

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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	CCF
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1. Introduction

- 1.1** Slough Borough Council is committed to being an employer of choice and investing in learning and development to achieve the Council's strategic goals and objectives and to assist employees to reach their full potential. Continuous learning and development supports employees to deliver excellent customer experience and service. It is therefore essential that we offer a learning environment conducive to these commitments.
- 1.2** This policy sets out Slough Borough Council's responsibility for planning and enabling learning and development activities. It defines the responsibilities of employees to attend learning events and the financial and human resources available to them to plan and agree their learning needs.
- 1.3** This policy is driven by the organisational vision and values which promote the Council as a learning organisation – *where people continually enhance their capabilities to create what they want to create*¹. It is a place where employees prosper and are the best they can be to advise and support each other, residents, visitors, businesses and partner organisations. To drive that vision² *We want to recruit, retain and develop high quality people who are committed to Slough and supported to do their job* and achieve the following core aims:
- Support every employee to be safe and effective in their roles throughout their career at the Council. This includes facilitated support by the Organisational Development Team at these key activities: local and corporate induction; probationary period; appraisal; mandatory training; and ongoing development.
 - Monitor and report on employee compliance to ensure that the Council is meeting its statutory and legal learning and development responsibilities;
 - Offer a comprehensive corporate learning and development programme which is aligned to corporate, departmental, team and individual needs with associated robust budget management;
 - Appreciate and respond to different learning styles, preferences and capabilities of the workforce; and
 - Upskill employees so that they are confident in their current roles; recognise their own potential; and evolve into role models for their colleagues and customers.
- 1.4** Through the Organisational Development (OD) team and budget, training needs are analysed through a review of annual Personal Development Plans (PDPs) agreed at appraisals. From this training needs analysis (TNA), employees are required and/or offered learning opportunities through internal facilitation and/or training at learning hubs throughout Slough. Where external facilitation or training is required, a relevant and robust procurement process is followed to secure the best expertise and value for public money.

¹ Senge, P: The Fifth Discipline 1990

² Aligned to the Council's Five Year Plan 2018-23

1.5 This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the council's vision and values as set out in the *Five Year Plan 2018-23*; associated appraisal documentation for employees through this weblink: <http://insite/people/your-development/appraisals/>; and *the Academic Programme Policy* (June 2014) which highlights the funding process for employees to attain professional academic qualifications.

2. Scope

2.1 The aim of this policy and procedure is to provide a framework for the learning and development requirements of all Slough Borough Council employees. It sets out the requirements and associated support for those that work on a permanent basis as well as those who have temporary or sessional contracts.

2.2 This policy also indicates how we share learning resources to best effect with partners and in particular arvato and the Slough Children's Services Trust.

2.3 This policy does NOT apply to apprentices, volunteers, and employees working for contractors.

2.4 The Council has a Corporate Learning and Development Programme with a complementary Directory. The Directory is updated as training needs are reviewed (usually monthly), and is available to all Council employees via SBCinsite or in hard copy form, upon request, from the OD Team. Internal courses are usually free but employees are advised to check course information as there are occasions where the resource has been commissioned from a partner or external organisation, for which there will be charge to the relevant Council department. Fees also apply to the relevant department for late cancellations and non-attendance at courses.

2.5 Generally, the Council does not fund qualifications unless the study is critical to the post. The level of support will be at the discretion of the line manager with support and advice from the Head of Organisational Development, taking into account the terms set out in the Academic Programme Policy (2014). The policy also sets out study leave allocation.

2.6 Slough Borough Council intends to create a new Slough Academy in 2018-19 which will offer alternative funding opportunities for the development needs of employees and residents. The Academy will utilise the Apprenticeship Levy to do so. This policy will be updated accordingly.

3. Duties and Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibilities of the Individual Permanent Employee

3.1.1 All permanent employees are required to live their corporate values and take personal responsibility to ensure that they are skilled sufficiently to meet the demands of their role and associated duties. To do so, they are **required** to:

- Start the local induction process within **five working days** of their first day of employment at Slough Borough Council with their line manager, utilising the checklist available on SBCinsite. Please note that this checklist will be available on the Agresso HR System in 2018-19.

- Actively register on the Council's Learning Management System (LMS) - known as Learning Pool – within **five working days** of their first day of employment to enable access to e-learning modules and booking courses. To get a Learning Pool login, email training@slough.gov.uk with your request. An employee should also familiarise themselves with Learning Pool's functionality including the self-help manuals; training inbox; and with the learning and development pages on SBCinsite: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Attend Corporate Induction within **two months** of their first day of employment at the Council. Corporate Induction dates are featured in the Corporate Learning and Development Programme Directory - <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Complete classroom and e-learning mandatory training in accordance with their probationary period, job role and service responsibilities within **six months** of their first day of employment at the Council. This training is specified in the Foundation Mandatory Training Schedule and featured in the Corporate Learning and Development Programme Directory - <http://insite/people/your-development/training/> This schedule is approved and updated annually by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and includes requirements around refresher training for employees.
- Actively seek development to meet the requirements of the job role including required competencies (both as line manager and employee, where relevant) and to contribute to the continuous improvement of their service.
- Attend **1:1 meetings** with their line manager and undertake for their direct reports at **least every six weeks**.
- Attend a **six-monthly review** meeting and **annual appraisal**. The appraisal is a key milestone in regular supervision meetings as it is an opportunity for an employee and their manager to review achievements and identify the required knowledge, skills and ability to do a job effectively and the areas where further development is possible. The appraisal form is available currently on SBCinsite via this link: <http://insite/people/your-development/appraisals/>. A new appraisal module will be featured on the Agresso HR System in 2019. All Personal Development Plans are reviewed by the Organisational Development Team on an annual basis to create a corporate Training Needs Analysis.
- Attend **probationary** period meetings. In the first **six months** of employment, an employee is also required to undergo a probationary period. The period of probationary service provides a formal opportunity for managers to review the progress of new employees and to assess their suitability for the post to which they have been appointed. For more information, please see SBCinsite weblink here: <http://insite/people/your-development/probation/>. All permanent employees who have completed successfully their **probationary** period may apply for study leave and funding in line with the *Academic Programme Policy (2014)*.
- Take advantage of any learning opportunities which are provided corporately and are appropriate to their development, as well as attend those learning opportunities as set

out in their Personal Development Plan. This includes selective learning methods such as work buddying, mentoring, coaching, action learning sets and job shadowing. Such training is to be completed within working hours and in agreement with your line manager. Details of these can be found in the Corporate Learning Directory via this link: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>

- Be mindful to attend any learning opportunities which are provided or arranged by the Organisational Development Team. This includes Corporate Induction. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that they arrive at the training session at least 10 minutes before it starts and to attend the whole session. Failure to complete the whole session will be recorded as non-attendance unless prior notification has been made to the Organisational Development Team.
- Failure to notify the Organisational Development of non-attendance will incur a departmental fine of £75 per absentee. The fine may be larger if an external course incurs more cost. This is subject to evidence that the employee's failure to attend was related to sickness, bereavement or family/dependent emergency. If an employee fails to attend due to a service need, the line manager should notify the Organisational Development Team **at least 12 hours** in advance.
- Maintain their professional registration or membership where applicable. Employees should refer to their employment contracts for the available financial support for such registration or membership.
- Record attendance and performance, where appropriate, at any learning event in six-monthly review and/or annual appraisals to demonstrate compliance.

3.2 Responsibilities of the Individual Temporary Employee who has been appointed for three months or more

3.2.1 All temporary employees – agency and those who are acting up into a post on a fixed term basis - are required to live their corporate values and take personal responsibility to ensure that they are skilled sufficiently to meet the demands of their role and associated duties. To do so, they are **required** to:

- Start the local induction process within **five working days** of their first day of temporary employment at Slough Borough Council with their line manager, utilising the checklist available on SBCInsite.
- Actively register on the Council's Learning Management System (LMS) - known as Learning Pool – within **five working days** of their first day of employment to enable access to e-learning modules and booking courses. To get a Learning Pool login, email training@slough.gov.uk with your request. An employee should also familiarise themselves with Learning Pool's functionality including the self-help manuals; training inbox; and with the learning and development pages on SBCInsite: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Attend Corporate Induction within **two months** of their first day of employment at the Council if they are contracted to work for more than three months at the Council. The

dates of Corporate Induction are featured in the Corporate Learning and Development Programme Directory - <http://insite/people/your-development/training/> . If an employee's contract is three months or less, their line manager should seek advice from the Organisational Development Team about whether the requirement of attending Corporate Induction is beneficial to the employee and the service. If an employee's contract is less than three months initially but is extended, they should attend Corporate Induction at the next available opportunity.

- If an employee's contract is more than three months, or is extended, they should complete classroom and e-learning mandatory training within six months of their first contractual day in accordance with their probation period, job role and service responsibilities as specified in the Foundation Mandatory Training Schedule, and as featured in the Corporate Learning and Development Programme Directory - <http://insite/people/your-development/training/> This schedule is approved and updated annually by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and includes requirements around refresher training for employees. If an employee's contract is three months or less, their line manager should seek advice from the Organisational Development Team about the most valuable elements of the mandatory training requirements to the employee and their service and their previous mandatory training experience. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Actively seek development to meet the requirements of the job role including required competencies (both as line manager and employee, where relevant) and to contribute to the continuous improvement of their service.
- Attend **1:1 meetings** with their line manager and their direct reports at least **six weekly**.
- Subject to the length of their contract, attend a **six-monthly review** meeting and **annual appraisal**. The appraisal is a key milestone in your regular supervision meetings as it is an opportunity for the employee and their manager to review achievements and identify the required knowledge, skills and ability to do a job effectively and the areas where further development is possible. The appraisal form is available currently on SBCinsite via this link: <http://insite/people/your-development/appraisals/>. A new appraisal module will be featured on the Agresso HR System from April 2018. All Personal Development Plans are reviewed by the Organisational Development Team on an annual basis to create a corporate Training Needs Analysis.
- Take advantage of any learning opportunities which are provided corporately and are appropriate to their development, as well as attend those learning opportunities as set out in their Personal Development Plan. This includes selective learning methods such as work buddying, mentoring, coaching, action learning sets and job shadowing. Details of these are featured in the Corporate Learning Directory via this link: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Maintain their professional registration or membership where applicable. Temporary employees are required to self-fund their registration or membership, unless otherwise stated in their contractual terms.

- Record attendance and performance, where appropriate, at any learning event in six-monthly review and/or annual appraisals to demonstrate compliance.

3.3 Responsibilities of the Individual Sessional Workers/Tutors (through letter of engagement)

3.3.1 All sessional employees are required to live their corporate values and take personal responsibility to ensure that they are skilled sufficiently to meet the demands of their role and associated duties. **Due to the nature of their working patterns, the Head of Organisational Development will liaise with line managers whose employees who work an 'as and when' basis to consider the responsibilities as outlined below. In some cases, adjustments will need to be made to ensure best use of time for these employees in line with their letters of engagement.**

- Sessional workers/tutors and their managers should review the local induction checklist together as soon as the employee has been asked to do a shift or in advance, if feasible.
- Actively register on the Council's Learning Management System (LMS) - known as Learning Pool – to enable access to e-learning modules and booking courses. To get a login, email training@slough.gov.uk with your request. An employee should also familiarise themselves with Learning Pool's functionality including the self-help manuals; training inbox; and with the learning and development pages on SBCInsite: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Classroom training and the time commitment can be challenging for 'as and when' employees so managers of these employees should discuss exemptions with the Head of Organisational Development.
- Actively seek development to meet the requirements of the job role including required competencies (both as line manager and employee, where relevant) and to contribute to the continuous improvement of their service.
- Subject to their contractual terms and actual shift, sessional worker/tutors need to consider how they manage the probation period, annual appraisals and 1:1 meetings with their line manager.
- Maintain their professional registration or membership where applicable. Sessional workers/tutors are required to self-fund their registration or membership, unless otherwise stated in their contractual terms.
- Record attendance and performance, where appropriate, at any learning event as part of their development programme.

3.4 Study Leave

- 3.3.1 The vast majority of learning opportunities take place outside of formal programmes of study. For the purposes of this policy, work based or on-the-job development, such as coaching, mentoring, shadowing, reflective practice, are not included in the study leave allocation for time off. These should be planned activities agreed between the line manager and employee so that the employee can manage their workload within core working hours; there is minimum impact on service delivery; and there is equity of access for all employees.
- 3.1.4 Where study leave of half a day or more is required to attend a conference/seminar or other form of learning event, all employees should seek permission to attend from their line manager. Study leave should be recorded as such on the employee's annual leave record on the Agresso HR System. For longer periods of study leave, employees should refer to the *Academic Programme Policy* for guidance.

3.5 Employee Compliance

- 3.4.1 The Organisational Development Team holds a record of every employee's compliance with the lifecycle requirements as listed in sections **3.1** and **3.2** from local induction through to ongoing learning and development. These records - known as **individual learning accounts** - are available upon request to any employee who wishes to see their own record and to any manager who wishes to see the records of their team members. These records are updated monthly and numeric versions are provided monthly to Directorate Management Teams and quarterly to the Corporate Management Team (or more frequently if required). This is to assure the Council that it is meeting its statutory and legal requirements in terms of learning and development. The records are also shared for auditing and inspection purposes when required. These individual learning accounts will be transferred to the Agresso HR System for self-view in 2018-19.

3.6 Responsibilities of the Line Manager

- 3.6.1 It is the responsibility of line managers, in discussion with their employees, to identify and agree appropriate learning opportunities and to facilitate the arrangements to allow employees to take advantage of these. Learning and development needs should be discussed during the annual appraisal utilising the Personal Development Plan template – see <http://insite/people/your-development/appraisals/> Learning and development needs may also be identified in regular supervision/1:1s discussions between managers and employees; as a result of capability issues; and to support service development/change or to achieve new initiatives/targets.
- 3.6.2 Line managers should:
- Familiarise themselves with this Learning and Development Policy and supports its implementation throughout the Council.

- Take personal responsibility to be a role model to their team in their performance and behaviour by completing the requirements set out in sections **3.1** or **3.2** of this policy, dependent upon role.
- Have an understanding of their employee/s job tasks and key responsibilities and how they contribute to the Council's Five Year Plan and values - [our refreshed values](#) - and the 'golden thread' to service plans, budget setting and team and individual objectives.
- Identify, support and plan the requirements for their permanent and/or temporary employees as set out in sections **3.1** and **3.2** of this policy.
- Review the **individual learning accounts** shared monthly and support their employees to comply with the requirements as set out in sections **3.1** and **3.2** of this policy whichever is relevant.
- Advise the Organisational Development Team of any updates/amendments to be made to the **individual learning accounts** as and when changes arise.
- Ensure that learning opportunities are accessible equitably for members of their team and most especially to their employees who are not office-based and do not have regular access to a PC. This policy will be updated in line with the implementation of the Smart Working Policy.
- At each annual appraisal, line managers should ask their employees to provide evidence of their compliance with the requirements set out in sections **3.1** and **3.2 whichever is relevant**. Line managers should take personal responsibility to support their employees to complete their Mandatory Training requirements by the corporate deadlines advised by the Organisational Development Team on behalf of the Corporate Management Team. It is recognised that there are occasions where such corporate deadlines are missed due to sickness and bereavement or family/dependent emergency. The line manager should seek advice from the Head of Organisational Development in respect of such incidences to avoid inaccurate employee compliance reporting.
- Ensure there is adequate service cover whilst an employee/s is/are attending a learning event or has study leave.
- Record an employee's attendance at any learning event in six-monthly reviews and/or annual appraisals to demonstrate compliance.
- Investigate and take appropriate action if notified that an employee is unable to or fails to attend any learning opportunities which are provided or arranged by the Organisational Development Team. This includes Corporate Induction. Failure by the employee to notify the Organisational Development of non-attendance will incur a departmental fine of £75 per absentee. The fine may be larger if an external course incurs more cost. This is subject to evidence that the employee's failure to attend was related to sickness, bereavement or family/dependent emergency. If an employee fails to attend due to a service need, the line manager should notify the Organisational Development Team **at least 12 hours** in advance.

- Ensure that learning activities are reviewed and that employees are supported to transfer their learning to the workplace including disseminating learning to colleagues, where appropriate.

3.7 Responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team

3.7.1 In addition to line management responsibilities, the Senior Leadership Team - comprising the CEO, Directors and Service Leads - has the leadership responsibility to:

- Review, at least annually (following service planning and appraisal season), a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) plan for their service with support from the OD Team; and
- Approve study leave and relevant funding for programmes in line with the principles identified in the *Academic Programme Policy*.

3.8 Responsibilities of the Organisational Development Team

3.7.1 The Organisational Development Team will:

- Diagnose and co-create learning opportunities for employees in response to organisational, team and individual needs. Such needs will be based upon priorities aligned with the Council's vision and values and to meet economies of scale and value for money. In support of this, an annual council-wide Training Needs Analysis (TNA) will be completed alongside the appraisal process. Where these requirements cannot be met by the service and its budget, alternatives will be sought through discussion between the requester and the Head of Organisational Development.
- Provide appropriate support and guidance to both internal and external facilitators and trainers, including adherence to the corporate values.
- Inform managers of any employee's non-attendance of a learning event and provide support for investigation of absence.
- Lead and review the Corporate Induction to ensure it is robust to meet new employees' needs and ensure it aligns with corporate vision and national and local impact upon Council business.
- Review the local induction checklist bi-annually (March and September each year) in line with operational needs; and the Signposting and Lonely Planet Guides for Corporate Induction every two months.
- Actively support inductees with their logins to the Council's Learning Management System (LMS) - known as Learning Pool - and enable and assist all users to manage the system effectively to complete their e-learning modules and/or book on courses. This includes the necessary procurement and account management of the LMS.

- Actively seek user views on the content and relevance of the all the learning opportunities outlined in the Corporate Directory: <http://insite/people/your-development/training/>
- Actively seek and evaluate delegate views on all learning opportunities and record employees' attendance.
- Provide timely reports to the Corporate Management Team (CMT), and Directorate/Senior Management Teams (DMTs/SMTs) in relation to compliance, complaints and compliments on the corporate Training Needs Analysis (TNA) plan. Take responsibility for action, where required.
- Advise and support good practice in terms of regular 1:1s between line managers and their employees and contribute to the regular review of the annual appraisal process.
- Maintain a database of learning opportunities and providers and actively seek learning opportunities using a plethora of tools and techniques (appreciating all learning styles) to meet the needs of customers and partner organisations.
- Publish marketing and advertising materials which are relevant for learning and development opportunities.
- Monitor and evaluate quality and value for money for any commissioned courses and ensure that our internal facilitators and trainers are supported effectively to deliver the best quality courses.
- Provide information, advice and guidance to employees to support personal and professional development needs.
- Oversee and provide guidance on the corporate training budget and advise on requests for study leave and funding to the Corporate Consultative Forum.
- Provide half-year validation reviews (March and September) to the Employment and Appeals Committee in relation to adherence to this policy and the learning and development activities provided to council employees.

4. Financial Monitoring

- 4.1** Line managers and their employees should always consider in-house provision before applying for external courses where the learning goals are comparable. The Organisational Development Team can offer advice and support for such comparisons. This is particularly relevant when a comparative training need is identified by a sufficient number of employees through their Personal Development Plans and it makes finance sense to seek value for money based upon economies of scale/training provider offers for group training.
- 4.2** Where external training provision is sought, the Council will consider either full or partial funding or support for eligible employees where the non-accredited course or learning event

is directly relevant to the employee's current role and provide identifiable benefits to the service/corporate need. Where a programme of study is primarily for career or personal development it is highly unlikely that the Council will be able to offer financial support.

4.3 The Corporate Training Budget is held by the Head of Organisational Development to provide:

- 4.3.1 Centrally commissioned programmes in line with Council priorities including Corporate Induction and other learning programmes specified in the corporate Training Needs Analysis (TNA) Plan.
- 4.3.2 A development programme to support all Council members. This programme is developed in conjunction with all members at the start of each financial year. Any further funding required is subject to the agreement of the Commissioner who holds the portfolio. The Commissioner also considers any individual member requests for learning and development on a case-by-case basis through the members' performance management framework.

5. Approval and Ratification

This policy is subject to approval and ratification in the sign off by the Employment and Appeals Committee.

6. Dissemination and Implementation

Once ratified, the policy will be available on SBCinsite and managers will be notified via the Council's internal communications channels.

7. Review and Revision Arrangements

This policy will be implemented through the People (SMT) Service Plan and monitored by the Employment and Appeals Committee on a half-yearly basis. It will be reviewed annually.

