Professional Development Policy

(i) **Purpose:**
This policy aims to assist in the development of a learning community by fostering activities which improve the practice of all members of the College's staff and to develop a community which reflects the core values identified in the College Mission Statement and the Learning and Teaching Policy.

Professional development should not be seen in the narrow sense of training. Rather, it encompasses activities designed to: develop a vision; reflect upon and improve work practices; identify needs and develop and implement action plans. Activities such as seminars, staff development days, meetings, formal courses, assessing examinations, mentoring staff who are new to the College, team-teaching and training sessions should all be regarded as falling within the ambit of professional development.

(ii) **Principles:**
At Salesian College, we believe professional development practices should:

1. Provide all members of staff with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Salesian educative system and its application to their work practice
2. Enhance the skills of teaching staff in order to maximise student learning and to help all staff cater for the pastoral needs of students
3. Promote a collaborative working environment where the College community readily and regularly exchanges ideas in order to improve work practices
4. Provide support for all staff members to ensure the ongoing development of a range of professional skills so their careers can be pursued with confidence
5. Ensure that the College meets the required guidelines of governmental bodies and the Catholic Education Office.

(iii) **Expectations:**
Professional development practices will be:

1. Designed to advance formation in the Salesian and Catholic educative systems
2. Informed by the establishment of goals by the College's various committees, departments, teams and bodies in order to foster a coherent whole-school plan
3. Leavened and strengthened by a strong collegial spirit
4. Oriented towards the cultivation of excellent teaching practice
5. Cognisant of the need to deliver a comprehensive induction program
6. Conscious of the importance of nurturing the careers of student teachers
7. Subject to clearly articulated and methodically maintained booking and record-keeping protocols.

These practices will be informed by the attached guidelines which will be regularly reviewed and revised by the College Leadership Team in consultation with staff

(iv) **Review**
This policy will be reviewed from time to time as required.
**Professional Development Guidelines**
*(To the read in conjunction with the Professional Development Policy)*

1. **The Salesian and Catholic Educative Systems**

   Professional development activities should be regularly planned and actively promoted to foster in all members of staff a deeper awareness of the Salesian and Catholic educative systems and how these systems apply to their daily work. Time equivalent to one working day per annum should be devoted from within the context of Staff Development Days to the pursuance of this aim. In addition, a range of other activities should be planned to assist in the formation of staff.

   Particular attention is to be devoted to the need to assist staff to gain accreditation to teach in a Catholic school and to teach Religious Education in a Catholic school. Professional development activities should be specifically designed to further these ends. As an important part in this process, the Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum and the Director of Religious Education are to maintain an accurate register of staff records pertaining to accreditation to teach in a Catholic school and to teach Religious Education in a Catholic school.

2. **Planning Professional Development Goals**

   Professional development activities should be carefully planned to provide pathways, which meet the needs of individuals, teams and the College. After the Leadership Team has articulated its broad goals and parameters, the staff is to be provided with opportunities at the commencement of each academic year to set and develop individual and team goals. Individual goals should take into account areas identified by staff during their annual review process. The goals of teams and departments should be the product of a collaborative approach involving relevant staff members and teams. These goals should be formally recorded; passed onto the Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum for consideration and regularly reviewed. The goals should be accompanied, where possible, by specific details of professional development activities that would assist in the achievement of the teams' goals.

3. **Annual Review Meetings**

   In accordance with the Victorian Catholic Schools and Catholic Education Offices
Agreement, teachers are required to participate in an Annual Review Meeting with the Principal or the Principal’s nominee. The Annual Review Meeting is an opportunity for a teacher and the Principal or Principal’s nominee to be involved in a formative process which reviews the past year, affirms achievements and plans for the future through the establishment of professional development goals. Prior to the meeting, teachers are asked to prepare a written self-review which covers a range of criteria and which forms the basis for dialogue at the meeting. Together, the Principal or the Principal’s nominee and the teacher establish goals especially in the area of professional development.

4. Collegiality and Meetings
Salesian College's greatest resource is its staff. The College especially values the knowledge, skills and experience generated in the workplace by practitioners. It is in the context of properly organised and well-supported meetings that collegiality finds its most practical expression. It follows, therefore, that meetings should be carefully planned by convenors to allow all members of staff to propose and secure solutions to work-related problems and to generate knowledge to achieve workplace goals. In this way, the expertise garnered by members of staff in the course of their working lives can be utilised to further improve the skills of their colleagues. Such meetings also provide opportunities to deliver professional development activities and for members of staff to pass on skills and information gathered at professional development activities.

Formally scheduled meetings at Salesian College are to be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

A. **Organisation**
Subject to the direction of the Leadership Team, the Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is responsible for the development of a Meetings Schedule which is to be published each term.

The Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to ensure that Fridays are kept free of scheduled after-school meetings.

B. **B. Agendas and Minutes**
Meeting convenors should produce and publish an agenda in advance of the
scheduled meeting date. Members of teams and committees should also be provided with formal opportunities to: (1) contribute agenda items and; (2) lead teams and committees in the consideration of matters in which they have particular interest and/or expertise.

In order to maintain an accurate record of what transpires at meetings, convenors should also arrange for the compilation of accurate minutes, which, at the very least, contain a list of decisions reached at the meeting. Minutes should be circulated no later than a week following the date of the meeting.

C. **The Length and Structure of Meetings**

With the exception of General Staff Meetings and meetings of the Curriculum Committee and the Student Services Team, meetings should, except in extraordinary circumstances, be confined to 60 minutes in length.

Meetings should be carefully planned to ensure they are relevant, interesting and give sufficient time for the consideration of substantive issues. In order to make best use of meeting times, convenors should give consideration to: (1) disseminating *administrivia* by memorandum; and (2) devoting significant parts of some meetings to the delivery of professional development activities.

D. **Attendance at Meetings**

Members of staff have a professional obligation to punctually attend scheduled meetings. Should illness, urgent personal business, attendance at university or other formal studies, or important College business occasionally prevent attendance at a scheduled meeting, an apology should be lodged at the earliest possible opportunity with the convenor of the meeting.

5. **Induction and Pre-service**

Salesian College is to assist in the professional development of all those staff who are new to the College by developing and implementing a thorough induction program. This facility will give new members of staff opportunities to: (1) quickly become familiar with the practices and procedures in place at the College; and (2) deepen their understanding of the Salesian educative system and its application to their work
practice. The program will include formal meetings during Semester One which will cover a range of academic and pastoral issues. A key component of the induction program is the use of a support network for staff new to the College, which, in part, will also include the use of a mentoring system.

Experienced members of the College's teaching staff have a professional obligation to assist, where possible, in the pre-service training of student teachers. A number of tertiary institutions make a gratuity to the College following the completion of students' teaching rounds. The College should acknowledge the significant contribution made by those who supervise pre-service teachers by passing on in full to those teachers any such funding directed to the College by tertiary institutions.

6. **Membership of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Assessor Panels**

The professional development of practitioners, and the academic reputation of the College, is enhanced by the practice of teachers becoming members of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority assessor panels. Accordingly, the College encourages suitably qualified teachers to apply for membership of one or more of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority assessor panels. The Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum and the Deputy Principal - Student Services will favourably consider applications to attend assessor training sessions conducted during College hours provided that no alternative arrangement is possible.

7. **Tertiary and Further Study**

Many practitioners recognise the need to update or expand their skills in order to: maximise student learning outcomes; to cater for the pastoral needs of students and to develop better ways of executing their daily tasks. Accordingly, the College encourages its staff to undertake additional tertiary studies and/or other forms of relevant further study.

In order to provide some form of practical expression to this encouragement, the College will provide five study bursaries per annum to assist members of staff who elect to undertake some form of further study which is relevant to the goals of the College.
Each bursary is to be valued at one hundred dollars and is to be included as a sub-item in the professional development budget. The Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to develop a pro forma and appropriate criteria to provide a formal structure for the implementation of the staff bursaries. The Leadership Team will consider the completed applications.

8. Bookings and Pro Formas For External and Internal Professional Development Activities

The Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to ensure that all professional development activities undertaken within and outside the College are subject to a formal booking procedure. Prior to the provisional authorisation of attendance at the activity, and in consultation with the relevant team leader, the Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to determine that the proposed activity is congruent with the goals of the team and the College. Final authorisation of the activity is subject to the approval of the Deputy Principal - Student Services who, in making his or her decision, will take into account the extent of any impact on the daily organisation of the College actuated by attendance at the activity.

9. Record-keeping

The Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to maintain detailed, secure and confidential records of all formal professional development activities undertaken by staff and is to provide each staff member with regular access to their own records. Upon request, the Deputy Principal - Learning and Curriculum is to furnish each member of staff with a statement of professional development activities undertaken whilst employed at the College.