



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Purpose of this policy and procedure

This purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff. When the document says 'you', it refers to the employee receiving training.

The Council is committed to developing the skills of its staff and recognises that training can benefit the Council and its staff. Staff should receive training appropriate to their role, subject to business need, operational and budgetary considerations.

Eligible staff also have a statutory right to request time off work for study or training. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which the Council can consider those requests.

No-one who requests time off under this policy will be subjected to any detriment or lose any career opportunities as a result.

The scope of this policy

It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term. Some staff aged 18 or under are subject to special laws on education and training, and may not be covered by this policy, depending on their age and qualifications.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Any type of study or training can be requested under this policy. It does not matter how or where it takes place. For example it could be:

- Training provided in the workplace
- A one-day training course provided by an external training provider
- A part-time college course
- An online training module (e-learning)
- A distance learning course

The study or training does not need to lead to a formal qualification. The only limitation is that it must be for the purpose of:

- Improving your effectiveness at work
- Improving the performance of the Council's business

Training and development needs will be identified from a variety of sources:

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- Workforce planning

- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes

In addition, the Council will encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety of learning and training methods, including:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars and short courses
- Online training
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- In house training
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning

Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an you. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and your employment record.

In order to ensure that the Council is able to consistently evaluate requests, training and development opportunities have been organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising training and personal development

The three categories are as follows:

1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the Council makes it a mandatory requirement. Any mandatory training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description. For mandatory qualifications, it is unlikely that an applicant would be recruited without having previously attained the qualification. Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the Council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification (see the section on Guidance for Support below).

Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement. Examples of mandatory training include:

Generic training

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (Clerk)
- Health and Safety (Personal Safety, Manual handling, Display Screen equipment)
- Food hygiene
- Data Protection]

2. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to your job. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description.

For desirable qualifications or training, an you may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain the qualification within a defined period of time. The need for training may also be identified through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals. A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the Council. Examples may include:

Job specific

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (Deputy Clerk)
- RBS Accounts
- Microsoft Excel
- Attendance by Clerk at Larger Councils National Conference

3. Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to your current job.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an you in order to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'.

Job specific

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

Guidance for support

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials in addition to half / day release and time off for study leave and taking the examination. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the Council.

Any financial support in excess of £500, including the offer of a loan, will always be conditional upon the employee's agreement to either a full or partial repayment of the financial support provided. The Council reserves the right to reclaim financial support by way of fees, expenses and other costs for funding your attendance on a training course ("the Costs") where the employee;

- Leaves the Council during the duration of the course, or up-to one year following completion of the course.
- Fails to complete the training.
- Fails to obtain the relevant qualification while in the Council's employment.

- Fails to attend training without good reason.

If you leave the Council's employment within one year of completion of a course funded by the Council then it may reclaim some or all of the Costs as follows:

- If you cease employment before you attend the course or training but the Council has already incurred liability for the Costs, 100% of the Costs or such proportion of the Costs that the Council cannot recover from the course provider shall be repaid.
- If you cease employment during the training course or within 12 months of formally completing the training course, 100% of the Costs shall be repaid.
- If you cease employment more than 12 months but no more than 24 months after formal completion of the training course, 50% of the Costs shall be repaid.

You shall not be required to repay any of the Costs under this clause if the Council terminates your employment, except in circumstances where your employment is terminated for reasons relating to your misconduct.

Study leave

Where you requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where you require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of your formal continuous professional development, the Council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per annum.

Where you require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of your desire for career development, the Council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to your role.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request you is asked to write to the Clerk (or Chairman of the Staffing Committee), setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

Making a formal time off to train request

To be eligible to make a formal request for time off to train under this policy you must:

- Be an employee;
- Have worked for the Council continuously for 26 weeks at the date your request is made; and
- Have made no previous formal requests under this policy in the last 12 months.

The Council will ignore the fact that a request was made less than 12 months ago in the following circumstances:

- If the Council agreed to the earlier request but the training was cancelled or you were unable to start it because of unforeseen circumstances that were not your fault; or
- If you withdrew the earlier request because it was not valid.

To make a formal request under this policy you should submit it in writing to your line manager. Please include the following information:

- A statement that the request is made under the policy or under section 63D of the Employment Rights Act 1996;
- The date of the request;
- The subject matter of the study or training;
- Where and when it would take place;
- Who would provide or supervise it;
- What qualification (if any) it would lead to;
- How you think the study or training would improve your effectiveness at work;
- How you think the study or training would improve the performance of the business; and
- If you have made any previous application under this policy, the date of that application and how it was made (for example, whether it was by email or letter and who you sent it to).

If the Council agrees to your request without the need for a meeting, the Council will tell you in writing.

The Council will treat your request as withdrawn if:

- You tell the Council that you are withdrawing the request;
- You fail to attend two meetings without reasonable cause; or
- You unreasonably refuse to provide information the Council needs to consider your request.

In those cases your line manager will write to confirm that your request has been treated as withdrawn. You will not normally be able to make another formal request for 12 months from the date of your original request.

Meeting

Your line manager will arrange to hold a meeting with you at a mutually convenient time and place, usually within 28 days of receiving your formal request (unless a longer time limit has been agreed in writing). The meeting may also be attended by another manager of appropriate seniority.

If the person who would originally hold the meeting is on annual leave or sick leave at the time of your request, the meeting will be held within 28 days of their return or within 8 weeks of your request, whichever is sooner. If necessary you should contact your line manager who will arrange who will appoint someone else to hold the meeting.

The meeting will be used to discuss your request and, if appropriate, explore any alternatives.

You may bring a colleague to a meeting as a companion if you wish. Your companion may speak during the meeting and confer privately with you, but should not answer questions on your behalf.

If your chosen companion is unable to attend at the time set for the meeting, you should contact your line manager and the Council will try to rearrange the meeting. If the meeting cannot be rearranged within seven days of the original date, the Council may suggest that you bring a different companion or come alone.

The Council will tell you its decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting unless a longer

time limit has been agreed in writing.

If the Council agrees to your request

Where the Council agrees to all or part of your request you will be given a written and dated notice containing the following information:

- which part of your request is agreed;
- if any part is not agreed, the reasons for rejection;
- the subject of the agreed study or training;
- where and when it will take place;
- who will provide or supervise it;
- what qualification (if any) it will lead to;
- any changes to your working hours in order to accommodate the agreed study or training;
- whether you will be paid for carrying out the study or training;
- how any tuition fees or other direct costs of the agreed study or training will be met.

In some cases the Council may suggest changes to your request. For example, the Council may suggest a different course of study or training, or may suggest an alternative time or place. These may be discussed at the meeting or may require discussion afterwards. The written notice of the Council's decision will set out any changes that you have agreed to. The Council will ask you to sign and return a copy of the notice to show your agreement.

The Council does not have to pay you while you are taking time off for study or training requested under this policy, unless this is necessary in order to comply with minimum wage legislation. However, in some cases the Council may agree to pay you for some or all of the time off.

The Council does not have to pay the costs of study or training requested under this policy (including any associated costs such as travel expenses). However, in some cases the Council may agree to meet some or all of those costs.

If the Council rejects all or part of your request

Where the Council rejects all or part of your request, you will be given a written and dated notice containing the following information:

- which part of your request is rejected;
- if any part is agreed, the relevant information.
- which of the grounds for rejection set out below applies and why; and
- the appeal procedure.

The Council may reject your request for any of the following reasons:

- that the proposed study or training would not in the Council's view improve your effectiveness at work and the performance of the business;
- the burden of additional costs;
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- inability to recruit additional staff;
- detrimental impact on quality;
- detrimental impact on performance;

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- insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work;
- planned structural changes; or
- any other reasons that the Government sets out in future regulations.

Appeal

You may appeal if the Council rejects all or part of your request. Your appeal must:

- be in writing and dated;
- set out the grounds on which you are appealing; and
- be sent to the the Clerk no more than 14 days after you receive the written notice of the Council's decision.

The Council may decide to uphold your appeal in full without a meeting. In all other cases, the Clerk will arrange for an appeal meeting to take place within 14 days of receiving your appeal, unless a longer time limit has been agreed in writing . The meeting will be held at a convenient time for all those attending and you may bring a colleague as a companion.

The appeal meeting will be held by a manager of appropriate seniority.

The Council will tell you the outcome of the appeal in writing within 14 days of the meeting, unless a longer time limit has been agreed in writing . That decision will be final and you will not be able to make another formal request until 12 months after the date of your original request.

If the Council upholds your appeal, you will be given the information set out above.

If the Council rejects your appeal, it will explain the reasons to you in writing.

If the Council needs more time

There may be exceptional occasions when it is not possible to adhere to the time limits in this policy. For example, the Council may need to delay holding a meeting or notifying you of the decision. The Council will ask for your agreement to extend the time limit, and will confirm in writing any agreement reached. In many cases this will be in your interests as it will enable the appropriate person to consider your request properly.

Changes to agreed study or training arrangements

You must tell the Council in writing immediately if:

- you do not start the agreed study or training for any reason (for example, if it is cancelled);
- you do not complete the agreed study or training; or
- you undertake (or wish to undertake) a different course of study or training.

You should also tell the Council immediately if you become aware of any changes to agreed

study or training, including changes to the timing or content of the course.

No study leave will be granted where you undertake study which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the Clerk (or Chairman of the Staffing Committee) will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the Council can be met.

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