

Staff Development Policy and Professional Development Process

Rotunda Ltd is committed to lifelong learning and is constantly improving the opportunities available to enable all staff to reach their full potential. The Staff Training & Development Strategy outlines our commitment to recruit the right people with the right skills while ensuring staff access to the right training and development regardless of where in the organisation they work. Rotunda has pledged to enable staff to reach their potential by establishing a culture of development through the mechanisms of Talent Management with a focus on resourcing which will enable the organisation to establish the skills needed to deliver the best possible education and services to our community now and in the future.

This policy provides managers with a clear framework by which they can manage and support the development of staff, including making decisions regarding funding and time off, whilst providing staff with clear guidance on the criteria that will apply to learning and development activities.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to confirm Rotunda's commitment to supporting its employees in learning and developing. It will:

- Provide managers with a clear framework by which they can manage and support the development of staff, including making decisions regarding funding and time off.
- Provide staff with clear guidance on how to apply for learning and development activities.

Definitions

Development Need is an identified opportunity to enhance performance through learning, training development or assessment activities.

Essential Development is that which is essential to meet the requirements of the current role. The essential skills of the role are those identified within a job description / person specification or those cited in the relevant competency framework for the role.

Career Development is that which does not relate, or only loosely relates to the current role and will enhance the future career prospects of the member of staff.

Long courses are those which cost over £500 and / or require over 7 days off work during any financial year. Examples include degree, diploma and masters courses, this may also apply to higher level vocational qualifications.

Short Courses are those which cost less than £500 and require less than 7 days off work during any financial year. Examples include both formal development such as short training courses and conferences and informal development such as coaching, mentoring, job-shadowing and attending relevant presentations.

Vocationally-Related Qualifications (VRQs) previously known as NVQ, (National Vocational Qualifications) are qualifications attained by assessment of work carried out in the current role against national role performance competencies.

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study. The time spent on off-the-job training should be at least 20% and will be supported by the employer. They are offered to anyone over the age of 16 and there is no upper age limit.

Distance Learning is that which is not directly taught in a given place at a given time. It therefore includes e-learning and research / dissertations associated with long courses. The subject and time for such projects must be negotiated with line managers in order to ensure relevance and minimise disruption to the Trust. All such assignments must be work based. A copy of any assignments and dissertations must be made available to Rotunda.

Direct Costs are those which relate to the provision of the training itself e.g. tuition fees.

Indirect Costs are those which are associated with attending development opportunities e.g. travel and subsistence payments. Indirect costs also include replacement labour costs.

Responsibilities

Chairman and Chief Executive are responsible for;

Ensuring Rotunda Ltd has robust policies and procedures in place to support staff in continuing their personal and professional development. In practice this responsibility is delegated to appropriate line managers.

- Ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated in light of legislation and guidance.
- Promoting a working environment that encourages continuous personal and professional development.
- Ensuring that access to training and development opportunities is available to all, including those with characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring appropriate funding provision is made for learning and development whilst taking into consideration current and future service needs. These responsibilities will be carried out in consultation with senior managers, workforce and professional development leads, and in line with business and workforce plans.

Managers are Responsible for;

- Commissioning and monitoring training provision, delivery and evaluation.
- Monitoring access to development opportunities to ensure equality between individuals, teams and services.
- Evaluating corporately-provided or commissioned training in consultation with the CEO Monitoring levels of non-completion of long courses.
- Discussing reasons for non-completion of long courses to advise on decisions relating to repayment of fees where appropriate.
- Producing and publishing reports on learning and development that has been undertaken.
- Informing line managers and staff of application decisions in a timely manner, and providing detailed reasons for non-agreement where applicable.
- Gaining feedback from line managers on the content and quality of training undertaken and passing relevant data to workforce to inform their future commissioning decisions.
- Acting on feedback from workforce in relation to equality of access to training opportunities.

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Acting fairly and consistently, ensuring that the policies and procedures are disseminated effectively and are understood by all employees.
- Ensuring employees development needs are identified within the appraisal process, including whether the development is essential, desirable or linked to career development.
- Discussing development options with employee to ensure best fit to development need and best value for money for the service.
- Ensuring costs are covered for non-completion of any funded development programme. Recovery of costs will be considered from the organisation, the service or the employee depending on the circumstances.

The line manager will therefore carefully consider the learning preferences of the employee before taking this request to the CEO for a decision.

- Evaluating completed training with the relevant employee, to identify whether the development undertaken has led to the anticipated business benefits identified at the approval stage during appraisal.
- Monitoring completion of training records on The Central Register and ensuring that updates are made in a timely manner.
- Informing Senior Management and CEO if an employee fails to complete a long
- Providing support where necessary to staff who are experiencing difficulties in completing or meeting the required standards of a long course.

All Employees are responsible for:

- Complying with Rotunda Ltd's policies and procedures and raising any questions or concerns, that may arise around these, with their line manager
- Identifying their own development needs through the appraisal process or with line manager as appropriate, including identifying whether the development is essential, desirable or linked to career development
- Discussing development options with the line manager to ensure best fit to development need and individual learning styles, whilst maintaining best value for money for the service undertaking development activity to meet current and future service needs and the requirements of professional registering bodies where applicable.
- Completing the development activity to the best of their ability and utilising those skills for the benefit of learners and clients of Rotunda Ltd
- Keeping their manager informed of progress when undertaking a development activity during the appraisal process (mid-year or annual review or 1 – 1 meetings).
- Informing their manager immediately if they do not undertake planned development as agreed, if they are unable to meet satisfactory rates of progress, or if they fail to complete any funded development activity.

Learning and Development Process

Identify development needs and solutions

Development needs will be agreed, between line manager and employee, as part of the wider appraisal process. This could be during the initial objective setting meeting, or a 1-1 at any time during the appraisal year.

The development need must be discussed in sufficient detail to enable the line manager and employee to agree the measurable benefits. This stage is crucial as it forms the basis for forecasting workforce plans and training needs, as well as future evaluation of the benefit of the development activity.

Type of development need Managers and employees need to be specific about whether the development is required to meet;

- The essential needs of the role
- The desirable elements of the current role
- A personal development goal of the individual for career development.

Types of development activity Development can take many forms;

- Attending specific meetings or conferences
- Engaging in new projects or activities
- Coaching or mentoring
- Observing or assessment of work
- Face-to-face training
- Distance learning

All types of development are to be considered and a decision made based on the closest match to the development outcomes and the learning style preferences of the employee. Where more than one option meets the development needs of the employee, the choice is to be made on the basis of value for money.

Payback of costs should the employee resign during development for which Rotunda Ltd is paying or within 6 months of the date of completion of the development, the employee will normally be required to repay the full cost of the development which will be from the employee's final salary.

Following this period, the organisation operates a sliding repayment scale, so the amount that the employee is normally required to repay is reduced by one quarter at six monthly intervals leading to a maximum of 2 years.

Approval Needed

Overall approval to undertake development to meet agreed development needs must have the following levels of approval;

- Agreement by Line Manager (all applications)
- Agreement by Senior Leadership Team
- Agreement by CEO
- Agreement by Chair if a Long- Term course

Where managers receive conflicting requests for development, priority will be given to requests in the following order:

- A – Statutory / Mandatory Training
- B – Essential Training
- C – Desirable Training
- D – Career Development

If the development activity is categorised as C or D and the employee is full or part time, compensatory time off is to be negotiated with the line manager.

- If the application cannot be approved at that time, the manager will inform the employee without delay and explain the reasons. Arrangements will be made, where possible, to agree alternative timings so that the request can be approved.
- If the application is approved, the manager will inform the employee. If there are no costs associated with the development activity, e.g. job-shadowing, mentoring or attending meetings / presentations, the employee can make arrangements to undertake the development activity in consultation with their line manager.
- If there is a cost implication all necessary funding approvals must be gained before the employee confirms attendance.

Agreement by CEO that the application meets the business objectives and will benefit the service and individual. This stage is required for all types of development and funding.

If the manager is unable to agree the application meets any of these requirements, then they will inform the line manager. Reasons for refusing the application will be clearly expressed so that the line manager can explain the situation to the employee without delay.

Development Request Declined

If approval is not given at any stage in the process, the reasons for this decision will be given, by the manager rejecting the request, making reference to specific criterion / criteria applicable.

If an employee believes that the approval process is inequitable or has not been properly followed, they are to raise this with their line manager. If their concerns are not satisfactorily addressed, employees are to refer to the formal Grievance Procedure.

Change of circumstance

It is recognised that some unforeseen changes in personal circumstances, e.g. illness, pregnancy, caring responsibilities, may have a detrimental impact on the ability of staff to meet the obligations associated with funded development. The line manager is to be notified of such changes in circumstances in a timely manner. Similarly, if the employee requires additional support to meet the requirements of the development activity e.g. ***reasonable adjustments in respect of disability, including learning difficulties such as dyslexia, they are to discuss these needs with the development provider and their line manager as soon as possible.*

Throughout the duration of an ongoing development activity, employees and line managers will regularly discuss the value of the course and the employee's progress. Employees will highlight any additional support needs to the provider and to the line manager. Employees must not discontinue funded development activities without first discussing the reasons for this decision with their line manager and development provider before a final decision is reached.

If the employee is unable to attend due to change of circumstances they are to contact the line manager immediately, in line with standard Absence Management procedures. **Failure to report non-attendance will be deemed to be unauthorised absence and may therefore be subject to disciplinary proceedings.**

If the development activity is part of an ongoing programme the employee must also inform the provider. The employee must then ensure that they make alternative arrangements to catch up on the course material delivered in their absence.

The line manager will send a replacement on the development activity where possible i.e. a conference. In instances where a replacement has been sent or non-attendance of a corporately funded development activity, the line manager must inform the CEO to this change in attendance.

Where costs have not been incurred for non-attendance the development can be immediately rebooked, if available. However, if costs have already been made the application process must be restarted and may not be approved if budgetary circumstances have changed.

If the employee wishes to **defer the development** activity due to change of circumstances they are to discuss this with their line manager and specify reasons and discuss an alternative arrangement.

If the employee cannot complete the development activity due to change of circumstances and it is not possible to send a replacement, then Rotunda Ltd reserves the right to recover a reasonable proportion of its costs from the employee.

Completion of development

It is the responsibility of the employee to inform the manager of completion / no completion of any planned development activity.

Line managers are responsible for confirming this development has taken place by updating the Central Register where Rotunda has funded this development, managers should notify the CEO to assist with finalising yearly budget allocations.

Non completion due to failure to meet the expected standard could result in Rotunda recovering its funding contribution from the employee. As academic capability is already assessed by external providers at the application stage, only personal circumstances previously highlighted to the manager during the course will be taken into account when making the decision on whether or not to recover costs.

Evaluation of development

The manager and employee will regularly review the benefits of the development activity using the measurable outcomes agreed when the development need and solution was identified. This will inform decisions about future development needs for the employee. If the development activity does not meet expectations the employee, line manager will provide feedback to the provider. They will liaise together to compile feedback data, so that a single organisation wide evaluation can be provided where appropriate. The CEO & Chair will also take this feedback into account when making commissioning decisions.

Equality Analysis (EA)

Rotunda Ltd expects the same standards of conduct of all employees. Managers will bear in mind the possibility that some employees may need assistance to follow or understand rules or procedures because of language or disability factors. If such assistance is needed or requested, consideration will be given to providing it.

Rotunda Ltd aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of its population and workforce, ensuring none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

Rotunda Ltd is subject to the equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and must pay "due regard" for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.


Due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

Review arrangements

This policy will be reviewed in one year following ratification or sooner if there is a local or national requirement.

Rotunda Policy Review Record

| Reviewed by: | Approval date: | Review frequency: | Review date: | Signed: |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Maxine Ennis | 11 th May 2024 | Annual | 12 th May 2025 |  |