Staff Development and Scholarship Policy and Procedure

1. Scope and Purpose

This policy and procedure guides Russo Business School's approach to identifying and managing professional development and scholarly objectives and providing opportunities for academic and administrative staff. It also outlines scholarly activities for academic staff as a key contributor to the culture of life-long learning.

This policy applies to all members of Russo Business School's higher education community.

2. Definitions

Appointment is the process of employing staff to a vacant position.

Performance Review is the performance development process for discussing achievements, whether staff are meeting performance targets, providing opportunities for improvement to staff performance and promotion, and career aspirations.

Professional Development is the process of improving staff capabilities through access to education and training opportunities.

Scholarship or Scholarly Activity is the discovery of new knowledge, systematic study of teaching and learning processes, application of disciplinary expertise, integration and synthesis of information (adapted from Boyer).

3. Policy Objectives

Russo Business School recognises that professional and capable staff underpin the achievement of strategic objectives. It is committed to providing staff with a working environment that promotes continuous professional development and understands the importance of developing staff members' skills and capabilities to maintain and increase job satisfaction and enhance workplace productivity. Professional development and scholarship will not only assist Russo Business School in achieving its strategic objectives but also enhance the quality of the student experience.

Russo Business School is committed to:
   a. Supporting staff by providing or funding professional development opportunities within budget parameters
   b. Encouraging staff to undertake scholarly activities to improve the quality of their teaching and maintain currency in their field
   c. Promoting a culture of life-long learning
   d. Retaining staff and maintaining job satisfaction.

4. Implementation

The implementation of this policy and procedure will take account of other human resource policies and provide fair and equitable access to staff development opportunities. Staff and supervisors are responsible for identifying professional development needs and discussing these with their supervisor.

Russo Business School aims to ensure that its staff remain professionally capable in changing work environments. Staff development activities will be linked to performance review processes and opportunities for promotion to assist staff in remaining up-to date with current knowledge and developing their careers. Scholarly activities are mandatory for permanent and academic staff contracted to teach. Sessional academic staff are strongly encouraged to engage in scholarly activities.

Russo Business School will ensure that it meets the Threshold Standards 2021 in relation to scholarly activities, which state:

3.2 Staffing
3. Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having:
a. knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice
b. skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts, and …

B1.1 "Institute of Higher Education" Category
2. The higher education provider's academic staff are active in scholarship that informs their teaching and are active in research when engaged in research student supervision, supported by the provider.

5. Procedures

5.1 Responsibilities

Russo Business School recognises that staff members, supervisors, managers and executive personnel share responsibility for professional development. The Academic Board has oversight of academic staff appointments and Executive Management has oversight of non-academic staff appointments.

The CEO is responsible for overall implementation of this policy. The Executive Dean is responsible for academic staff professional development and scholarly activities. Although scholarly activities are mandatory only for permanent academic staff, sessional staff are strongly encouraged to engage in scholarly activity. The CEO is responsible for approving the annual staff development budget and monitoring higher education general staff.

The Dean of Studies will be responsible for general staff development processes and reporting, and will:
  a. Undertake requirement analyses
  b. Disseminate staff development opportunities

c. Monitor the staff development budget
d. Keep a register of staff development activities
e. Liaise with the CEO and Executive Dean regarding academic staff activities
f. Prepare a scholarly activity report annually for the Academic Board that includes allocated budget, individual expenditure and activities.

The Executive Dean will:
a. Encourage and promote scholarship and teaching and learning excellence
b. Monitor scholarly activities and collaborate with academic staff to build communities of practice
c. Promote research-informed teaching
d. Monitor staff workload and permit release to attend professional development activities, where possible
e. Disseminate relevant events and scholarly articles relevant to fields of study at Russo Business School.
f. Seek opportunities to develop scholarly papers and publications in collaboration with academic staff.
g. Liaise with the Dean of Studies and provide advice regarding academic staff planning and activities.
h. Ensure that any compulsory training provided by the organisation is undertaken to meet legislative and other requirements.

All staff will be required to:
a. Participate in performance reviews and identify and discuss professional development needs
b. Actively participate in identifying their professional development needs in consultation with their manager
c. Actively participate in any compulsory training provided by the organisation to meet legislative and other requirements, including induction activities
d. Actively seek opportunities, in consultation with their manager, to upgrade skills and knowledge required in their current position
e. Apply new knowledge and skills to their work as appropriate.

Academic staff will be required to:
a. Maintain a portfolio of teaching and learning practices
b. Maintain a portfolio of scholarly activities and provide it to the Executive Dean and Dean of Studies
c. Report and share knowledge gained from participating in external scholarly activities funded by Russo Business School
d. Participate in regular scholarly activities and collaborate with others
e. Undertake further studies, where relevant.

5.2 Staff development and scholarly activities

A range of staff development activities will be supported by Russo Business School, which may arise from performance review discussions and will be reflected in the individual's Staff Development Plan. Russo Business School will also proactively circulate various staff development activities and scholarly opportunities as they arise. These may include conferences, teaching and learning workshops or seminars and other opportunities relevant to staff members' fields of study. Other general skills-based activities such as innovations in technology and the like will also be distributed and staff will be encouraged to attend, where it is relevant to their position.

5.2.1   Professional development opportunities

Professional development opportunities that Russo Business School may support include internal and external opportunities as outlined below.

Internal opportunities

- On-the-job training
- Participation in coaching or mentoring
- In-house training, briefings and presentations
- Undertaking specific projects or activities outside of current position
- Temporary performance of higher duties.

External opportunities

- Attendance at specific training programs, further studies or seminars
- Attendance and opportunities to present at professional forums, seminars, workshops and conferences
- Participate in an industry placement to maintain currency of industry knowledge
- Involvement with networks or professional associations
- Subscription to journals and other professional literature
- Participation in professional development activities relating to teaching, learning and research (for academic staff)
- Membership of professional organisations, including professional development requirements to maintain professional currency
- Visits to and from other organisations to gain and share knowledge and practices.

5.2.2   Scholarship scope

TEQSA states in its *Guidance Note: Scholarship v3* that:

In the context of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HES Framework), 'scholarship' refers to those activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, or appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge, or engaging with and keeping up to date with advances in the field.

Engagement in scholarship can be considered:
- *across a provider (e.g. policy frameworks, resource allocation, institutional expectations, staff development), or*

- *at the level of individual activity (e.g. part of an individual's personal professional development, teaching, research or professional practice).*

Various aspects are relevant to higher education, but a key component is that scholarship:
- *advances knowledge or professional practice in a field, or*
- *transmits advances through contemporary approaches to teaching and learning, or research and training.*

The Guidance Note also provides information on 'What TEQSA will look for" as follows:

The HES Framework requires TEQSA to consider a provider's engagement with scholarship at several levels. These include the following standards and criteria from the HES Framework:

Part A: Standards for HE Providers	Key considerations
3.1.2:Course Design 3.2.3: Staffing	• Scholarship contributing to the design and delivery of particular courses of study
4.2.2 (if applicable): Research Training	• Scholarship associated with research and research training
Part B: Criteria for HE Providers	Key considerations
B1.1.2: Staff scholarly activity B1.2.6 and B.1.3.9: Systematic approach to scholarship	• Scholarship directly associated with informing teaching and learning, including disciplinary scholarship • Institutional encouragement and support for scholarship across all courses of study

5.2.3   Scholarly activities

Academic staff are required to undertake scholarly activities to keep up-to-date with knowledge in their discipline area and teaching and learning methodologies. Permanent academic staff are required to undertake scholarly activities as part of their workload, which are taken into account for promotions. Sessional staff are required to keep a portfolio of scholarly activities that are undertaken at any other employer and report it to Russo Business School for its records. It is expected that scholarly and research outputs will be part of the individual's academic profile at Russo Business School. Scholarly outputs may be in two forms: peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and book chapters for academic purposes; and reviews, reports, surveys, demonstrations, exhibitions, and media releases for industry purposes. Each staff member's academic profile will be recorded in an institutional repository that is published on the Institute's website.

Russo Business School will provide regular access to scholarly activities and staff will be actively encouraged to undertake scholarly activities such as:
a. Presenting at or attending conferences and seminars that are relevant to their discipline area or teaching and learning
   - Publishing literature reviews/papers at conferences, in journals or other avenues

- Maintaining relevant professional registration and practice activities and integrating this knowledge into teaching and learning practices and the curriculum
- Keeping abreast of literature, research and practice to inform teaching and learning practices
- Peer-review activities and editorial roles for academic journals or other avenues
- Conducting original research in a discipline area, industry-based research or on teaching and learning practices
- Participating in evidence-based course review processes
- Upgrading qualifications, where relevant
- Reflective practices for improving teaching such as journaling based on student and peer feedback
- Forming communities of practice with peers to improve teaching and learning and promote scholarship.

5.3 Funding and support

5.3.1 Funding

Staff will be supported within the annual budget to attend staff development and scholarly activities. Managers must ensure equity of access for all team members when allocating resources for professional development.

Where a staff member is required and directed by their manager to undertake a training program, further study or attend a seminar essential for carrying out their current duties, the cost of participation should be covered by the manager's budget. Where the staff member initiates a request that is relevant to the staff members' work, the manager may approve a contribution towards the total cost of participation, or the total cost.

All academic staff development and scholarly activities, including facilitation and development of teaching and learning workshops, approved staff absences from campus for purposes of meeting professional registration or accreditation requirements, attending professional meetings and other approved activities will be considered to be academic staff development for budgeting purposes.

Staff members must provide relevant tax invoices and receipts where relevant, as evidence of expenditure. Reimbursement will only be provided by Russo Business School where formal approval has been granted prior to undertaking the activity.

5.3.2 Allocated time and leave

Permanent academic staff will have time allocated in their workload to participate in scholarly activities. Eligible employees may apply for paid study and exam leave to undertake an approved award course. The application must be made in advance and take into account business continuity planning. The study leave application should be sent to the employee's manager for approval. Study and exam leave may be used to undertake activities directly related to, and required by the approved course of study, such as attending weekly lectures, course related research or examinations.

For employees undertaking external study, the employee must provide documentation from the educational provider detailing the study commitment for attending lectures to satisfy course requirements. Study leave hours do not include the additional time needed for reading, assessments or assignments, study group discussions, exams or travel which would normally be completed

outside of lectures. If an employee fails a subject, no further study leave will be granted for that subject or an equivalent subject.

The maximum study leave entitlement will be determined by the employee's manager. If the time needed exceeds this amount, the balance should be taken from other forms of leave such as annual leave. Study leave will be applied on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees. Staff may also apply for leave to participate in other approved activities, which is to be negotiated with the Chief Operating Officer.

5.3.3 Planning

Ensuring that staff development and scholarly activities are planned appropriately is an important aspect of meeting staff development objectives. To assist with offering appropriate activities and identifying staff development needs, the following planning mechanisms will be undertaken:

a. In-house skills activities will be planned for each calendar year
- Regular external conferences, seminars and the like will be added to a schedule of staff development activities and circulated to staff
- Application processes will be distributed and made easily accessible to staff
- Online activities will be sought and made available to staff.

5.3.4 Staff development applications

Individual staff development plans will be developed as part of the performance review process. Staff will not need to present a case for activities that have already been approved. For activities identified outside of the annual performance review process, staff will need to make an application by presenting a case for approval. Academic staff will also need to demonstrate how the proposed activity will contribute to scholarship in their discipline area or teaching and learning. The amount of financial support offered to academic staff will take into consideration the workload for each program and will be subject to budget constraints.

To obtain approval, professional development activities must:

a. Be directly relevant to the staff members' work, career or professional development and have the support of their manager
b. Address identified needs or support Russo Business School's organisational goals, including:
    i. The staff members' current and/or future needs
    ii. The team's designated priority areas
    iii. Russo Business School's strategic and operational plans
c. Be a suitable investment considering available funds, other staff members' needs, other cost-effective ways to meet the developmental need (i.e. internal opportunities)
d. Be transferable to the workplace.

Where a manager does not support a request to attend a training program, further study or seminar they should provide a reason to the staff member in writing.

5.3.5 Reporting and monitoring

The Executive Dean will monitor professional development and scholarly activities for academic staff as part of the performance review process, and report regularly to the Academic Board Board of Directors as part of the monitoring process. The Scholarship Activities Framework and Templates will guide the reporting and monitoring process and provide templates for staff to record their scholarly activities

The Chief Executive Officer will monitor professional development activities for general staff as part of the performance review process.

5.4 Promotions

Promotions will take account of performance reviews, staff development and scholarly activities, as well as the experience and conduct of the staff member.

6. Related Documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:
    a. Records Management Policy and Procedure
    b. Staff Development Plans
    c. SRG Human Resource Grievance and Disputes resolution Policy and Procedure
    d. Staff Recruitment and Performance Policy and Procedure
    e. Sarina Russo Group Enterprise Agreement
    f. Russo Business School Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Forms
- Scholarship Activities Framework and Templates

7. Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed one year after commencement and three yearly thereafter.

8. Accountabilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for review and approval of this policy, with input from the Academic Board.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and Russo Business School's higher education community via the website and other publications.

Delegated Authority	Delegation
Governance	
Board of Directors	Refer to the Terms of Reference
Academic Board	Refer to the Terms of Reference
Executives	
Chief Executive Officer	Relevant to Accountability Statement
Executive Dean	Relevant to Accountability Statement
Management	
Dean of Studies	Relevant to Accountability Statement

9. Revision history

Policy & Procedure Version No	Policy & Procedure Sponsor	Approval Authority	Date of Approval	Date for next review
1/2014	Ms Kathleen Newcombe	Academic Board	9/10/2014	9/10/2015
2/2015	Dr Elizabeth O'Brien Executive Dean, Russo Business School	Academic Board	23/11/2015	23/11/2016
3/2016	Dr Elizabeth O'Brien Executive Dean, Russo Business School	Academic Board	7/10/2016	7/10/2017
4/2020	Ms Kathleen Newcombe CEO (Education Group)	Academic Board (Minor Amendment)	9/6/2020	9/6/2021
5/2022	Chief Executive Officer	Board of Directors	13/07/2022	13/07/2024