

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) POLICY

POLICY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Title:	CPD Policy
Identifier:	TL_1.1
Date of Last Review:	May 2023
Status:	Non-Statutory
Committee:	Leadership
Staff Lead:	School PD Leader (SPDL) / HR Manager
Review Process:	Annually
Location:	VLE
Reviewed and Approved:	May 2023

INTRODUCTION

GEMS World Academy, Dubai (GWA), recognizes the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all staff to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively support the learning and development of our students. This policy sets out the Academy's commitment to providing ongoing professional development opportunities, which links to the Academy's Improvement Plan 2023-2026, and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of all staff.

Our targets and expectations of our own performance are very high. We are committed to raising standards in education and to doing everything in our power to improve the life chances of young people in this region. To this end, we are committed to the continuing professional development of all staff at GWA to develop and empower and help achieve our overall vision.

We believe that where staff feel *strategically involved and empowered* in their workplace, are in receipt of high quality and appropriate coaching and training, and receive timely support where and when required, our challenging targets are much more likely to be met.

RATIONALE

CPD and performance management require a shared commitment to high performance. It helps focus attention on more effective teaching, learning, and monitoring of achievement to raise the quality of teaching and benefit students and staff. It applies to all staff involved in student instruction; teachers, teaching assistants, learning support assistants, counsellors, and other support staff, with the aim of providing appropriate and effective professional and performance training and coaching to ensure job satisfaction, a high level of expertise, and progression of staff.

In line with the Academy Improvement Plan, the focus on continuing professional development can be found within the following objective;

TL1: PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

Enhance the skills and expertise of all adults involved in student instruction, enabling the delivery of consistently higher-quality teaching that enhances student achievement, engagement in learning, understanding, and outcomes.

The aim of CPD at GEMS World Academy:

- Every member of staff at GEMS World Academy has access to effective, high-quality, research-based training via INSET and weekly CPD sessions, pivotal to their roles and responsibilities throughout the academic year.
- To support staff in developing their professional knowledge and skills, both in relation to their current role and in preparation for future career development. All staff should be encouraged and supported to achieve their potential through agreeing on objectives,

undertaking development, and engaging in performance assessment.

- CPD is personalized. Any CPD booked or explored must be relevant to i) the Academy's Improvement Plan; and ii) the individual staff member's performance management objective/s and/or the goals of the team.
- To enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and improve outcomes for our students.
- The Academy will encourage and support staff in pursuing further academic and professional qualifications, particularly IB certification.
- Staff will be expected to engage in reflective practice and share their learning and experiences with colleagues to promote a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.
- The Academy will evaluate the impact of professional development on staff and student outcomes, and use this information to inform future CPD planning and implementation.
- The Academy will keep staff informed of relevant CPD opportunities and encourage them to take an active role in identifying their own development needs and opportunities based on the IB Approaches to Teaching (ATT).

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy covers all staff except supply or cover teachers and those on temporary or short fixed-term contracts of less than one term. It will evolve as part of an ongoing consultation process. The policy sets a framework for all staff to agree on and review professional and personal development priorities, alongside performance objectives, within the context of the Academy's Improvement Plan and their own professional learning needs.

This policy recognizes how much there is to gain by encouraging teachers and support staff as educational professionals to develop their expertise in teaching and learning, and to incorporate new strategies and tools based on the latest educational research. Delivery of CPD will be achieved through effective and engaging approaches.

The breadth of the CPD programme consists of:

In-House Training: The Academy has a wide range of expertise within the collective experience and abilities of its own staff. Sessions are tailored to the needs of the Academy and may focus on specific topics or skills relevant to the individual or department.

Workshops: Led by Academy Leaders or Lead Teachers. These are sessions that are designed to provide hands-on, practical training to staff. Workshops can be conducted on various topics such as classroom management, assessment, teaching strategies, technology integration, etc.

IB Global Conferences: An IB Global Conference (IBGC) is an annual event organized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). The conference brings together IB world educators, school leaders, administrators, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the Conference is to provide a platform for these professionals to share ideas, best practices, and innovations in IB education. At GWA, the priority for attending an IBGC is usually afforded to IB Programme Coordinators (EYP, PYP, MYP, and DP), and Senior Leaders.

Tellal: Tellal provides a range of Teacher Competency modules, Middle Leader modules, and Teacher Leader modules, both in English and Arabic languages. Application of Tellal training is done through Phoenix and registration closes 7 days prior to the start date of the course. Requests are approved by the School Professional Development Leader (SPDL). Tellal offers both asynchronous and in-person training. There is no cost to GEMS employees to undertake Tellal training.

Coaching: Support structure. Work one-on-one with instructional coaches who understand the challenges and triumphs of teaching. Receive targeted advice, engage in reflective dialogue, team-teaching, and guidance, and collaborate with staff to improve and enhance your instructional strategies, classroom management, and overall teaching effectiveness.

Mentoring: Mentoring involves pairing an experienced teacher or Middle Leader with a less experienced one to provide guidance and academic support. Within this structure, staff will collaborate, set goals, co-teach, and provide feedback on their teaching practice.

Action Research: Action research involves conducting research on one's own teaching practice with the aim of improving it. Teachers can design and implement their own research projects and collaborate with others to share their findings.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): PLCs bring teachers together to share ideas, resources, and strategies. These groups can be formal or informal and may be facilitated by a coach or mentor. PLCs work well when they are cross-divisional, bringing together a wider range of skills and expertise, interests, and experiences.

External Consultants: External education consultants may visit the Academy at various points in the year. Their role is often developmental and aims to help the Academy improve and achieve our goals. Experts that work with GEMS World Academy are IB World School Advisors and other experts that come from various educational backgrounds and often with KHDA inspection experience. They can provide a fresh perspective on the challenges and opportunities that the

Academy is facing, helping us to better understand ways in which we can move forward in alignment with the IB Standards and Practices.

External Provision: Staff requests for financial support in meeting costs associated with external training provisions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of 1) SPDL; 2) Principals; and 3) CEO/Principal. Staff will only be required to complete BlueSky after approval is given and a PRF is completed and signed by the SPDL and CEO/Principal and submitted to Finance. Depending on the course, staff may be required to sign a Training Agreement. (See Appendix A for a generic training agreement, which can be customized to suit individual circumstances).

APPLYING FOR CPD

As outlined above and further detailed below, staff requests to attend external training provisions must follow the approval steps. Applications for external training are available from **01 September - 01 June**. Once the PD budget closes on 01 June, staff requests to attend training may not be approved.

PRF and CPD Absence Form (Process completed at least 14 days in advance. If the request is made outside of this time period, the request may be rejected).

1. **Staff:** Populate PRF with name of staff member, course details (name, date and cost in local currency and UAE dirhams), and all details on CPD Absence Form and send to SPDL.
2. **SPDL:** Approval. Send to CEO/Principal for approval.
3. **Staff:** Once course has been approved by CEO/Principal, staff member to request Invoice from Company and send to SPDL.
4. **SPDL/Procurement:** Send approved PRF and invoice to Procurement (Siva / Sanoop) for PO processing. Once the PO is processed, Procurement to send all the documents (PO/PRF and Invoice), to Finance.
5. **Finance:** Email SPDL and staff member/s once payment has been made.
6. **Staff:** Complete BlueSky.
7. **SPDL:** CPD Absence Form to be shared with staff member, SLT Line Manager, divisional Principal and Secretary. Staff to ensure cover is arranged.

IB Accredited Training for New Staff: IB Coordinators will arrange IB training prior to the start of the new academic year, or as early in the academic year as possible, provided the course is relevant to the position of the individual. Where teachers teach across both the MYP and DP programmes, priority should be given to the DP course. Payment is covered by the IB Training Budget but still requires approval from the SPDL and CEO/Principal in collaboration with the IB Coordinators.

In cases regarding IB training, the below steps should be followed.

PRF and CPD Absence Form (Provide at least 14 days in advance. If the request is made outside of this time period, the request may be rejected).

1. **IB Coordinator:** Populate PRF with name of staff member, course details (name, date and cost in local currency and UAE dirhams), and all details on CPD Absence Form and send to SPDL.
2. **SPDL:** Approval. Send to CEO/Principal for approval.
3. **Staff:** Once course has been approved by CEO/Principal, IB Coordinator to request Invoice from the IB or training provider and send to SPDL.
4. **SPDL/Procurement:** Send approved PRF and invoice to Procurement (Siva / Sanoop) for PO processing. Once the PO is processed, Procurement to send all the documents (PO/PRF and Invoice), to Finance.
5. **Finance:** Email IB Coordinator, SPDL and staff member/s once payment has been made.
6. **Staff:** Complete BlueSky.
7. **SPDL:** CPD Absence Form to be shared with staff member, SLT Line Manager, divisional Principal and Secretary. Staff to ensure cover is arranged.

When the application is approved, the staff member should book the relevant activity/course with the support of the IB Coordinator. IB Coordinators must keep a whole school record of staff attendance throughout the year, which will be built year-on-year.

COMPLETION OF CPD

Once the course has been attended, the staff member must change the status on BlueSky to *Completed or Attended* and write a brief evaluation. If there are any changes to the course, or the member of staff is unable to attend, they must inform the SPDL, HR, and their line manager as soon as is practically possible.

There is an expectation that staff share their learning with the community. This can be achieved through Teaching and Learning Bites, Thursday CPD sessions, lesson visits, Professional Learning Communities, coaching sessions, and Iris Connect. Staff to create a portfolio of learning to evidence the impact of their training on school improvement.

The Cycle of Professional Review: The activity at the core of this policy is the annual cycle of performance management which is outlined in the Performance Management Policy.

This policy will be implemented by GEMS World Academy, in accordance with the guidelines outlined above. The Academy will regularly review the policy to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of staff and students and fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in all aspects of our operations.

APPENDIX A

GEMS WORLD ACADEMY TRAINING AGREEMENT

In consideration of the training which I will be receiving from GEMS World Academy, Dubai, I agree to remain employed by GEMS World Academy, Dubai, for a minimum period of two full years after completion of the training.

I agree that:

- a) I will remain employed by GEMS World Academy, Dubai, throughout the duration of the Course, and if I voluntarily terminate my employment with GEMS World Academy, Dubai, within two (2) years of completing the Course, I will be liable to repay to the total cost of the Course. This amount will be recovered from my final settlement.
- b) I will attend all sessions of the Course, whether in-person or online, and fully participate in all aspects of the Course including testing; and
- c) Present key learning points from the Course to colleagues (e.g. within your team and/or department), and to a wider audience (e.g. other departments within the school) as may be requested by the Line Manager.

This training will end on [date] and if I leave my employment at any time before the end of [above date plus two years] I undertake to refund GEMS World Academy AED [accurate cost of training].

In the event of my failure to pay, I agree that GEMS World Academy has the right as an express term of my Contract of Employment to deduct any outstanding amount due under this agreement from my salary or any other payments due to me on the termination of my employment in accordance with the legislation currently in force.

Course Name:

Signature:

Date: