



MKHAMBATHINI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND BURSARY
POLICY 2024

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SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The objective of this policy is to promote Human Resources Development in the municipality by empowering individuals with the skills and development capacity in terms of the Skills Development Act.

2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 2.1. The policy will apply to all full-time and fixed term contract employees of the municipality who are employed for longer than 1 year, including senior managers.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The Municipality's skills development program will be aimed at empowering employees and improving their capacity for their personal benefit as well as to benefit the Municipality's service delivery program.
- 3.2. In this regard the skills development needs of employees will be informed first and foremost by the need to support their formal jobs and responsibilities within the Municipalities.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. Career path

Career path is the plan mutually agreed upon between the employee and the relevant department's director, the Manager's nominated representative, in terms of which the employee's skills, knowledge and or academic qualifications will be improved within a specified period of time in order for the employee to function effectively and efficiently in the working environment.

4.2. Employee development courses

Means voluntary programs that develop the employee's general skills and knowledge through seminars, workshops, conferences, presentations, (councillors

included).

4.3. Learnership

A work-based education and training programme that is linked to a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Learnership is occupationally directed programmes that consist of both structured theoretical learning and practical workplace experience.

4.4. Supervisor

Means a manager to which Mkhambathini Municipality employee reports

4.5. Study aid

Means financial assistance to pursue either part-time or full time studies, or post graduate studies including pursuance of a job requirement qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

4.6. Official

Means a person employed in a permanent/fixed-term contract, including officials who joined Mkhambathini Municipality.

4.7. Full-time study

This is where a person is granted leave of absence from his/her workplace in order to study towards an approved qualification on a continuous basis.

4.8. Part-time study

Where a person studies towards an approved qualification on a part-time basis and is also responsible for fulfilling his/her job/ occupational duties.

4.9. Qualification

For the purposes of this document a qualification is considered to be a planned combination of learning outcomes with a defined purpose/s

5. THE MUNICIPALITY'S COMMITMENT TO SKILL DEVELOPMENT

5.1. The municipality recognizes that its human assets are its most vital resource and is therefore committed to ensuring that all employees receive appropriate and equitable skills development opportunities for the following purpose:

- (1) To enable them to meet the requirement of their current jobs.
- (2) To enable them to make the most of their ability.
- (3) Encourage employees to take advantage of all development opportunities that are available to them.

5.2. The Heads of Department of individual departments will, based on the provision of this policy, ensure that all employees in their departments receive equal opportunities to skills development.

6. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 6.1. The Municipality will comply with the provision of the skills Development Act and Regulations 97 of 1998 (as amended) by:
- 6.2. Submitting its workplace Skill Development Plan (WSP) on an annual basis to the Local Government Sector and Education Authority
- 6.3. Compiling and Submitting an Annual Training Report (ATP) as a direct outcome of the implementation of the WSP.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION

- 7.1. The HR Section will coordinate and provide support across the organization for an effective skills development program.

8. TRAINING

- 8.1. The provisioning of skills development within the municipality will be achieved through the following:
 - (1) External training through accredited service providers
 - (2) Internal training through mentoring and coaching
 - (3) In exceptional cases through unaccredited training.
 - (4) The Municipal Manager will approve all unaccredited training.

9. THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- 9.1. The Municipality through the LLF may constitute a Human Development Committee for the purpose of overseeing all training and development

issues including:

- (1) Workplace Skills Plan Processes
- (2) Annual Training report ratification
- (3) Employment equity issues
- (4) Bursary management
- (5) Learnership and internship programs management

9.2. The composition of the Human Resource Development Committee shall be such that:

- (1) It is represented by all departments and satellites offices throughout the municipality.
- (2) It has management representation from any Department other than Corporate Services.
- (3) It has the representatives of the Labour component.

THE WORKPLACE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

10. The Workplace Skills Development plan shall be the only basis for providing skills development opportunities to employees within the municipality. The WSP will be costed and a budget approved formally by the municipality

EMPLOYEE BURSARY/SPECIALISED TRAINING

11. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STUDY AID

11.1. Awarding

Study aid will only be considered if the studies are relevant to the business needs of Mkhambathini Municipality in line with the approved personal development plan and career pathing. Employees considered for studies must have the potential to be successful with the studies and to fill a position in future for which the qualification is a requirement.

Only studies that lead to a national qualification or credits in accordance with the National Qualification Framework will qualify to study aid. Studies may only be pursued at an accredited and registered training or education provider. Study aid will not be granted retrospectively unless Council agree to it on the merit of a specific application. Newly appointed employees currently studying towards a qualification defined in this policy are required to obtain approval to continue, in accordance with the procedure stipulated in this document, before any of the benefits contained in this policy become applicable.

Applicant must have been in the employment of the municipality for at least a period of 12 months before they are eligible for a bursary.

Gaining a qualification will not automatically lead to an appointment/promotion in any particular position. The thesis/dissertation topic for postgraduate studied must be agreed with the Line/Functional Manager and the signed agreement as part of the conditions of employment will apply. If study aid is awarded for studies that are not applicable to the employee's current position and related development path, individuals must be prepared to transfer to a career or job to which the studies may apply upon completion of studies if so required by Mkhambathini Municipality. Such studies must still be included in the development plan.

Employees are encouraged to study at public institutions in order to qualify for a full bursary. If employees opt to study in a private institution, or their chosen qualification is only available at a private institution, the Bursary

Committee shall award 50% of the bursary and the remaining 50% shall be paid by the employee.

The municipality will give preference first time applicants i.e. an employee applies to study a Bachelor's degree. If same applicant completes the Bachelor's degree and want to pursue a postgraduate degree, he or she may not get the bursary again in order to ensure that all employees get a fair chance to study further.

11.2. Monitoring and evaluation

The continuation of the bursary is determined by the progress of the bursary holder. The bursary holder must furnish the Directorate Corporate Services (HR Section-Skills Development Section) with official examination results within one month after being released by the institution. Failure, on the part of the bursary holder to furnish official examination results within the specified period will result in the bursary being reviewed. The Director Corporate Services will maintain records of examination results of bursary holders and will initiate action against any defaulters on the bursary contract.

11.3. Should a bursary holder fail on his/her first attempt at writing an examination in a specific subject(s), and a supplementary examination is granted to the bursary holder, the Municipality will not fund the writing of such an examination but will grant the study leave required for this purpose.

11.4. In the case of having to again attend classes for the supplementary examination, the expense incurred for such attendance will be for the account of the bursary holder but study leave will be granted only for the day on which the supplementary examination is written.

11.5. If the bursary holder is unsuccessful in the supplementary examination(s), the subject(s) will have to be repeated in the next study year at the bursary holder's expense.

11.6. If the bursary holder does not, on average pass an academic year or semester, the bursary will be suspended and the bursary holder will repeat the work of that academic year or semester at his/her own expense, and the bursary will continue in the next academic level of

study.

11.7. Where no formal examinations are written, the Skills Development Facilitator should confirm the progress of the bursar to the Municipality in writing.

11.8. If a bursary holder does not continue with his/her studies immediately, except where postponement or deferment has been granted by the Municipality (in writing), he/she will be regarded as having abandoned the study and as such will have to immediately repay the money involved for their study purposes. Interest will be calculated as determined from time to time by Mkhambathini Municipality.

12. CANCELLATION

Mkhambathini Municipality has the right to cancel any study aid awarded or refuse further study aid if either the work or academic performance of the applicant is deemed to be below standard, if the conditions of this policy are not complied with or if the employee terminates his/her studies or service at Mkhambathini Municipality.

12.1. Additional principles for postgraduate studies

In the event of post graduate studies, the following principles should be considered:

- The Supervisor must support the application as well as consider performance history of the incumbent in his/her current position.
- The candidate must have the potential to occupy a level 4 or higher position in the organization
- The applicant to make sure that work performance is not affected because of his/her studies.

13. CHANGE OF STUDY DIRECTION

13.1. A change of study direction will be considered in cases where a written request for change is submitted by the bursary holder, to his/her Head of Department for recommendation. Should the request be recommended, the Director: Corporate Services in conjunction with the Training Committee will further recommend it for approval by the Accounting Officer.

- 13.2. Should such a request be unsuccessful, the bursary holder will have to pursue studies in the original study direction or forfeit the bursary and repay the bursary grant.

14. EXTENSION OF STUDY CONTRACT

- 14.1. The Municipality will consider extensions of study periods as a result of circumstances out of the learner's control if proof is provided of his/her situation or good reasons for not fulfilling his/her obligation. The extension time may not exceed the period of one year.
- 14.2. If extensions have a financial impact for the Department, the Director: Corporate Services must submit the case for consideration by the Municipal Manager.

15. DEFERMENT/POSTPONEMENT OF STUDY CONTRACT

- 15.1. The bursary holder must apply in writing to the Director: Corporate Services for approval to defer or postpone his/her study contract. This deferment shall not exceed one year as determined by the Municipality.
- 15.2. Deferment of bursary service obligations may be considered for (but is not limited to) the following reasons:
- (a) Overseas study and research purposes or further study in South Africa, which, in the opinion of the Municipal Manager in conjunction with Management, will be in the interest of the Municipality.
 - (b) When the official is recalled for duty under extenuating circumstances such as disaster management.
 - (c) For the purpose of gaining relevant experience (locally or internationally) which in the opinion of the Municipal Manager, will be in the interests of promoting effective service delivery within the Municipality
 - (d) An official who failed his/her examinations and needs to repeat a year of study (at his/her own cost).
- 15.3. Should the candidate fail to return to complete his/her service obligation the full outstanding bursary debt including interest will be recovered

16. STUDY AMOUNT (POSTGRADUATE STUDIES)

The amount granted for postgraduate study (i.r.o. Career pathing) will be 50% by the Municipality and the employee pays another 50%. This will only be applicable for postgraduate studies.

17. STUDY CONDITIONS

Upon successful completion of studies, employees will have to work back of which the period will be equal to the study period (e.g 1 year study equals to 1 year of working back) failing which the employee will be liable for the amount spent towards the bursary. For specialised training, the municipality shall impose a period of not less than a year for an employee to work back irrespective of the duration of the training.

17.1. The following will apply to part time studies;

Upon successful completion of studies at a university or university of technology FET colleges or other accredited training providers Mkhambathini Municipality shall update personal profiles of employees, and to comply with this policy employees may submit examination results to HR Section within a month after receiving them. Where study aid has been granted for Postgraduate studies and these are not completed within 4 years, the study amount or the total spend cost of the program plus interest accrued will result in being recovered from the employee. In exceptional circumstances, the Bursary Committee may approve a further one year, over and above the prescribed period to complete the qualification.

18. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES

Employees may claim travel and /or accommodation expenses for attendance of compulsory classes, study schools or writing of exams in terms of the S&T policy.

18.1. Travel expenses

Employees may claim travel expenses for each trip where they attend compulsory classes, study schools or write exams.

19. TERMINATION OF STUDIES OR SERVICE

20.1. Breach of contract

- (1) Breach of contract will occur when a bursary holder fails to fulfil the

conditions of the bursary contract. The following constitute breach of the bursary contract:

- Discontinuation or suspension of studies for which the bursary was granted without prior arrangement with the Department.
 - Changing the field of study to something other than that specified in the contract without written approval.
 - Resignation from the Municipality prior to fulfilment of service obligations.
 - Relinquishing the bursary at own request.
- (2) In the event of any of the above, the bursary holder becomes liable for the repayment of the full outstanding bursary debt including interest.
- (3) In the event Mkhambathini Municipality terminates /cancels the study contract, the employee will not be liable for the costs incurred or pay back the bursary grant to the Municipality.

20. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

20.1 Learnership/undergraduate and post graduate studies

In terms of Learnership the Director or Supervisor will nominate, at his /her own discretion and in terms of its business unit protocol, employees for an introduced learnership and applications received for undergraduate studies. The nominating Supervisor/Manager presents the nominated employees to the Municipal Manager for processing of full-time study aid.

The presentation should include:

- The employee must meet all the entry requirements of the applicable higher education institution
- The requirements of Mkhambathini and the relevant business unit, work performance
- Potential for horizontal and vertical utilization within the institution.
- The applicability of current qualifications and experience
- Results achieved during previous studies
- Period of service with Mkhambathini Municipality (at least 12 months service)
- The availability of people with the same qualification and experience in the market.

- The nominating Supervisor/Manager must ensure that the employee who is being supported has a mentor to enable the development of the employee.

All documentation related to the supported study (costs, quotations, registration etc.) must be kept on the employee's personal file at HR.

21. COMPETENCY COMPLIANCE

1. The MFMA 2003 chapter 8 Part 2 Chapter 10 Part 5, Sections 83, 107, and 119 sets the minimum competencies required of accounting officers, senior managers, finance officials, and other officials responsible for supply chain management of a municipality and municipal entity, depending on the municipal capacity and budget size. National Treasury sets guidelines that after 01 January 2013 no person may be employed that do not meet the requirements of the Regulations. It is further recommended that the attainment of prescribed competencies and qualifications should be incorporated to the job description and evaluated criteria as reflected in the annual performance agreement of existing and any new senior manager of a municipality.
2. The Municipal Finance Grant will cater for funding for Finance staff and other staff from other departments' funding will be from the Municipality's own funding or from LGSETA if made available.
3. Attendance of classes shall not be detrimental to the provision of services and work performance.

22. BURSARY COMMITTEE

22.1. Role And Responsibilities

1. Priorities bursary allocation according to mutually agreed selection criteria.
2. Ensure that bursary applicants meet the criteria as stipulated in the policy.
3. Determine the selection criteria and make recommendations for the awarding of bursaries within the parameters set out on the bursary policy.
4. Make inputs on policy formulation and reviewal.
5. To advise on possible strategies for marketing the bursary programme of the Municipality.
6. To monitor the strategic implementation of bursary management within the Municipality.

22.2 The committee responsible for bursaries shall be constituted as follows:

1. Municipal Manager
2. Chief Financial Officer
3. Director Corporate Services
4. Manager Human Resources (to provide administrative support)

22.3. Human Resources responsibilities

1. Advertise bursaries in accordance with the set closing dates for applications.
2. Serve as Secretariat for the Study Assistance Committee
3. Execute decisions made by the Committee.
4. Maintain records of all departmental bursary holders.
5. Communicate the outcome of bursary applicants.
6. Ensure that bursar enter into contractual obligations with the Municipality.
7. Facilitate bursary payments.
8. Report to the committee on bursary holder's progress
9. Facilitate the recovery of improperly expended amounts to individual and or institutions.
10. Review the bursary policy as and when such needs arise.

23. CONDITION OF BURSARY AWARD AND PAYMENT

1. The signing of bursary contract by the employee and student, agreeing to the term and conditions of the said contract.
2. Bursaries will be awarded to applicants who register with accredited institutions. It is the applicant's responsibility to verify the status of the institutions they are intending to register with as well as getting himself or herself admitted at an accredited institution.
3. The Municipality reserves the right to withdraw any approved bursary upon the candidate's submission of unsatisfactory results.

The payment of bursary fees is subject to the following:

1. An invoice must be submitted before any fees can be paid to institution on behalf of the bursary holder. Payment of bursary will be made directly to the institution.
2. Subjects or modules, which are repeated, including the cost of supplementary examinations, are excluded.
3. Employees are only allowed to study in government institution or public institutions.

4. Successful or unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing. Successful applicants should register with 6 months of approval, failure of which bursary will be withdrawn.

The amendments to the policy were adopted by Council at its meeting held on 27 June 2024 through the resolution number: LC9.5/20.06.2024.



BURSARY APPLICATION FORM

(This form must be completed in writing by the applicant)

PART A: PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Surname:		Title:	Mr	Mrs	Miss
First names:					
Identity Number:					
(Attach a certified copy of your identity document)			Date of birth:		
For the purpose of monitoring employment equity in terms of bursaries, it would be appreciated if you would provide information regarding your race, gender and disability.					
Gender:		Male	Female	Disability (Please specify):	
Race:	Asian	African	Coloured	White	Other
Department:			Position:		
Postal code:			Employee code:		
Key Performance areas:		Cellular number:		Alternative number:	
Field of study bursary is applied for:					
Name of educational institution at which you are or will be studying:					
Duration of the course:					
PART B: COMPULSORY EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION					
Grade 12/Latest subjects					

(Attach official proof of results from school / institution or the Department of Education and senior certificate)

Post school qualifications:

Name of institution:

Field of study:

Subjects already passed

Year in which subjects were passed:

(Attach official proof of results from institution)

Course to be enrolled for

Name of institution:

Total (all inclusive) costs of studies for

(Attached proof of registration and cost)

Part C: Bursary acknowledgement

I: _____ Employee Code: _____ hereby acknowledge and accept the Terms and Conditions stipulated in the Internal Bursary. I confirm that I am aware of the Policy, its contents and all the requirements that necessitate the approval.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE INTERNAL BURSARY:

1. The employee must have been in the employ of the municipality for a period of 12 months [1 year]
2. The qualification to be studied should be in line with what the employee is currently doing in the municipality.
3. For Undergraduate studies, the municipality will pay the total amount if the employee is enrolled at a government institution of higher learning. If enrolled at a private institution, the municipality will pay 50%
4. For Post Graduate studies, the municipality will pay 50% and the employee will pay the other 50%, provided that the employee is enrolled at a government institution. If enrolled at a private institution, the municipality will pay 25%.
5. After successful completion of the qualification, the employee shall remain in Mkhambathini municipality employment for a period equivalent to the duration of his/her study [e.g., 1- year study equals to 1 year to be worked back]
6. Failure to adhere to number 5 above will lead to the municipality recovering the whole amount paid in respect of the qualification from the employee.
7. The municipality will not fund the costs for writing supplementary examinations.
8. Travelling and Accommodation to attend classes and study groups will be for the employees' own expense.

9. From time to time, the Municipal Manager / Departmental Strategic Manager may ask the employee to assist in some other municipal business units.

Employee's Signature: _____

Date:

APPROVAL SECTION

HOD/Line Manager's Signature _____

Corporate services Director _____

CFO _____

Municipal Manager _____

Approved ☐ Declir ☐

Comments: _____

Date : _____

PLEASE NOTE:

No late applications will be considered.