

## RELEASE TO INDUSTRY (VET)

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### 1 PURPOSE

This policy and procedure provides a framework for managing release to industry, which is a form of professional development for VET educational staff.

### 2 SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to VET educational staff, including teachers, tutors and educational administrators, who are employed by the University either on a permanent or fixed-term basis for longer than twelve months or the full-time equivalent.

This document includes references to organisational structures and position titles of the former CQ TAFE, have been updated to reflect changes resulting from the merger when reviewed. For any clarification, refer to the Administrator (refer to Approval and Review section).

**3 EFFECTIVE DATE**      18 April 2016

### 4 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

[Central Queensland University TAFE Teachers Copied Award 2014](#) (the Award\*)

[Central Queensland University Educational Employees Copied State Employment Agreement 2014](#)

[VET Quality Framework](#)

### 5 POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 Release to industry is a form of professional development, which educational staff members may undertake to continuously improve their professional practice and currency in the areas in which they teach or tutor. As such, it forms part of CQUniversity's continuous improvement system to meet the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Quality Framework's objective to deliver quality services and products.
- 5.2 Professional development may be taken in a variety of activities, including but not limited to formal study, participation in workshops, seminars, conferences; in or outside the University, or through [release to industry](#).

#### Eligibility

- 5.3 TAFE educational staff (i.e. teachers, tutors and educational administrators) must be employed either on a continuing or fixed-term basis for longer than twelve months or the full-time equivalent to be eligible to apply for release to industry.
- 5.4 Under the Award\*, VET educational staff are entitled to a minimum of 10 days per year for the purpose of professional development, including release to industry, subject to appropriate professional opportunities being available. Requests for release to industry shall be determined on their relevance and value to the staff member's professional development needs and those of the University.

#### Release to Industry Types

- 5.5 The three types of release to industry (below) differ according to who has responsibility to pay the educational staff member during the release to industry placement:

- a) **CQUniversity sponsored** is generally one month or less in duration. The educational staff member's salary will continue to be paid by CQUniversity and all award conditions will be maintained.
- b) **Jointly sponsored** is generally for periods greater than one month and up to one year. However, it may be appropriate to negotiate with industry to reimburse salary and on-costs of a period less than one month. CQUniversity will continue to pay for the educational staff member to maintain regular payments and employment conditions. Negotiations are to occur with the industry host for partial or full reimbursement of salary and on-costs.
- c) **Industry sponsored** is release to industry where the industry pays the educational staff member's salary, while they are on approved special leave without pay from CQUniversity. Refer to the Special Leave Procedure (TAFE Educational and TAFE Professional Staff).

## Authorised Activities

- 5.6 Release to industry activities may be either observation, research, practical experience or a combination of the below:
- a) **Observation:** In these situations, the educational staff member observes work activities either to obtain a general awareness or to shadow an employee in their normal work responsibilities. Observation is particularly relevant for staff without the appropriate registration/license to engage in 'hands-on' work or for those who have been away from industry for an extended time. This type of release should only be used for a short duration or in combination with another activity.
  - b) **Research:** In these situations, the educational staff member works in an 'on-the-job' project in industry to gain greater exposure to the industrial environment. It is recommended that this type of release only be used for a short duration or in combination with another.
  - c) **Practical Experience:** In these situations, the educational staff member fills an industry position and is expected to perform the normal duties of the job and participates as they were an employee of the organisation.

Refer to course syllabi as there may be specific requirements.

## Duration

- 5.7 The duration of the release to industry placement is to be as flexible as possible, and will be subject to host industry availability and University commitments. Duration may range from half a day to one year, or occur over a period of time, for example, two days a week for five weeks. Refer to the relevant course/syllabus/training package for physical resources requirements regarding release to industry.
- 5.8 The relevant Discipline Manager shall determine requests for release to industry placements for duration of up to and including one month. The Dean shall determine requests that exceed one month duration.

## Costs

- 5.9 Educational staff members in remote areas may need to consider long distance travel to work in an appropriate organisation to achieve their objectives. Costs will need to be identified and considered prior to approving release to industry.

## Program Negotiation

- 5.10 The negotiation process must involve the educational staff member, a representative from the host industry body/s and a relevant University representative to ensure all parties accept the planned outcomes and working conditions. Any identified issues or costs are to be clarified in writing and form part of the Release to Industry Agreement, which all parties must sign.

## Program Termination

- 5.11 Circumstances may require the release to industry agreement to be re-negotiated or cancelled, if necessary. Every effort is to be made to ensure that a release to industry activity does not become a time served experience and staff are encouraged to re-negotiate the placement should this occur. Re-negotiation is to be undertaken in a professional manner to maintain a positive relationship between the host employer and

CQUniversity. In these circumstances, the release to industry activity must be reviewed when completed to prevent a similar occurrence.

## Conflict of Interest

- 5.12 All staff are required to consider the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest Policy when planning a release to industry activity to ensure any potential conflicts of interest are declared and managed in accord with these policies. Non-compliance with the Code may be grounds for disciplinary action.

## Confidentiality

- 5.13 The host industry body may require a University representative to sign a written agreement to ensure confidentiality of specific industry practice. When required, the educational staff member is to complete and sign a statutory declaration. The following wording is an example of what may be required; however, the industry host is to be consulted to ensure their concerns are addressed: *"Materials may include, but not be limited to, printed audio and/or visual materials, know how, ideas, techniques, processes and other information which is not in the public domain. I will not disclose any material, defined above, to gain directly or indirectly a pecuniary advantage for myself or for any other person."*

## Operational Convenience

- 5.14 Release to industry must be planned well in advance and at a time that minimises disruption to staff and students and accrual of additional costs. Consider the following options:
- a team decision to cover the educational staff member's absence,
  - casual employment to fill the temporary vacancy,
  - part-time release, for example, one day per week for ten weeks,
  - plan for release to industry in program down times, or
  - plan for release to industry when surplus teaching/tutoring hours are available.
- 5.15 If casual employment is required, consider requesting full or partial reimbursement from the industry host.

## Timetable

- 5.16 Teachers on release to industry must be timetabled.

## Feedback/Report

- 5.17 The feedback phase ensures that skills and knowledge acquired from release to industry are shared with all stakeholders. A copy of the completed and signed Release to Industry Agreement must be included with the educational staff member's registration documents for educational audit purposes. The report is contained within the Release to Industry Agreement and enables input of the employee's educational delivery staff profile on Teacher/Assessor Currency Profile.

[Reporting Guidelines](#) are in [Appendix 1](#) to assist educational staff members to consider what information they may want to include in their reports or what type of reporting formats to use.

## Feedback/Report Timeline

- 5.18 For release to industry of less than one month, the educational staff member is to submit a report to their Qualification Coordinator within 15 working days of recommencing work at CQUniversity.
- 5.19 If the release to industry is longer than one month, the educational staff member is to submit progress reports at regular intervals to ensure the activity is progressing as planned, barriers are identified and addressed, and that the educational staff member is updated on any relevant changes or opportunities at the University.

## Risk Assessment

- 5.20 CQUniversity employees on a release to industry placement will be covered by insurance for the period of their placement, provided that the placement has received prior approval by the University and is deemed to be work-related.
- 5.21 Qualification Coordinators and Discipline Managers shall consider the following issues in regard to planned release to industry and the associated potential degree of risk involved with the placement. This is not an exhaustive list. Issues for consideration:
- type of industry,
  - length of time since last placed in industry,
  - level of responsibility in organisation,
  - duties to be the educational staff member in industry,
  - level of supervision over the employee in performing their duties,
  - amount of impact or influence the educational staff member will have over the organisation's clients,
  - workplace health and safety standards at the host organisation,
  - ensure the employee will be given a safety induction on their first day in industry,
  - ensure the relevant safety equipment is provided,
  - identify training required to operate unfamiliar machinery,
  - potential impact the duties performed will have on the organisation's outputs,
  - frequency of exposures to specific hazards,
  - legislation and policy that the employee may be covered by while released to industry,
  - ensure the employee has the relevant licences, qualifications and certificates (certified copies must be sent to the industry body),
  - ensure activity has been approved by the industry body,
  - need for an agreement that details each party's responsibilities,
  - has the employee attended a CQUniversity safety induction,
  - advise the employee of their responsibilities while on release to industry, for example, they should not undertake any task or activity that they are not trained to do unless supervision and training is provided, and
  - if necessary, visit the workplace to assess possible hazards.

## 6 PROCEDURE

- 6.1 The release to industry process must be initiated well before the proposed placement dates to allow for further approval/communication stages. The educational staff member is responsible for initiating discussion and to make the initial contact with industry.
- 6.2 When initiating release to industry discussion with industry, the educational staff member must identify clear objectives for the release that reflect relevant stakeholder needs and will benefit all parties.
- 6.3 The educational staff member then meets with their Qualification Coordinator to:
- a) consider and discuss their responsibilities and the requirements of this policy and procedure,
  - b) identify if the placement is to be CQUniversity, jointly or industry sponsored, and any conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of the release to industry placement,
  - c) negotiate appropriate dates for the release to industry,
  - d) define the activities and objectives, including how they relate to currency requirements, and
  - e) nominate a potential host employer for the release to industry placement.
- 6.4 Based on the above meeting outcomes, the educational staff member prepares the Release to Industry Agreement then:
- a) requests the host employer to sign the Agreement, indicating their agreement to the terms and conditions of the release to industry placement,

- b) signs the Release to Industry Agreement, indicating that they understand the conditions of the release and that any conflict of interests have been declared, and
  - c) forwards the Release to Industry Agreement to their Qualification Coordinator for recommendation.
- 6.5 The Qualification Coordinator recommends and forwards the Release to Industry Agreement to the relevant decision-maker (i.e. Discipline Manager or Dean – see [section 5.8: Duration](#).) (It is anticipated that the Qualification Coordinator has already agreed to the release to industry placement prior to the host employer signing, so their involvement in further negotiation is not required.)
- 6.6 The decision-maker approves the Release to Industry Agreement and returns it to the relevant Qualification Coordinator. The Discipline Administration staff retains the Agreement for follow-up.
- 6.7 If the decision-maker does not approve the Release to Industry Agreement, they will return the unsigned Agreement, along with their comments and/or concerns (from the Dean of School or Discipline Manager). The Qualification Coordinator will meet with the educational staff member to negotiate alternatives and resubmit if necessary.
- 6.8 Four weeks before the planned release to industry placement, the relevant Qualification Coordinator contacts the educational staff member to confirm that the placement is proceeding as planned.
- 6.9 If the placement is not proceeding as planned, the relevant Discipline Administration Officer will:
- a) advise the Qualification Coordinator of the cancellation via email,
  - b) note the Agreement as cancelled, and
  - c) forward the cancelled Agreement to the qualification Coordinator to assist with negotiating revised arrangements with the educational staff member.
- 6.10 If the placement is proceeding as planned:
- a) the Qualification Coordinator will prepare and send the confirmation letter to the host employer at least two weeks before the placement dates, and include a completed and signed copy of the Release to Industry Agreement, and
  - b) the Discipline Administration Officer will forward a copy of the letter and the Agreement to the educational staff member and to People and Culture for retention on the educational staff member's file.
- 6.11 If the release to industry is fully sponsored by the host employer, the educational staff member is to apply for leave without pay through ESSO.
- 6.12 On the final day of the release to industry placement, the educational staff member will:
- a) ask the host employer to sign Part II of the Release to Industry Agreement to verify the activities undertaken by the educational staff member and the dates when these activities occurred, and
  - b) sign Part II of the Agreement to verify that the activities were undertaken as listed in their approved proposal (or as amended by the host employer).
- 6.13 Within three working days of returning to work at CQUniversity, the educational staff member will return the Release to Industry Agreement for the Qualification Coordinator to verify and sign Part II.
- 6.14 The Discipline Administration Officer then:
- a) forwards the signed Release to Industry Agreement to People and Culture for filing, and
  - b) distributes the signed Release to Industry Agreement to the relevant staff for:
    - updating the timetable to reflect the release to industry placement, and
    - updating ESSO.
- 6.15 The educational staff member is responsible for updating their Teacher/Tutor Currency Profile with their release to industry information.

## 7 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Compliance, Monitoring and Review

7.1 The Administrator is responsible for ensuring compliance with and monitoring implementation of this policy and procedure, and to undertake reviews as required.

### Reporting

7.2 There are no additional reporting requirements.

### Records Management

7.3 All records relevant to this document are to be maintained in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## 8 DEFINITIONS

**Release to industry:** is a particular component of professional development. It means release from University attendance for observational, research or hands-on (practical) experience in an external organisation within industry, commerce or other appropriate setting for the specific purpose of acquiring skills, knowledge, and experience necessary for staff members to improve the quality of vocational education.

Refer to the University [glossary](#) for the definition of terms used in this policy.

## 9 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

**Note:** Staff can access CQUniversity forms, templates and fact sheets on CQUniversity's SharePoint system.

### Related Policy Document Suite

[Release to Industry Agreement](#)

[Release to Industry New Learnings/Updated Skills Report](#)

[Release to Industry Letter to Host Organisation](#)

### Related Legislation and Supporting Documents

[Central Queensland University TAFE Teachers Copied Award 2014](#)

[Central Queensland University Educational Employees Copied State Employment Agreement 2014](#)

[Special Leave Procedure \(TAFE Educational and TAFE Professional Staff\)](#)

[VET Quality Framework](#)

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
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Administrator	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Industry, Vocational Training and Access Education)
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## APPENDIX 1: REPORTING GUIDELINES

### What to include in the report?

The written report could include such information about the release to industry placement as:

- an overview of the activity such as type of release, duration, and employment conditions,
- an overview of the organisation and the educational staff member's role within the organisation,
- problems that were encountered so that they can be prevented in future activities,
- outcomes that have been achieved,
- knowledge and skills that were gained with particular reference to the staff member's areas of teaching (as evidence of vocational competence),
- the effect of the educational staff member's absence from the University,
- the relationship between current course content and the industry practices observed,
- suggested improvements for future programs, and/or
- recommendations.

**TIP:** It may be easier to write a report if a diary or journal has been kept or if progress reports have been submitted during the placement.

### What type of format to use?

In addition to using the Release to Industry New Learnings/Updated Skills Report template, consider including a combination of the reports listed below (optional):

- training sessions for team members,
- written report,
- brief overview in the University's staff newsletter,
- debrief with the University representative,
- debrief with the industry body's representative,
- debrief with the industry body's work team,
- a brief verbal report for anyone who may be interested in planning a similar activity, with a focus on how the activity was planned, negotiated and the benefits of release to industry,
- a written report from the industry body's representative to identify the benefits and problems associated with the activity and any ongoing business/relationship,
- comments from the University representative regarding the benefits and problems that were identified,
- a report from the employee's team at the University to identify problems that may have occurred due to an absent staff member, and/or
- a report from the employee's team to identify the positive outcomes for the team and the University.