cases where an employee takes a leave of absence during the time of the course or learning event.	The PD Spending account is a benefit and, therefore, does not get paid out when employees leave the College.  Claims and reimbursements are reviewed at Alberta Blue Cross and at NorQuest (People & Culture)	See “Conditions for Tuition Waiver” for information about fees, taxable/non-taxable benefits, fee waivers, and the steps required to opt out of SANQC fees.
<b>Currency</b>	Requests for funding must be in Canadian dollars. If paid or quoted in another currency, calculate the conversion and/or provide proof of payment in Canadian funds (e.g., relevant portion of a credit card statement).		
<b>Reimbursement</b>	Employees must ensure that expense reimbursements requests are accurate and aligned with the eligible reimbursement criteria.		
<b>Record formal learning</b>	Record time invested in formal learning (half day or longer) under the code “Prof Develop” in PeopleSoft Time Entry to create a fuller overall picture of learning and development at NorQuest College. This does not deduct from any leave balances.		
<b>Business Critical Training Fund</b>	<p>Business Critical Training is a separate fund for training or development required in order for the college to do its business (i.e., for compliance or safety, to maintain systems / operations, and/or essential to achieve strategic priorities).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds are allocated based on priority and impact to the college, as decided by a subset of Deans and Directors.</li> <li>Business Critical Training funding may only be used for registration fees and/or travel expenses.</li> <li>Unused funds are not carried forward into the next fiscal year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p><b>In scope of these funds, in order of priority, is training required to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet legislation and/or compliance requirements</li> <li>Ensure the safety of the employees and students</li> </ul>		



- Maintain a critical existing college-wide system and/or operation
- Meet a strategic priority
- Prepare for an upcoming significant change to a college system or operation

**Out of scope:**

- Conferences to present or receive an award
- Graduate studies courses and undergraduate courses
- Training related to grants
- Accreditation professional development requirements

**To apply for Business Critical Training Funds:**

A prospective applicant will contact the Dean or Director in their area to discuss the business need. The Dean/Director determines if an application to Business Critical Training Fund will occur and remains involved in the application process.

**APPROVAL AND EXPENSE**

Approved expenses are submitted as an Expense Claim via PeopleSoft Finance. Budget codes are provided at application approval time.

**Return Service Agreement (RSA)**

The following conditions determine if an RSA is required, the duration of the RSA, and the effective date.

The requirement for an RSA will be based on the total value (per fiscal year) of funding provided through a combination of the

- Learning & Development Fund and/or
- Business Critical Training funds.

An RSA is required when:

- Professional Development is fully or partially funded by the college in alignment with the thresholds below.
- A combination of professional development and/or business critical funding adds up to \$2500.00 or more in a fiscal year.

Individual PD Spending Accounts and Tuition Waiver are not factored into RSA Agreements.

If an RSA is required, the following guide will determine the duration of the RSA.

Total Amount Funded per fiscal year from L&D Fund and/or Business Critical.	Duration of Return Service Agreement
\$2500.00 - \$3499.99	6 months
\$3500.00 – \$5000.00	12 months
\$5000.01 or more	18 months or more, depending on amount
<p>When an employee receives new L&amp;D or Business Critical funding which requires an RSA and they have an active RSA in place, the agreements will run concurrently. RSA term commences on the date of approval of the Expense Claim.</p> <p>The Procedure Administrator and the Procedure Owner will determine the duration of any RSA over \$5000.</p> <p>If an employee is on leave while the RSA is in place, the RSA end date may be extended at the determination of the Vice President, People and Culture.</p>	

### Tuition Waiver

(available to all employees with six (6) months of continuous service)

- Employees who apply to college credit programs will have the application for admission fee waived pending available space.
- Course materials, textbooks, or software, required for the course, are the responsibility of the employee.
- Should employment terminate for any reason prior to the midpoint of the course, the cost of tuition and mandatory fees will become the responsibility of the employee.
- Effective Fall 2021: There are two SANQC fees applied to all student registrations: MyLegalPlan fee and Extended Health & Dental benefits. NorQuest employees who qualify for Tuition Waiver may opt out of these student fees directly on the SANQC website within 14 days after the start date of the course. These fees are not waived, nor is opt-out automatic.
  - Opt out of SANQC MyLegalPlan: <https://www.mystudentplan.ca/norquest/en/mylegalplan/opt-out-form>
  - Opt out of SANQC Extended Health & Dental: <https://www.mystudentplan.ca/norquest/en/forms>

## Definitions

**Employee:** includes a person who works for or is engaged by NorQuest College to perform a service in accordance with existing terms and conditions of employment, employment contracts or collective agreements.

**Fee Assessment or Fee Schedule:** is a complete listing of the various fees determined by the learning event offering institution that make up the total cost of a course, workshop or conference.

**Return Service Agreement:** is a written agreement between the employee and employer. It specifies the length of service required by the employee in response to the financial commitment provided by the employer. It also stipulates the required repayment of funds if the length of service requirement is not provided.

**Tuition Fees:** those fees specified in section 2 of Tuition and Fees Regulation under the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

**Tuition Waiver:** NorQuest College credit and non-credit courses and have college tuition and mandatory fees waived.

## Related information

### NorQuest College

- [Business Critical Training Fund Application](#)
- [Employee Development Policy](#)
- [Learning & Development Hub](#)
- [Learning & Development Live Slides](#)
- [NorQuest College Blue Cross Benefits Booklet \(Contact People and Talent Operations\)](#)
- [Opt Out of SANQC Extended Health & Dental Form](#)
- [Opt Out of SANQC MyLegalPlan Form](#)
- [Return Service Agreement template](#)

- [Tuition Waiver Request Form](#)

## External

- [Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)
- [Tuition and Fees Regulation](#)

## Next review date

December 2027

## Revision history

Date	Version Number	Action
July 2020	V1	New (replaces retired Graduate Studies Funding and Professional Development Support Procedures).
October 2021	V2	Revised to include (retired) Tuition Waiver Procedure and to update for clarity.
November 2022	V3	Updated links in the Procedure.
December 2023	V4	Updates for clarity. Addition of Business Critical Training Fund to the Procedure.