

Staff Development Policy

Document Summary

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1. Introduction

Staff Development is seen as a key factor which influences the quality of the learning, teaching and service offered by the College. The most significant resource in ensuring success for our students is the staff team. The development of all staff is a vital element of the staff development programme and as a consequence, encouragement is being made for a continuing programme of professional development for all members of staff.

2. Definition

Staff Development can be defined as the identification of personal and professional needs of the individual member of staff and the devising of programmes to meet these needs within the framework of corporate objectives. Staff Development can take many forms and covers, for example, formal training, attending seminars and workshops, networking, and mentoring. It is a core component of managing talent and developing staff to take on more challenging roles at a higher level.

Staff Development seeks to support and assist in the achievement of objectives within the College structure. An essential part of management responsibility is to recognise the importance of staff motivation and career development at all levels.

3: Principles

The College recognises that supporting and promoting staff development constitutes a commitment to the principles of continuous improvement. It is also recognised that the College relies on the knowledge, skills and behaviour of its staff to achieve its objectives and serve its students. The College is committed to developing and training all staff to the standard necessary to achieve the College's objectives.

This Policy is based on three key principles:

- All staff members will have equal treatment in matters relating to development regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief
- Investment in training and development is designed to enable people to improve their performance, as individuals and as team members, so that the aims, objectives and targets of the College (both strategic and operational) can be met
- Opportunities are supported for all to develop their potential (including the gaining of appropriate qualifications), to continue their professional development and to learn new skills relevant to their role.

4: Staff Development needs

Staff Development needs may be identified through the following:

- Improvement Planning
- Performance Management
- The individual member of staff identifying a training need
- Work Scrutiny.

Staff Development has three main aspects:

- Induction into the College
- Training for the job
- Professional development for career progression.

5. Aims

The broad aim of the staff development strategy is to offer and support a range of activities that:

- enable staff to develop skills and expertise which will be relevant to their individual needs and can be incorporated into their practice
- provide a supportive and effective environment for learning and development while, at the same time, working within the confines of the size and resources (both financial and human) of the College
- respond to the particular needs and priorities of the College and its areas, sections and students
- reflect the priorities of identified curriculum development within the strategic plan
- include and reflect national needs and priorities for staff development
- create access and equal opportunities responding to the expressed needs of all staff together with a recognition of the training needs of specific groups where appropriate
- includes evaluation of provision and the effective dissemination of good practice.

6. Objectives

Each member of staff should know what is expected of them. In order to achieve these aims, the College plan is to:

- actively support plans for staff development resulting from performance management activities
- Incorporate sufficient flexibility to take into account individual working patterns, for example with specialist members of staff who have a limited or intermittent presence at the College
- achieve the highest standard of professional excellence
- improve performance and remedy weakness
- prepare for changing duties and responsibilities and, where applicable, to encourage new methods and techniques

- broaden experience and encourage career development
- improve and update existing qualifications, skills and knowledge
- enhance job satisfaction.

7. Priorities and activities

The priorities for staff development will vary on an annual basis, and will largely reflect the progress towards targets in the Strategic Plan. Priority will be given to development opportunities which are essential for an individual to carry out their role, are legally required, provide good value for money, and are likely to significantly impact on the individual, their team and the students in a positive manner.

Examples of staff development activities may include:

- College induction
- In-house training (the College offers a minimum of three days per academic year)
- Self-directed learning
- Webinars
- Mentoring
- Observations (peer/ management)
- Shadowing
- Practical training in new skills required by individuals for the performance of specific tasks
- Attendance at short courses, seminars and training events, external to the College
- Attendance at day release, block release or evening classes/ courses
- Attendance at longer courses (eg. gaining a teaching qualification)
- Participation in distance learning courses
- Access to other facilities which would help to equip a member of staff in the performance of his/her existing or future role
- Performance management reviews.

The College may commit to contributing either financially or by other means (eg. time) to support individual staff development activities at its own discretion.

Responsibilities

Each member of staff is responsible for his/ her own training and development. Individuals should work with their Programme Leader/ manager to ensure they are able to access development as appropriate. The College develops a CPD Plan with teaching staff focussing on key requirements (eg. identifying suspected cases of academic malpractice and the use of digital technology in learning) but staff are expected to identify and address their own development needs as well. Applications for staff development activities should be submitted to the Programme Leader/ manager in the first instance. Applications are most likely to be approved where they contribute to meeting the stated needs of the College.

Each member of staff is responsible for maintaining a record of the Professional Development (PD) activities that they have undertaken.

Each Programme Leader/ manager in the College is responsible for assisting staff in identifying, addressing, monitoring and evaluating the development needs/ activities of their team.

Staff Development is overseen by the Managing Director, Principal and Academic Board.