

UNIVERSITY OF YORK
STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

The University's Corporate Plan aims 'to provide an outstanding and distinctive intellectual social and physical environment in which research, scholarship and learning may flourish, and all students and staff reach their potential'.

It is recognised that the success of the University depends on all staff whatever their role having the relevant skills, knowledge and competencies.

The University recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. A strategic, professional approach to staff development helps the University to attract and retain high-calibre staff with the skills and competencies necessary to deliver its objectives.

Staff development refers to all the policies, practices, and procedures used to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of staff to improve the effectiveness and efficiency both of the individual and the University.

We are committed to providing staff with development opportunities to ensure that individuals and departments are able to contribute fully to the achievement of department and University objectives in the context of the strategic plan.

The University acknowledges that as an educational provider it has a unique responsibility to support and encourage the development of its staff, and recognises that staff development can play a critical role in building the capability of its workforce.

Management Guidelines on the implementation of this policy are to be provided.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff. Formal endorsement of staff development should be given by the Line Manager or Head of Department.

Staff development embraces all forms of development activity including personal study, e-learning, internal or external courses, workshops, work shadowing and planned experiences. We will aim to support individuals through a variety of means within the prevailing budgetary provision and identified business need.

Development activities which have no direct relevance to the individual's role or objectives of the University are not within the remit of this policy.

3. Aims and objectives

The main aim of the policy is to provide managers and staff with a framework that supports and encourages the development of all staff in line with the delivery of the University of York's corporate plan and departmental objectives as agreed during the annual planning and budgetary cycle. Clear guidance notes are provided to support the achievement of the following objectives:-

- Staff development provided by the University is informed by its strategic aims and operational requirements, taking into account the needs of the individuals and where possible the career aspirations of staff as well as the success of their departments.
- Departments work alongside the Professional and Organisational Development team to develop a coordinated approach to planning staff development, maximising the use of available resources.
- Leaders and Managers are provided with the skills, knowledge and competencies they need to work in partnership with their staff to support their continuous development.

- All staff are supported and encouraged to acquire and develop the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies to enhance their performance in their current role and, where they are involved in succession planning, for their next role within the University.
- An appropriate balance is created between the desire for individual staff members to maximise their potential and for the University to obtain a return on its investment in staff development.
- All staff receive an appropriately organised University and local induction in timely fashion.
- The skills are developed that enable staff to respond effectively to the demands placed upon them by internal and external changes.
- There are appropriate controls in place to enable all staff to be trained at the levels appropriate to their role, in order to ensure the University is compliant with respect to its statutory and legal obligations.

4. General Principles

- The University shows commitment to the development of its staff through encouraging an environment conducive to development.
- All staff development activities will be conducted in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- All staff have equitable access to staff development opportunities, appropriate to their role and aligned to their objectives. Occasionally a need may be identified to offer specific training for specific groups of staff in order to overcome past inequality.
- All internal training activities will support the need to heighten awareness of equality and diversity issues. This will be reflected in the design, content and delivery of each activity. Where a staff development activity is commissioned from an external provider, the training specification supplied by the University will include the need to heighten awareness of equality and diversity issues and meet the needs of all attendees.
- The University is subject to a number of statutory regulations and it must ensure that staff are trained to levels appropriate to their roles in order to perform legally in the best interest of themselves, of others and of the University. Participation in certain staff development activities will therefore be mandatory.
- In order to gain the most benefit, the University's staff development processes need to be closely aligned to other planning and review cycles including staff induction at individual, departmental and University level; performance review programmes; the annual planning cycle; annual academic and periodic subject reviews.
- Funding and/or study leave for the purpose of staff development must be approved by the appropriate Head of Department or nominee. In a minority of cases such approval may require consultation with HR Policy, and/or Research or Teaching Committees.
- Heads of Departments and Line Managers are expected to encourage and support all staff (regardless of job role, grade and work patterns) to take advantage of internal and external staff development opportunities. It is the University's expectation that all departments participate in appropriate staff development activity.
- The University also recognises that, for its Staff Development Policy to be effective, staff must take responsibility for their own development. In addition to undertaking mandatory and relevant training defined nationally and locally and as requested for a particular role, they are expected to avail themselves of the development opportunities provided to enable them to keep their skills updated and respond flexibly to change.

5. Identification of needs

Staff development needs are identified in a number of ways:

- Through the People Plans developed by departments during their annual planning and budgetary cycle.
- Individual needs identified through the Performance Review, Personal and Career Development Planning and Probationary Review processes.

Staff development needs may be identified throughout the year. The planning processes will retain flexibility for agreement of additional development needs as they become necessary.

6. Responsibilities

There is a shared responsibility for the development of staff at the University, which is summarised below. It is recognised that there will be differences between Departments as to how these responsibilities are fulfilled.

HR Policy Committee is ultimately responsible, on behalf of the Council, for the overall Human Resources strategy of the University and for agreeing key Staff Development Policies which contribute to that strategy.

Professional and Organisational Development Team (POD) is responsible for:-

- Effective staff development provision, from clarifying the need, to design and selecting methods, through to the delivery and evaluation of interventions.
- Providing all line managers and those involved in the identification and prioritisation of staff development activities with the relevant support.
- Providing an advisory service to Heads of Department, line managers, staff and University networks and committees on external developments within the staff development field.
- Maintaining effective partnerships with departments, trade unions and other staff development providers to ensure individual and unit objectives are supported by appropriate development activities.
- Offering guidance on external provision of staff development interventions.
- Ensuring such activities are conducted in accordance with the University's policy on Equal Opportunities.
- Supporting the provision of any needs identified from positive action initiatives.
- Providing the mechanisms to ensure accurate training records are maintained.
- Evaluating staff development activities in order to assure and enhance their quality.
- Reporting back to HR Policy Committee on matters relating to staff development.

Heads of Department are responsible for:-

- Demonstrating appropriate behaviours, especially commitment to excellence & continuous development.
- Identifying needs for development of their staff arising from internal and external change at Departmental and University levels.
- Liaising with the Professional and Organisational Development team regarding the provision of appropriate developmental interventions.
- Providing appropriate resources for Staff Development.
- Ensuring training opportunities are supported in accordance with the University's policy on Equal Opportunities
- Where appropriate, identifying nominee/s among their senior management team to undertake some aspects of these responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for:-

- Ensuring that individuals have the opportunity at regular intervals, to discuss their Staff Development needs.
- Giving staff constructive, honest and timely feedback on their performance.
- Identifying individual and team development needs which take account of both the University goals and relevant aspirations of individuals.

- Regularly considering the development needs which will enable individuals or groups to respond effectively to internal and external changes.
- Establishing priorities taking account of individual departmental and University priorities and making appropriate provision to meet them within the resources available.
- In conjunction with the Professional and Organisational Development team, identifying appropriate opportunities for staff development.
- Where appropriate, approving attendance at relevant staff development activities and making appropriate provision for the release of staff from their duties.
- Recognising and taking into account that disadvantaged groups may require particular encouragement, or positive action training initiatives, to help overcome historical inequalities.
- Briefing and de-briefing their staff who participate in staff development activities, to facilitate effective consolidation of their learning and in some cases dissemination more widely.
- Ensuring equal opportunities in access to staff development is in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Individuals are responsible for:-

- Reflecting at regular intervals upon their performance in their current jobs and future career aspirations and identifying their development needs.
- Discussing these with their Line Manager during their Performance Review Meetings with a view to establishing priorities in relation to their personal, departmental or University objectives.
- In conjunction with the above, identifying appropriate opportunities for Staff Development.
- Taking full advantage of such opportunities.
- For the upkeep and maintenance of their individual personal development portfolio as evidence of their development and achievement.
- Applying newly-developed knowledge and skills to their work and the development of their careers.
- Where difficulties occur, raising issues with their line manager and POD in the first instance.

Departmental Training Officers (DTO) are responsible for:-

- Assisting the Head of Department to identify and assess staff development needs on behalf of the Department.
- Providing advice and guidance on staff development needs and opportunities
- Maintaining Departmental training records.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of staff development. This may include contributing to an annual summary of outcomes/benefits to the Department.
- Assisting the Head of Department in making effective use of the Departmental Staff Development budget and applying for additional University funds as available.
- Attending the termly DTO Forum to network and share practice.

7 **Monitoring and Review of Policy**

- All staff development activities will be evaluated. The Professional and Organisational Development team and other providers of in-house staff development activities are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of what they provide.
- We are committed to the continuous improvement of our staff development provision and encourage feedback from staff. Where appropriate, best practice will be shared as part of our commitment to improve our service provision.
- Those responsible for managing staff should, together with the staff member participating in staff development activities, evaluate the extent to which development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives, and where necessary agree appropriate next steps with the staff member during their annual Performance Review.
- HR Policy Committee will receive an institutional wide staff development evaluation report, asking for comment on how our investment in staff development has impacted on the University's overall performance.
- Application of the policy will be monitored by the Director of Professional and Organisational Development. Annual reports will be made to the HR Policy Committee.

8 **Staff Development Policy Guidelines**

The following guidance notes will be provided to assist staff in implementing the Staff Development Policy:-

- Staff Development Policy for part-time staff
- Induction
- Identification of development needs
- External development programmes with or without qualification
- Internal programmes with or without qualification
- Funding for staff development
- Policy on Tuition Fee Waivers for Staff undertaking Postgraduate qualifications
- On-line/E-learning in staff development
- Psychometric testing policy
- Communicating development opportunities
- Legislative training
- Records management and Data Protection Act
- Monitoring, evaluation and review
- Developing Contract Research Staff

9 **Approval**

Approved by HR Policy Committee on 11 December, 2007