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DIRECTORATE: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

POLICY TITLE : BURSARY ADMINISTRATION

POLICY Ref. No. : S1/P/ Bursary Administration

1. Preamble

The pursuit of further education and training is important as it exposes employees to new development in their professional careers, thus staff members need to be encouraged to pursue training and development interventions that will equip them with competencies to be able to improve their job performance and contribute to the overall vision and mission of the Department of Public Works and Roads.

This ensures continued supply of learned human resources that will enhance and sustain service delivery in the Department, therefore it is of utmost importance that resources are allocated to support and encourage this initiative that is geared at developing the human resources to sustain present and future survival of the Department.

2. Policy Statement

The Department of Public Works and Roads reaffirms its commitment in increasing the current skills base by providing employees with opportunities for further education and development.

The core challenges that this policy seeks to address comprises of the following related elements:

- 2.1 Lack of systems, outcomes and competency based approach to Education, Training and Development initiatives directly linked to the requirements and needs of the department as outlined in the Skills Development Act, Further Education and Training Act and the Departmental Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 Lack of integrated academic programmes into Departmental performance.
- 2.3 Lack of synergy between what bursary holders are studying and their current work.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 To provide current employees with financial assistance and opportunities for further development and to increase the knowledge and skills available within the department
- 3.2 To afford previously disadvantaged individuals an opportunity to gain technical and professional qualifications
- 3.3. To cater for scares and critical skills as identified by the Departmental HR plan.
- 3.4. To develop a culture of life-long learning and enhancement of work performance
- 3.5. To enhance the development of career paths for employees of the department, thus retaining a skilled and dedicated workforce.

4. Scope of Application

- 4.1. The bursary policy is applicable to all employees of the department of Public Works and Roads including those that are appointed on candidacy development programme, **with the exception of those still on probation.**
- 4.2 The bursary is applicable to undergraduate and postgraduate studies offered by Accredited public institutions of higher education and training within the borders of South African.

5. Criteria for Bursary Allocation

The bursary may be granted where the employee

- 5.1. Undertakes the study on a full or part time basis
- 5.2. Undertakes research on a full or part time basis
- 5.3 The employee has initiated the study and requested such assistance or the study is initiated by the department
- 5.4. Equity representation
- 5.5 Succession Planning
- 5.6 Availability of Budget
- 5.7 Scares and Critical Skills

6. Pre-requisite for allocating Bursaries

- 6.1 The allocation of bursaries must be aligned to the Department's priorities and individual performance development plans, **except for officials on salary level 2-5.**

- 6.2 Recommendations by the relevant line managers shall be taken into consideration when allocating bursaries.
- 6.3 Initiatives aimed at promoting equity representation will be given preference.
- 6.4 In order to qualify for the bursary, applicants may not be beneficiaries of other bursary schemes at the time of application or have an outstanding study obligations
- 6.5 Bursaries are granted to all relevant studies undertaken at Institutions granting nationally recognised Degrees/Diplomas or studies leading to a qualification. Only programmes recognised by SAQA and Council of higher education will be funded by the bursary scheme.
- 6.6 The bursary will fund study programmes that have duration of twelve months or more.

7. Bursary for part-time studies

- 7.1. This bursary is intended for current and prospective employees i.e. employees who have been transferred from other departments (through takeover of study obligations) to enable them to study on a part time basis while employed by the Department.
- 7.2. Bursary holders shall be contractually bound to the Department for at least one year after attaining the relevant qualification.

7.3. The bursary shall cover the following:

- a. Registration and administration fees
 - b. Tuition fees
 - c. Travelling, accommodation and meals during block attendance
 - d. Prescribed text books
 - e. bridging course or extend programme to prepare students for entrance in a study programme, the bursary scheme covers such interventions
 - f. Compulsory levies, i.e SRC and exam fees
- 7.4. Payment of prescribed text books should be accompanied by proof from the relevant study institution. Costs for recommended or additional books shall not be covered in this regard. In order to qualify for additional fees for study material (e.g scientific calculators) the bursary holder shall be expected to submit a letter from the institution stating the course material requirements. Should the student purchase the prescribed materials before submitting the institutions letter to the HRD the student will be required to submit proof of purchase.

7.5 The bursary funds shall not cover the following:

- a. Subject cancellation fees
- b. Late registration fees
- c. Courses being repeated
- d. Interest charged on overdue accounts
- e. Payment of supplementary fees
- f. student cards
- g. Recommended books

7.6. Bursaries **cannot** be allocated retrospectively

7.7 Bursaries cannot be transferred from one bursary holder to another or from one academic year to another.

7.8 Bursary holders must submit an admission letter to the department within a month after accepting the bursary award. Failure to do so will be deemed as a cancellation/forfeiture of the bursary award

8. Bursary for Full time Studies

8.1 Employees may be allowed to undertake a full time study only where the study programme does not have a provision for block or part time attendance. The programme to be undertaken on a full time basis must be approved by the Head of Department and must be in line with the scares and critical skills priorities as identified by the Departmental HR and Work Place Skills Plans

8.2 The approval for full time study will be granted by the Head of Department, based on the submission of adequate evidence from the training institution indicating that the study is only offered on a full time basis

9. Non Financial Assistance offered to employees during studies

9.1 The department may provide an employee with time off to go and conduct research or to attend practical training outside the premises of the premises of the employer, based on approval of HOD.

9.2 Usage of government resources such as laptops and data card (in accordance with The departmental cell phone policy)

9.3 Usage of departmental premises for purposes of research, such as meeting with other students, or conducting of focus group interviews (Based on HoDs approval).

10. Study leave

- 10.1 Leave during research, attendance of block classes, full time, part time studies and exams will be allocated in accordance with the departmental leave policy.
- 10.2 Bursary holder must apply for a special leave before attending block classes.

11. The following guidelines should be followed to apply for a bursary:

- a. All bursary applications must be completed in the prescribed form available in HR.
- b. The form must be accompanied by a study motivation signed by both the applicant and the supervisor.
- c. If the applicant is already studying academic report or most recent results should be submitted.
- d. It is the responsibility of the applicant to get himself/herself admitted at an accredited institution.
- e. Proof of admission from the relevant institution. Bursary office must ensure that no bursary contract is signed before this letter is provided. All proof of admission must be provided within the first three months of the academic year of study.
- f. The closing date for all bursary application is **30 October** each year.

12 Bursary for full-time studies (Unemployed learners)

- 12.1 The bursary for full time studies for the unemployed learner will be considered under the provisions of the North West Provincial Bursary Scheme Policy.

13. Provision of Work experience or Internship (Unemployed learners)

- 13.1 The department may offer the bursary holder internship opportunity upon successful completion of their study programme. The internship will be regarded as part of serving the bursary obligation. The bursar will be taken on the departmental internship programme, with the intention of registering as candidate interns as per the departmental internship policy.

The appointment and remuneration of bursary holders into the internship or candidacy programme will be guided by the departmental internship policy.

- 13.2 Bursary holders who are required to serve internship programme prior to attainment of their qualification will do so with the department, in line with the departmental internship policy.

14. Payment of accounts

- 14.1 The budget for bursaries is centrally controlled, under the Directorate: Human Resource Management. Payments will be made within 30 days after receipt of Statement of account, academic progress report or results for continuing students
- 14.2. No payment for bursaries shall be made directly to the bursary holder, payment must only be made to the institutions.
- 14.3 Under no circumstances will interest be paid on any overdue accounts. All bursary holders are expected to submit accounts on time to the HRD.
- 14.4 Where a bursary holder has paid money from his/her pocket to the institution, the money will be refunded on receipt of an authorized invoice which **must fall under the contract period**. This is inclusive of study material as per the provision of this policy. No official will be allowed to claim refund on behalf of the other.
- 14.5 Continuous Payment of bursaries will only be made upon receipt of the **satisfactory** academic results or performance report from the bursary holder. It is the responsibility of the bursary holder to submit progress report annually and half yearly to the HRD unit so as to qualify for the continuous granting of the bursary.
- 14.6 Payment of S & T must be in line with the departmental financial management policy.
- 14.7. All relevant documents, such as proof of registration, statement of account, letter of acceptance must be submitted by all bursary holders before payment can be done. The required documents must also be submitted within the first three months of the academic year. The bursary office must take action if the specified documents have not been submitted by 1 April of each year.

15. Bursary contract

- 15.1 Bursary holders must complete and submit contracts before any payment may be made towards their institutional accounts.
- 15.2 The fully completed contract must be signed by the bursary holder as well as countersigned by two witnesses on each page of the contract.
- 15.3 A student is contractually bound for a period of one year after completion of the studies
- 15.4 Should the applicant wish to change the course or field of study originally approved this shall be permitted only if the intended course is in line with the Departmental strategic plan and the Director: HRM has approved the change.

- 15.5 If the applicant wishes to change the institution s/he must put the request in writing and state the reasons for such intensions. Failure to do so will constitute a breach of the contract. The students will be liable for any extra costs incurred.
- 15.6 No bursary holder shall be allowed to enter into another bursary contract before completing the contractual obligation of the existing contract.
- 15.7 A bursary holder who has failed a particular course(s) shall repeat such course(s) at own expense.
- 15.8 A part time bursary holder should pass 50% of the first level subjects for the current academic year for bursary to continue.
- 15.9 An employee who fails to complete the relevant qualification shall redeem any obligation in terms of the contract through service in accordance with PSR 2016.
- 15.10 Bursary holders must submit progress reports on a semester or annual basis

16. Withdrawal of bursaries

- 16.1 Any breach of the term of the contract on the part of the bursary holder constitutes the withdrawal. The amount paid for the studies will be recovered with Interest.
- 16.2 The applicant's failure to admit him/herself at the relevant institution during the academic year for which the bursary was approved, such bursary will be withdrawn depending on the motivation and circumstances that resulted in non-admission to the institution.
- 16.3 The applicant's failure to sit for examination on a specific semester or de-registers without providing the HRD with the necessary information or such intentions.
- 16.4 If a bursary holder does not submit a request for an approval from the Department to postpone her/his bursary or not to register for a semester/year within a maximum period of two months

17. Extension for bursaries.

- 17.1 The maximum permissible period for extension purposes is two years.
- 17.2 Each case will be considered on the basis of its merit with regard to the extension.
- 17.3 The bursary holder must apply for extension of period through their line managers to the HRD unit.

- 17.4 Work pressure will not be accepted as a valid reason for not fulfilling bursary obligations unless supported by the line manager. The HoD shall have the discretion to approve or disapprove such request.

18 Taking over of study debt and bursary obligations

- 18.1 The Department is not obligated to take over any study debt. The applicant should inform HRD of his/her study obligation as soon as they have accepted the Department's offer.
- 18.2 Granting and taking over of bursaries must have direct relevance to the Functions performed within the Department.
- 18.3 An official who is a Public Service bursary holder from another Department will be considered for a bursary take over subject to signing of the Department of Public Works and Roads bursary contract.

19. Bursary committee

- 19.1 A Bursary committee shall be appointed and it will be required to allocate bursaries to individual applicants according to the requirements of this policy, in a transparent and justifiable manner. The committee shall be accountable to the HOD.

The committee shall consist of the following persons:

- a. Directorates Representatives
- b. Districts Representatives
- c. HRD to serve as secretariat,
- d. The chairperson and deputy chairperson will be elected by the committee.

20 Decisions of the committee

The decisions of the committee shall be:

- a. Through consensus, otherwise a simple majority, and the chairperson shall have a casting vote; and
- b. Binding on all members.

21 Roles and responsibilities

21.1 Head of Department

- a. Approve /disapprove allocation of bursaries
- b. Appoint members to serve in the bursary committee
- c. Approve/disapprove writing off of bursary debts in merit. The HoD will approve

to waive the whole or part of the study debts in terms of the PSR 2016 as amended by Clause 77 (6).

21.2 Bursary Committee

- a. Prioritize bursary allocation based on mutually agreed criteria by members.
- b. Ensure that the application meets the criteria as stipulated in the policy
- c. To serve for a period of three years

21.3 HRD unit

- a. Advertise bursaries in advance of the closing date for applications. The advertisement should give details of the bursaries on offer as well as minimum requirements and application procedures, with deadlines.
- b. Allow time for the applications to be processed properly before the beginning of each academic year. No applications received after the closing date will be considered.
- c. Serve as secretariat to the bursary committee
- d. Facilitate bursary payments
- e. Review the bursary policy after two years or when need arises
- f. Inform applicants of the outcome of their bursary applications
- g. Inform external bursary holders of the status of their bursary obligations in the department, should the department be unable to place the bursary holders.
- h. Ensure that members sign contracts on time
- i. Keep and update bursary holders files regularly
- j. The HRD unit will monitor and keep record of all bursary holders and their progress
- k. The bursary policy will be reviewed on a three year basis
- l. The Bursary Office shall establish links with the institutions at which students pursue their studies and make arrangement for support and guidance to be given to students in receipt of bursaries.
- m. Communication with the institutions shall be on a regular and systematic basis, to set up monitoring procedures, which ensure that the department becomes aware of problems as they arise.

21.4 Supervisor

- a. Recommend staff members' study direction on the application form
- b. Submit bursary needs to HRD as per skills needs
- c. Make recommendation for the extension of the bursary contract.

21.5 Bursary holders

- a. Submit statement of accounts to the HRD.
- b. Submit proof of registration before any payment can be done
- c. Submit academic progress report.
- d. Inform the HRD three months in advance about the intentions to change study direction.
- e. Inform the HRD in writing within seven days of the de-registration of the study otherwise the bursary holder will be liable for the de-registration costs.
- f. Submit motivation requesting contract extension with academic results to the HRD after recommendation of the bursary holders line manager.

22. IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING AND REPORTING

The **Chief Director: Corporate Services** shall monitor the implementation process and ensure adherence to these policy provisions. He/she shall report **on continuous basis to the Accounting Officer.**

If and when any provision of this policy is amended, the amended provision will supersede the previous one.

APPROVED



MR M.S. THOBAKGALE
ADMINISTRATOR

DATE

01/11/2018