



Learning, Development and Further Education Policy

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1. Introduction

At ng homes we view learning and development as critically important factors and we see this as an important investment of our time and resources. We are committed to ensuring that all staff and Board Members will have parity in relation to accessing suitable learning, development and educational opportunities, which will assist in their role and also their personal development.

2. Aims

ng homes aims to:

- Ensure fairness, clarity and consistency for all ng homes staff and Board members
- Be responsive to the current and future learning, development and educational needs of all staff and Board Members
- Promote a culture of sharing knowledge and skills with colleagues
- Provide full support for staff and Board Members who are involved in learning programmes and further education
- Assist the Association's staff and Board members with their continuing professional development (CPD)
- Support the Association with succession planning
- Ensure that all learning and further education courses will represent value for money and will also be of benefit to the member of staff / Board member and the Association
- Assist in discussions between staff and their line managers during Check-ins and other one-to-one meetings
- Promote considering alternative methods of training to attending course and conferences
- Monitor and manage the training budget to ensure that there is sufficient funding for all relevant learning, development and further education needs

In writing this policy, reference was made to standards expected of us by SFHA and the Scottish Housing Regulator and in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Equality of opportunity is available to all members of staff and Board in relation to learning, development, seminars, conferences and access to further education.

3. Identifying Training/ Learning Needs

3.1 Self Development

Everyone should take responsibility for their own development and improving their skills. All staff and Board members should:

- Take responsibility of self development to ensure the development of skills needed to achieve their own objectives and to be able to contribute to the achievement of their department and the Association's objectives
- Identify personal strengths and areas for development, this includes measuring current skills against appropriate standards and pro-actively seeking feedback from colleagues as well as managers to assist in improving future performance
- Set clear development objectives ensuring that objectives are achievable, realistic and challenging
- Consider the needs and objectives of the organisation and referring to these to develop as a team member
- Allow sufficient time and resources to achieve development objectives
- Review personal progress and performance with their manager via the Staff Check-in process or other one to one meetings and revise their personal development plan as accordingly
- Participate in training needs analysis and skills audits as required
- Be available to attend appropriate training or learning opportunities as identified
- Make use of, where appropriate, the Go1 Learning Management System
- Undertake any assigned e-learning in a timely manner

3.2 Management Responsibilities in Developing Staff and Board Members

Managers have a responsibility to ensure appropriate learning, development and educational opportunities are made available for all staff and Board Members.

Managers should:

- Involve staff / Board members in identifying their own learning and development needs, strengths and areas for development
- Discuss development needs and plans with staff / Board members and gain their commitment in planning how their development needs will be met
- Ensure that the learning and development plans are clear, relevant and realistic

- Provide coaching and mentoring as a development tool where appropriate, this should be accompanied by a proper plan and expected outcomes – it may be more effective for this to be led by someone other than the direct line manager (although it should always be subject to the line manager’s approval)
- Balance the business needs with individual aspirations – plans should help people to develop the skills needed to meet current and future requirements in relation to their job role and also their career
- To ensure that the resources available are used effectively when planning and delivering development activities
- Prepare an annual departmental / team training plan and regularly review plans to discuss and agree improvements to the development plans with staff and Board Members
- Work in conjunction with the HR team to provide information as required
- Identify job competencies and ensure all staff are given appropriate learning opportunities to develop the required skills for their job
- Identify Board competencies and ensure all Members are given access to opportunities to develop their skills
- Provide the Board and Human Resources Committee with regular update reports on learning and development including training

3.3 Check-ins/Staff Training Needs Assessment

Learning, development and further education needs will be jointly agreed by Managers and staff as and when they arise throughout the year. The Staff Check-in process will also be used to identify and progress both personal and professional needs and this information will be used to develop the organisation’s learning and development plan including departmental and organisational training plans.

3.4 Board Learning/Training Needs Assessment

This will be dealt with in line with the annual Board appraisal planning process. Learning and Development needs for Board Members will be identified through self assessment questionnaires and one to one discussions with the Chief Executive or their designated depute and the Association’s Chairperson. A suitably qualified independent consultant may support in this process.

4. Learning and Development Plan

An annual plan will be drawn up for the organisation which will detail the learning and development needs of staff and Board members and will address how these needs will be met. The plan will be reviewed quarterly and monitored by the Directorate. Quarterly reports detailing progress on learning and development will be submitted to the Human Resources Committee.

5. Training Sources

The Association shall subscribe on an annual basis to relevant organisations e.g. SHARE, EVH, SFHA and both staff and Board members will ensure learning opportunities are maximised. Attendance at relevant course, seminars and conferences will be actively encouraged among staff and Board members. The Association will meet all reasonable expenses involved in the pursuit of learning.

6. Learning Evaluation

Learning evaluation will be undertaken to establish the effectiveness and appropriateness of the training intervention, learning event, course, seminar etc.

Evaluation will involve:

- Defining the objectives of the learning
- Creating the correct learning process
- Assessing how well the objectives are met
- Assessing performance of participants both pre and post training
- Defining and measuring any lasting benefits for the organisation

This information will be recorded and held to aid informed decisions about future training.

7. Further Education/ Professional Studies

Where appropriate, staff will be encouraged and supported to undertake further education courses, either day release, block release, evening classes or on-line / correspondence. These courses and / or professional studies must be relevant to the staff member's job role and participation will take account of available resources and the requirement to ensure uninterrupted service delivery to our customers.

Attendance at further education courses shall be at the recommendation of the line manager and approved by the head of department or Chief Executive. As per the EVH Terms and Conditions of Employment, discretion up to 100% financial assistance may be given with approved costs and fees. The financial assistance paid by the Association will be regarded as a loan and this loan will be written off 12 months following the successful completion of the course.

The Association will cost share the purchase of recommended books up to a limit of £100 per annum split 50/50 with the employee.

Time off will be granted to students to enable them to sit examinations for approved courses. The time off will include the previous half day where the examination lasts a half day or the previous day where the examination lasts a full day.

Should a staff member fail to make satisfactory progress, fail to complete the course or leave the Association within one year of completing their course/studies, then the Association reserves the right to recover from the staff member the full amount or a proportion of the fees loaned.

8. Other Related Policies

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff Check-in
- Board Appraisal
- Dignity at Work
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Board members
- Terms and Conditions of Employment

9. UK General Data Protection Regulations 2021

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021 (UK GDPR) and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notice.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in line with legislative requirements or good practice guidelines.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy is equally applicable to all and has no detrimental impact to protected characteristic groups as specified within the Equality Act 2010.