

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council recognises that its employees are its most valuable asset. The development of all employees will be a key factor in enabling East Dunbartonshire Council to achieve its corporate objectives and build an innovative organisation capable of delivering high quality services.

The Council is therefore committed to providing a structured and co-ordinated approach to Training and Development for all employees so that they may acquire the skills, knowledge, abilities and qualifications to perform efficiently and effectively in their jobs and deliver the services required in line with Council priorities.

2. OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Council's Training and Development Policy are:-

- 2.1 To ensure that the Council has sufficient numbers of trained, experienced and qualified employees capable of delivering and managing high quality services in an efficient and effective way .
- 2.2 To provide the training and development opportunities to fulfil the needs of the Council in achieving its corporate and departmental objectives and meet the continuing personal, professional and career development needs of individuals.
- 2.3 To assist, support and advise departments and individuals on training and development issues.
- 2.4 To promote equality of access to and opportunity for training and development activities for all employees of the Council.
- 2.5 To provide a quality, professional and cost-effective training resource to the Council and its employees.

3. TRAINING PRIORITIES

The Council has established certain training and development initiatives to allow employees to make a maximum contribution to the organisation. Directors and Heads of Service will prioritise their own needs, based on local operational requirements. However they should include in their considerations the following corporate requirements:-

- 3.1 Induction training for all new employees to the Council and those transferring between departments or sections.

- 3.2 Training or development required as a result of changes in legislation , new policies or procedures or the introduction of new technology.
- 3.3 Training required under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 or any other relevant legislation.
- 3.4 Enabling employees to acquire or develop skills to participate effectively in corporate strategies and initiatives.
- 3.5 The promotion of good employment practices, employee relations and job satisfaction for all employees.

4. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

A proportion of each department's budget should be set aside for training and development. Departmental Training and Development Budgets should be based on the requirements of the Departmental Training and Development Plan taking into account the on-going Personal Development process. Consideration should be given to the requirement for internal and external provision of training and development activities including higher and further education, statutory training, continuous professional development and in-house training.

5. DEFINITION OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

For the purposes of this Policy, training and development shall include the following activities:-

- Internal and external short courses and modules
- Seminars
- Higher and Further Education
- Open and Distance Learning Programmes
- Professional Education
- Secondments
- Team and Self Directed Learning

6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Head of Human Resources

The Head of Human Resources has the responsibility for identifying and developing training and development activities which support the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives. This responsibility includes ensuring that departmental approaches to training and development are consistent with the Council's Training and Development Policy.

The Head of Human Resources has specific responsibility for:-

- 6.1.1 Ensuring the availability of training and development support for all the Council's corporate initiatives.
- 6.1.2 Formulating, implementing and evaluating the corporate training and development policy for all employees.
- 6.1.3 Preparing a Council-wide training and development plan reflecting the needs of all the Council's departments and employees, as identified through the Personal Development Planning process.
- 6.1.4 Providing advice and guidance to all Council departments on issues related to training and development.

6.2 Directors and Heads of Service have responsibility for:-

- 6.2.1 Ensuring that a Departmental Training and Development Plan is formulated on an annual basis, which takes account of the development needs associated with corporate and departmental objectives as well as individual training and development needs. These plans should clearly identify the resources available for training and developing employees.
- 6.2.2 Providing the Head of Human Resources with information and statistics regarding training and development provision in that department to be used as part of the planning and reporting process on Council-wide training and development provision.
- 6.2.3 Ensuring that employees are aware of and have access to the training and development opportunities available to them to enable them to carry out their jobs effectively or as part of their on-going personal development.
- 6.2.4 Ensuring that the training and development needs of employees are met in the most cost effective way. The Council's internal resources should be utilised wherever possible. The Head of Human Resources should be consulted prior to using training and development services from any external source. It is the Council's policy that external sources will only be used where no suitable equivalent is available internally.

6.3 Line Managers and Supervisors

Line managers/supervisors have direct responsibility for ensuring that the individuals within their workgroups receive the training and development they require to meet Corporate and Departmental objectives, as well as the present and future requirements of their jobs.

It is the responsibility of the employee's immediate manager to:-

- 6.3.1 Ensure that each employee is thoroughly and appropriately inducted into his / her job.
- 6.3.2 Ensure that each individual's training and development needs are identified through the corporate Personal Development Planning process and, if consistent with corporate and departmental objectives, record them on the individual's agreed Personal Development Plan.
- 6.3.3 Ensure that individual employees are adequately prepared prior to their participation in any development activity, through discussion of its purpose and content.
- 6.3.4 Evaluate the outcomes of any training or development with the individual employee.
- 6.3.5 Review with the individual his/her training and development needs on an annual basis.

6.4 Individual Employees

Each employee will be responsible for:-

- 6.4.1 Contributing to identifying their own training and development needs.
- 6.4.2 Taking personal responsibility for their own learning in order to gain maximum benefit from the training and development opportunities made available to them.
- 6.4.3 Participating in the evaluation of the effectiveness of training and development activities made available to them.

7. PROVISION OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Council will make training and development provision subject to the conditions outlined in Sections 7, 8 and 9 below and within the context of Council and Departmental priorities, service provision and budgetary constraints. It is the Council's policy however that every effort should be made to meet training and development needs as agreed through the Personal Development Planning process.

Access to training and development opportunities will be via the Personal Development Planning process or Departmental Training Plan.

Training and development opportunities will include:-

7.1 Induction Training

All employees should receive induction training when they commence employment with East Dunbartonshire Council. This should include the Corporate perspective such as Council policies and guidelines on Health and Safety, Training and Development, Equal Opportunities, the Employee Complaints Procedure etc. In addition Departmental and sectional induction training should be provided to all new employees and those transferring from one department or section to another.

7.2 Job-Related and Personal Development Training

Employees should be encouraged to undertake job related training resulting from the identification of training needs via a Personal Development plan or Departmental Training Plan.

This type of training or development, which is usually of a short duration may take the form of in-house departmental or corporate courses, external courses, induction or inter-section placements or project work.

The Head of Human Resources will provide a range of in-house courses related to personal skills development and corporate policies. Where there is no in-house provision the Head of Human Resources should be consulted regarding the identification of suitable external providers.

7.3 Vocational and Professional Training

Facilities and financial assistance may be available to employees to participate in undergraduate, post-graduate and/or professional qualifications where it would be in the interests of the Council and the individual employee.

7.3.1 Day or Block Release

- Day or block release facilities will be provided, where available, for employees under 18 years at the beginning of the academic year. This facility is to allow the employee to gain a qualification appropriate to their work.
- The Director/Head of Service will normally undertake to continue such facilities until the employee has completed the course, subject to satisfactory progress being made throughout the course.

This undertaking will apply to the gaining of the basic qualification for which the facilities have been granted. Facilities to continue further study on a day or block release basis may be granted at the discretion of the Director/Head of Service.

Day or block release facilities may be granted to employees of 18 years of age and over who wish to commence an authorised course of study leading to an approved qualification, subject to the exigencies of the Department. Continuance of this facility will be dependant upon the employee making satisfactory progress throughout the course and will be subject to the approval of the Personnel Committee.

- An employee may be granted day/block release facilities to pursue a course of study leading to a professional qualification essential to the professional practice of the post for which the employee has been recruited. Subject to the employee making satisfactory progress throughout the course this facility will be guaranteed until the qualification is complete.
- An employee who is undertaking an approved course of studies on a day or block release basis and is appointed to another post within the Council, will be allowed to complete the course of study authorised for that academic year. Access to further study will be subject to the Director/Head of Service's recommendation that the qualification will be of benefit to the work of the department and relevant to the post.

7.3.2 Full-Time Secondment

Employees may be granted full-time release or secondment with or without pay to attend an authorised course of study. These facilities will be granted under exceptional circumstances only. The Head of Human Resources should be consulted by the Director/Head of Service in any case where full-time secondment is being considered. See also section 9.10.

7.3.3 Evening Classes, Open or Distance Learning

Employees may be granted financial assistance to undertake approved courses of study by these methods.

7.3.4 Pre- Retirement Courses

Employees who are within two years of retirement will be given the opportunity to attend a pre-retirement course. Directors/Heads of Service will nominate candidates for this training to the Head of Human Resources.

8. ACCESS TO TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Access to all training and development provision should normally be identified in the first instance via the Personal Development Planning process. The line manager and the individual should identify the most suitable means of meeting that need. Advice and guidance on the range of internal and external training and development provision is available from the Organisational Development Section of Human Resources.

8.1 In-House Provision

Applications for the Council's in-house training and development courses and seminars should be made on the appropriate booking form.

8.2 External Provision

8.2.1 External provision may be identified as the most appropriate means of meeting an agreed training or development need (see 6.2.4) provided that:-

- i) The training or development activity is relevant to the Council, the Department and the individual in carrying out his/her duties.
- ii) The departmental training and development budget can support the expenditure.

8.2.2 Authorisation is required by the Director/Head of Service for an employee to attend external events such as conferences and seminars. Directors/Heads of Service should submit a summary of all departmental attendances at these events on a quarterly basis to the Head of Human Resources, for statistical purposes.

8.3 Overseas Conferences

Requests for attendance at overseas events and conferences should be made to the relevant Committee with a copy to the Head of Human Resources.

8.4 Vocational and Professional Training

Participation in an approved course of study leading to an professional or vocational qualification should be identified as an appropriate method of development via the Personal Development Planning process. The application requires to be supported by the appropriate Director/Head of Service and needs to be submitted to the Personnel Committee for approval.

This applies to all methods of gaining professional and vocational qualifications including secondment without pay and open/distance learning.

The criteria used to recommend attendance should be that:-

- i) The proposed course is relevant to the work of the Department and the employee's present post or future career development needs.
- ii) The need has been identified via the Personal Development Planning process.
- iii) The Departmental training budget can sustain the expenditure.

These criteria should be applied for each year/stage of the particular course of study. Directors/Heads of Service should satisfy themselves of a student's satisfactory progress before recommending continuation of support for a further stage/year.

8.5 Training for Trades Union Representatives

Application for attendance on paid release at an approved Trades Union course should be made to the Director/Head of Service . In considering such applications the Director/Head of Service should take account of the trades union duties performed by the individual. Release will be subject to the exigencies of the service.

9. GENERAL CONDITIONS

9.1 Excess Travelling Expenses, Personal Expenses and Subsistence Allowance, Out of Pocket Expenses.

Employees may in certain circumstances be eligible to claim excess travelling expenses for internal courses and excess travelling expenses, personal expenses and subsistence allowances for attending external training and development events. Details of these are contained within NJC Conditions.

The undernoted conditions will apply to employees who have been authorised to study for an approved course on a block or day release basis, by evening class, distance or open learning, or by secondment with pay.

9.2 Letter of Undertaking

All employees who have been granted facilities for further/higher education courses of study will require to sign a Letter of Undertaking prior to commencing their studies.

Before signing the undertaking, an employee will be advised of the cost of the proposed course of studies.

A copy of the signed undertaking shall be provided to the employee.

This undertaking will require employees to agree to continue in the service of the Council for a period of 2 years following the completion of the course and to repay to the Council any financial assistance given (see section 9.3) should the employee before the expiry of the 2 year period:-

- voluntarily leave the service of the Council.
- voluntarily terminate the studies before completing the course.
- voluntarily take any action which compels the Council to dismiss the employee from their service.
- be dismissed from the service of the Council for reason of indiscipline or misconduct.

- fail to make a satisfactory number of attendances while on the course.
- not attempt to complete the work of the course to a satisfactory standard.
- fail to make satisfactory progress in the course.

9.3 Recovery of Training Expenses

The amount to be recovered in terms of Section 9.2 above shall be the financial assistance paid by the Council or such proportion determined by the following criteria:-

- a) **Resignation or dismissal during the study period or within one year of its completion** - requirement to pay back 50% of the total financial assistance awarded.
- b) **Resignation or dismissal between one and two years of completion of the course** - requirement to pay back 25% of the total financial assistance awarded.
- c) **Withdrawal from a course of study after 3 months and without completion** - requirement to pay back 50% of the total financial assistance awarded.
- d) **Resignation or dismissal after completion of the course within 1 year of continued service** - requirement to pay back 50% of the total financial assistance awarded.
- e) **Resignation or dismissal after completion of the course and between 1 to 2 years of continued service** - requirement to pay back 25% of the total financial assistance awarded.
- f) **Resignation, dismissal or withdrawal from the course within 3 months of commencement of study** - requirement to pay back the total financial assistance awarded.

The calculation will include:-

- the course fees for the course of studies
- all examination fees
- any grant made by the Council towards the cost of essential text books
- any grant made by the Council towards the cost of preparing a thesis
- actual excess travelling expenses

- any other grant made by the Council
- any expenses incurred by the Council in recovery of financial assistance

Repayment of salary would only be claimed where the employee had been granted full-time training facilities. The amount to be repaid would be proportionate to the un-expired portion of the minimum period of service given in the written undertaking.

9.4 General Assistance

Provided application has been made and approved, the undernoted financial assistance will be given on production of receipts where appropriate.

- Course Fees - 100%
- Books - 50% of the cost of essential text books. course.
- Registration/Exemption Fees - 100%
- Examination Fees - 100% for first attempt only
- Thesis - 50% of cost of typing and binding if submission is a compulsory part of the course.
- Travelling Expenses - Out of pocket expenses up to a maximum of costs equivalent to bus fares or second class rail travel to destinations, where these are not otherwise recoverable. (N.B. In the first instance the obligation is on the employee to receive formal confirmation from the college or the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) that such a claim would not be valid).

NOTE:- The Council will not pay membership fees of any institute or professional body.

9.5 Reduction in Financial Assistance

Employees are required to claim all grants, bursaries and travelling expenses to which they are entitled from any source before claiming reimbursement from the Council as employers.

Where an employee receives financial assistance towards the cost of course studies from any other body, the assistance given by the Council will be reduced accordingly.

9.6.1 Attending Examinations

Leave of absence with pay will be granted to employees to enable them to sit authorised examinations during normal working hours.

9.6.2 Study for Examinations

Leave of absence with pay will be granted by the Director/Head of Department, subject to operational conditions within the department, for the purpose of final revision prior to sitting a formal examination (not a class examination). This will be limited to one day's leave per examination and any additional time should be taken from the employee's annual leave entitlement.

9.6.3 Study Schools

Where an employee is required to attend a summer school as part of an authorised open or distance learning course, leave of absence with pay will be granted.

9.6.4 Vocational and Professional Training during a Public Holiday

Where an employee has a commitment to attend a day release class on a public holiday no enhanced payment will be made. The employee will be entitled to the equivalent time off in lieu, subject to the exigencies of the service.

9.7 Failure in Examinations

Where an employee fails an examination, he/she will be responsible for the resit examination fees. If the employee fails the resit examination, the Director or Head of Service will interview the employee and assess whether the continuation of support would be recommended. Any exceptional circumstance should be notified to the Head of Human Resources.

9.8 Course Termination

When an employee who has been authorised to attend an approved course of studies during the session terminates an authorised course of studies, or terminates employment with the Council, the Director/Head of Service will take any action that may be required to comply with the conditions of the Letter of Undertaking signed by the employee.

9.9. Monitoring of Progress

Line Managers will conduct regular monitoring of individual progress on further and higher education courses. In the case of Distance Learning courses, an assessment of tutorial work shall be obtained from the course provider. Where appropriate, guidance and counselling should be provided for employees who experience difficulties associated with their approved course of studies.

Should progress be unsatisfactory due to irregular attendance or insufficient application to the work of the course, and there are no extenuating circumstances, support will be withdrawn and the employee will be required to repay such a proportion of the financial assistance as may be determined by the Director/Head of Service after consultation with the Head of Human Resources.

9.10 Secondment without Pay

The Council requires to give permission to an employee for leave of absence without pay to undertake a course of study. The employee will be able to apply for an educational grant, and will bear all the costs associated with the course.

On completing the qualification the secondee will be eligible for placement on the grade appropriate to holders of the particular qualification.

9.11 Other Arrangements

A Department proposing any other form of support or facility for a member of staff wishing to undertake Further or Higher Education should consult the Head of Human Resources.

10. **MONITORING OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Head of Human Resources will be responsible for monitoring the overall application of the Council's Training and Development Policy.

10.1 Training and Development Statistics.

Organisational Development will maintain records of attendance at in-house training delivered by Organisational Development and Health and Safety.

Directors/Heads of Service will maintain records on all aspects of external provision accessed by their employees including professional and vocational training and development events.

A form will be issued for this return to be made to the Head of Human Resources on an annual basis.

10.2 Monitoring of Progress

Directors/Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring that line managers monitor the progress of employees and offer appropriate advice and guidance where necessary. Where appropriate a senior member of staff may be appointed to oversee projects or act as a mentor.

10.3 Evaluation of Training

Evaluation of training is integral to the provision of effective training and development.

Employees participating in any in-house provision will be expected to contribute to the on-going evaluation of that provision undertaken by Organisational Development.

Directors/Heads of Service should ensure that any external provision accessed by their employees is properly evaluated to assess its cost-effectiveness in terms of its impact on Departmental objectives and individual training needs.

11 **COMMUNICATING THE POLICY**

Directors/Heads of Service have a responsibility for ensuring that :

- employees are aware of the content and conditions of the Training and Development Policy
- employees are aware of the training and development opportunities which are available

12 **GRIEVANCES**

Any employee who considers that he/she has been unfairly treated in relation to the application of this policy may raise a complaint through the agreed procedures for dealing with grievances or complaints.

13 **REVIEW OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

The Head of Human Resources will review the policy in the light of the changing training and development needs and priorities of the Council.

14 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this policy is accepted and adopted as the Training and Development Policy for employees of East Dunbartonshire Council.

**ANN DAVIE
HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**