Professional Development and Training Policy

Ver.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Type of Change	Approved by
00	04/11/2025	09/11/2025	Initial Release	President

1. Purpose

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) recognizes the importance of encouraging and supporting all Employees in undertaking professional development and training activities related to their employment to increase personal job satisfaction, improve workplace productivity and adaptability, and promote excellence. This policy provides guidelines and establishes the principles upon which professional development and training is provided at HBKU.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Employees of HBKU. Additional professional development and training of faculty and researchers on specific areas and skills related to teaching and research are also covered by the Academic and Research Professional Development Policy.

3. Terms, Abbreviations, and Definitions

The following terms and abbreviations used in this policy shall have the meanings defined below:

Term/Abbreviation	Definition
Employees	Any person engaged to perform work for HBKU under HBKU's direction and supervision.
Line Manager	The person to whom the Employee reports directly.
Professional Development and Training	Professional development and training is defined as activities and learning undertaken by Employees to maintain and advance their skills, knowledge and competencies, specifically as they relate and add value to their job. It is a dynamic process and may be achieved not only through participation in programs and courses but also through professional experience, collaboration, mentoring, participation in activities of professional organizations, and through independent study and research.
University or HBKU	Hamad Bin Khalifa University

4. Policy

4.1. General Principles

4.1.1. HBKU recognizes its responsibility to encourage the professional development and growth of its Employees including faculty and researchers by identifying, creating, and providing a variety of opportunities for professional development and training to enhance the capacity, skills, professionalism, and well-being of Employees to enable them to contribute effectively and creatively to the University's mission.

4.1.2. The university supports both job-related and career-related professional development and training programs and activities.

4.1.3. The Human Resources Directorate is responsible for providing professional development and training opportunities to all Employees, including faculty and researchers on matters other than teaching and research.

4.1.4. The Human Resources Directorate is responsible for collecting the professional development and training needs from HBKU internal stakeholders including Centers, Colleges, Research Institutes, and Directorates.

4.1.5. Ultimate responsibility for assessing job-related skills and knowledge, for maintaining a high level of performance, and for seeking appropriate professional development or training opportunities rests with each Employee. Employees are expected not only to undertake initial developmental activities upon joining the University but to

continuously engage in identifying and meeting their own further professional development and training needs.

4.1.6. Line Managers play a key role in staff development. They are responsible for assessing job-related skills of individual Employees in their direct reporting line and for discussing professional development and training needs during each Employee's annual performance review.

4.1.7. Line Managers are responsible for guiding, encouraging, and assisting Employees in their direct reporting line in taking advantage of the professional development and training opportunities provided and for ensuring implementation of approved Employee professional development and training programs.

4.1.8. Participating and successfully completing professional development and training opportunities do not guarantee or automatically lead to promotion, when applicable.

4.1.9. Where appropriate, Employees are expected to share their own job-related expertise with others so that the benefits they bring to the University and to other Employees can be maximized. Employees are encouraged to contribute to the development of others, e.g., through mentoring and counselling.

4.1.10. The time an Employee spends taking either a mandatory or an approved job-specific or recommended professional development or training program as defined in the following section, is considered time worked and, when applicable, the full or partial payment of fees and expenses, i.e., materials, travel, and registration fees shall be paid by the relevant unit.

4.2. Types of Professional Development and Training

4.2.1. Professional development and training programs and activities may include, but are not limited to, on-the-job training, cross training, mentoring, coaching, and internships; participation in courses, programs, workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures, and meetings; maintenance of professional licenses and certifications; induction and orientation programs and activities; participation in professional and technical associations; independent study and research; and further study.

4.2.2. Specific professional development and training programs and activities may be designated as mandatory, recommended, job-specific, or elective.

4.2.3. **Mandatory Professional Development and Training:**

4.2.3.1. The Human Resources Directorate may identify mandatory professional development or training programs that all Employees or a designated group of Employees are required to complete. These may be required to comply with applicable laws and regulations or to address legal, financial, or physical risks that could significantly impact the University.

4.2.3.2. The Human Resources Directorate will designate the frequency and the time-period during which mandatory professional development and training programs must be completed.

4.2.3.3. Failure to complete mandatory professional development and training programs within the mandated time period may result in disciplinary action.

4.2.3.4. Employees on an approved leave of absence may be granted additional time to complete the mandatory professional development and training programs at the discretion of the Human Resources Directorate.

4.2.3.5. Examples of mandatory professional development and training programs may include new Employee orientation, new manager and supervisor training, environmental sustainability training, and health and safety training.

4.2.3.6. **New Employee Orientation:** Newly hired Employees must complete new Employee related mandatory training within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of hire and receive appropriate development and guidance through initiatives such as induction, orientation, mentoring, on-the-job training, and developmental conversations with their Line Managers and supervisors.

4.2.3.7. **New Manager or Supervisor Training:** All Employees newly hired or promoted to Manager or Supervisor positions must attend manager orientation training, usually during their first month as managers or supervisors. Additionally, they may be encouraged to complete other recommended professional development and training programs such as leadership development programs.

4.2.4. Job-Specific Professional Development and Training

4.2.4.1. Administrators at the level of Directors, Executive Directors, and Deans or higher are, in consultation with Line Managers, responsible for identifying and approving any job-specific professional development or training requirements and for notifying the Human Resources Directorate and the concerned managers and supervisors of such requirements.

4.2.4.2. Employee participation in job-specific professional development or training programs must be approved by the relevant Line Manager or supervisor and the Human Resources Directorate.

4.2.4.3. Line Managers and supervisors are responsible for notifying Employees of any approved job-specific required professional development and training program and for ensuring that Employees complete the requirement.

4.2.4.4. Failure to complete job-specific professional development and training requirements may result in disciplinary action.

4.2.4.5. Examples of job-specific professional development and training requirements may include courses pertaining to cash management, safety, data security and privacy, and courses needed to obtain or maintain professional licenses and certifications that are a requirement of an Employee's current or future position.

4.2.5. Recommended Professional Development and Training

4.2.5.1. Line Managers or the Human Resources Directorate may recommend that an Employee takes specific professional development and training programs offered within or outside the University.

4.2.5.2. Employee participation in recommended professional development or training programs must be approved by the Line Manager, the Head of the relevant Entity or Unit, and the Human Resources Directorate.

4.2.5.3. Recommended professional development or training programs are not mandatory. Examples of recommended professional development or training programs may include leadership courses and communication skills courses.

4.2.6. Elective Professional Development and Training

4.2.6.1. An elective professional development or training program is a professional development or training program that is not mandatory, job-specific, or recommended by a Line Manager or the Human Resources Directorate.

4.2.6.2. Employees may request a long leave of absence to participate in an elective professional development or training program.

4.2.6.3. An Employee who wishes to participate in an elective professional development or training program shall develop a Professional Development Plan for approval by the Employee Line Manager and the Head of the relevant Entity or Unit.

4.2.6.4. The Professional Development Plan should be developed in consultation with the Employee Line Manager or supervisor to address the following:
- A description of the program or activities to be undertaken by the Employee.
- The requested period of time for the program or activities.
- The relation to the University's mission and strategic goals.
- The relation to the Employee's current and future job responsibilities.
- How will the program or activities contribute to the Employee development.
- The quality of the program or activities and of its providers.
- The impact, if any, on Employee workload and the workload of colleagues.

4.2.6.5. Employee participation in elective professional development or training programs must be approved by the Human Resources Directorate. Participation that requires a long leave of absence must be reviewed by the Human Resources Directorate, endorsed by the relevant senior administrator reporting directly to the President, and approved by the President.

4.2.6.6. An Employee who receives a long leave of absence to participate in an elective professional development or training program must remain a full-time Employee of the university for at least one year after the conclusion of the leave.

5. Associated Procedures, Guidelines, and Supporting Documents

NA

6. References and Related Policies

Leaves Policy
Performance Management Policy

7. Source, Responsible Office, Authority

The Human Resources Directorate is responsible for the administration, implementation, and enforcement of this policy.