



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Victorian School of Languages (03) 9474 0500.

RATIONALE

Policy for professional learning at the Victorian School of Languages draws on professional learning practices and recognises that the participation of teams and individuals in workplace learning and in the wider professional context is key to developing quality professional practice.

The policy outlines the requirements and procedures for professional learning at the Victorian School of Languages. This policy draws on knowledge of professional learning practices gained from current research. It recognises that the participation of teams and individuals in workplace learning and in the wider professional context are keys to developing quality professional practice.

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff employed at the Victorian School of Languages including Sessional Centre Staff.

PURPOSE

The Victorian School of Languages is committed to providing language education that fully develops the talents and capacities of all students. Professional learning is valued and recognised as a major contributing factor for improving the learning outcomes of students. Teaching and non-teaching staff in schools have a responsibility to undertake ongoing professional learning that develops skills, knowledge and understandings in support of this goal.

Professional learning refers to all training and development opportunities, formal and informal, individual and shared, that provide opportunities for professional discourse, interaction, practice, reflection and analysis. Professional learning can occur face-to-face, online or through other modes of delivery.

POLICY STATEMENT

Professional learning for Victorian School of Languages staff should contribute to the professional growth of staff and improved student outcomes at our school. The individual, the school, DET and regions share responsibility for promoting, planning, implementing and evaluating professional learning in schools. This policy has the following components:

- Individuals engage in ongoing professional learning throughout their career.
- The VSL will include a professional learning component within the endorsed school plan.
- The VSL will ensure that the professional learning component takes into account the needs of staff and the school community and the priorities of the school and DET.
- The VSL will as part of the School Improvement Team composed of Principal Class and Leading Teachers, plan, implement and evaluate the professional learning component of the school strategic plan.
- The VSL will support the professional learning of staff through the development of policy and the provision of a range of resources and opportunities.
- The VSL will evaluate the impact of professional learning to inform and improve future professional learning.

- The VSL will be accountable for the expenditure of funds on professional learning. This does not include payment of individual memberships to external associations. This also does not include attendance costs for individual sessional instructors to attend external professional development.

Procedures and standards

Individuals engage in ongoing professional learning throughout their career. All staff members are responsible for improving their practice by:

- pursuing ongoing professional learning in all aspects of their work
- critically reflecting on their practice and achievements
- contributing to the professional learning of colleagues.

Staff are entitled to seek school-based and systemic support to identify learning needs and develop personal professional learning programs.

Professional learning needs can include the development of knowledge, skills and understandings related to teaching, learning, leadership, management and administration. These can be related to personal professional goals and role specific needs at different career stages.

The VSL include a professional learning component within the school Strategic Plan.

The professional learning component of the school Strategic Plan should be developed collaboratively with staff. It should be linked to the priorities articulated in the school Strategic Plan and outline staff professional learning needs, the professional learning strategies to meet those needs and the anticipated outcomes of the learning. This is also further supported through the Professional Practice Days allocated to FTE staff or pro-rata.

School Council will endorse the professional learning component as part of the endorsement process for the overall school Strategic Plan.

Schools can have different ways of developing and describing the professional learning component. The Victorian School of Languages will ensure that the professional learning component of the school Strategic Plan takes account of the needs of staff and the school community and the priorities of the school and the Department of Education and Training.

Individuals and groups within the school should be involved in identifying their learning needs and goals for professional growth within the context of the priorities of the school and the Department.

The Department's priorities, strategic directions and commitment to staff learning inform the professional learning component of the school Strategic Plan and annual priorities.

The Victorian School of Languages will have a responsibility to support the individual learning needs of all new staff. In particular, new teachers will receive individual, structured, long-term, school-based programs of induction.

Under the leadership of the Assistant Principal (Curriculum & Professional Development) and within the context of the school's management structures, Professional Development/Learning will be structured to reflect the needs, interests and capacities of the school.

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum & Professional Development) will:

- develop annual outcomes for professional learning, taking account of individual needs and the priorities articulated within the school Strategic Plan.
- design the professional learning component, identifying strategies to support the achievement of the outcomes.
- lead, coordinate, evaluate and report on the implementation of the professional learning component of the endorsed school Strategic Plan.

Planning for professional learning should be developmental and informed by research. Collaboratively negotiated strategies, time-frames and forms of feedback support the achievement of professional learning outcomes for all staff. A strong collaborative professional community and supportive leadership enhance and extend opportunities to learn.

Learning that connects explicitly to the individual's day-to-day work creates opportunities for sustainable change to professional practice.

Professional learning can occur within and beyond the school. Activities beyond the school provide opportunities to network and those within the school provide opportunities to practice. Changing practice requires time to develop skills, knowledge and understandings.

The implementation of professional learning should use strategies that connect theory to practice and encourage collegial discourse, critical reflection and constructive feedback. This is supported by DET through the development of policy and the provision of a range of resources and opportunities.

DET also supports the development of skills, knowledge and understandings that are essential to the introduction of mandatory aspects of curriculum, welfare and organisational change or that assist staff to comply with legislative requirements.

In addition to expertise available in schools, resources to support professional learning for school staff include:

- professional learning funds distributed to all schools.
- targeted funds for specific purposes.
- other school funds as appropriate.
- school development days.
- print-based, electronic and online professional learning materials.

The Victorian School of Languages will progressively evaluate the impact of professional learning to inform and improve future professional learning. This systematic evaluation of professional learning will identify the impact on practice and provide information on the extent of the achievement of outcomes and the effectiveness of the strategies employed.

To ensure valid and reliable information, the Victorian School of Languages will incorporate strategies for monitoring the progress of professional learning and recording the extent to which professional learning outcomes have been achieved. This will include the extent and quality of professional learning available to and accessed by teaching and non-teaching staff, and keeping records of plans, strategies, expenditure and outcomes.

All members of the school Leadership Team have a responsibility for implementing the VSL Professional Learning Policy. This ranges from the Principal Class, Leading Teachers (Area Managers), Learning Specialists, Editors and Language Coordinators. They are to be assisted by the relevant Education Support Staff including the Technology team.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- Made available publicly on our school website – www.vsl.vic.edu.au
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last updated	June 2022
Consultation	School Council: 15/6/2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2025