



MTU Professional Development Guidelines & FAQ

The purpose of these guidelines and frequently asked questions is to supply information to members about professional development and provide guidelines for the reimbursement of professional development funds.

To submit a reimbursement claim

1. Read through the MTU Professional Development Guidelines & FAQ
2. Get pre-authorization
 - a. Pre-authorization is encouraged for any Professional Development reimbursement claims to ensure your claim is not denied
3. Fill out application
4. Make sure all required papers and information is included
5. Submit application to the MTU office
 - a. Send it via school mail
 - b. Drop it off at MTU office #100- 33344 2nd Ave, Mission, BC
 - c. Email mtu@missionteachersunion.com

MTU Professional Development FAQ

1. What qualifies as Professional Development?

The Union believes that the general purpose of Professional Development (PD) is to improve quality of instruction, by addressing the professional needs of the teachers as they prepare for and continue to do their work. PD is an ongoing process, which a teacher may use to remediate, upgrade, or otherwise modify techniques or styles of instruction.

Specific purposes for Professional Development include the following:

1. to enhance personal instructional skills and methods;
2. to provide exposure to new ideas, research, resources and technology;
3. to improve personal management skills;
4. to facilitate curriculum implementation;
5. to upgrade knowledge of subject content
6. to increase interaction among teachers, both inter- and intra- District;
7. to provide related professional experiences.

2. What does not qualify as Professional Development

- a. Accompanying students on activities and/or field trips
- b. Student/ classroom resources
- c. Subscriptions
- d. Any event/activity you are being reimbursed/paid for, example Facilitator
- e. Vacations personal or family

3. How do I apply the BCTF Professional Development Lens to Professional Development?

- a. The ProD lens has questions to confirm all the necessary factors are present for an activity to be considered Professional Development.

Professional Development Lens

The Inner Ring: Key criteria

The inner ring consists of three factors that are necessary for an activity to be considered professional development. If any of the three are not present, then the activity should not be seen as professional development.

- i. Relevant
 - a. Does this activity help me improve the work I do in my role as a teacher? Does this activity help the teachers involved improve the work they do as a collective?
- ii. Autonomous
 - a. Has this activity been/voluntarily chosen? Does this activity jeopardize the autonomy of my colleagues?
- iii. Responsible
 - a. Does this activity meet obligations to colleagues, collective agreements, and our profession?

The Outer Ring: Necessary factors

The factors in the outer ring are critical to the success of teacher-directed professional development as a collective endeavor. In turn, this collective work provides the necessary conditions for all teachers to be able to create their own rich tapestries of appropriate professional learning.

- i. Funded and Supported -Teacher-directed professional development must be supported with time, information, respect, and encouragement. Adequate funds for both individual and collective teacher-directed professional development opportunities must be available.
 - ii. Career-long - Appropriate opportunities for teacher-directed professional development span the full range of a teacher's career.
 - iii. Diverse - Teacher-directed professional development opportunities should span a wide range of topics and learning methods.
 - iv. Collaborative - Teacher-directed professional development is best when teachers work together to plan, to deliver, and to share their professional learning.
- 4. Should I get my Professional Development activity pre-approved?**
- a. Pre-approval is strongly encouraged for all ProD activities to ensure you can be reimbursed for all your activities.

5. Does my Professional Development activity have to relate to my teaching assignment?

- a. See 1 and 3.

6. Do I need a receipt for all activities?

- a. Any paid for activities need to have a receipt.
- b. If you are claiming reimbursement for activities that are not paid for need to be accompanied by time stamped photos as evidence of activity. You will also need to relate the activity to the ProD lens.

7. How long do I have to claim my Professional Development funds?

- a. Members have up to 2 years to claim expenses.

8. Are my Professional Development Funds taxable by the Canada Revenue Agency?

Some expenses can be considered income and you would be responsible for claiming those expenses with the CRA. If you are unsure if your expense is taxable, it is up to you to check with the CRA.

9. If my Professional Development application is denied, can I appeal it? What are the steps to appeal? (Policy 6213 7.)

Steps to appeal

1. If your application for reimbursement is denied you may be asked to provide more information
2. If your reimbursement claim is denied members may appeal to the MTU Executive Committee, whose decision shall be final

10. How do I find out how much I have in my Professional Development account?

Email the union office- mtu@missionteachersunion.com

Call the union office- 604-826-0112

11. Why does it matter what I spend my money on, it is my money?

CRA rules apply to the use of Professional Development funds. The member may be liable for paying any taxes and or fines that the CRA deems a ProD claim to be a taxable benefit. If the union is audited the union could be fined for not doing due diligence in making sure monies disbursed are applied to legitimate Professional Development activities.