



Risk Management and Policies

Staff Development Policy

This forms part of the Fèisean nan Gàidheal policy portfolio

Date Approved	04/03/2022
Purpose	To ensure that staff and volunteers are offered appropriate training to perform their individual jobs effectively and in doing so ensure that the organisation meets its strategic objectives.
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide a working environment where continuous learning and development take place• To ensure that employees and volunteers are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands of the organisation and its service users• To ensure that the organisation achieves its strategic objectives• To facilitate employee development at work and/or personal development through assisting employees to broaden, deepen and thereby further enhance their existing skill base

Staff Training and Development Policy/Procedure

1. Introduction

This organisation recognises that staff development and learning is an integral part of the organisation's strategic planning and that all members of staff and volunteers can perform their individual jobs effectively and in doing so ensure that the organisation meets its strategic objectives.

2. Aims

The main aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a working environment where continuous learning and development take place
- To ensure that employees and volunteers are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands of the organisation and its service users
- To ensure that the organisation achieves its strategic objectives
- To facilitate employee development at work and/or personal development through assisting employees to broaden, deepen and thereby further enhance their existing skill base

3. Equal Opportunities

The organisation is committed to ensuring equality of learning opportunity; hence no employee will be excluded from learning on the grounds of gender (including gender reassignment), age, marital status, disability, racial grounds (race, colour, nationality – including citizenship - ethnic or national origin), sexual orientation, religion or belief, responsibility for dependants, trade union membership or employment status. Part time and fixed term employees will have equal access to learning and development opportunities.

4. Responsibilities

Employees

Employee development is most effective when the individual employee takes responsibility for identifying any opportunities for self-development which will enhance work performance through increased skills and knowledge.

We expect all employees to also take a proactive approach to furthering organisational wide learning and development.

Employees, through the support and supervision and appraisal process, must set out an Individual Learning Plan, which is agreed with their line manager.

Employees are also responsible for maintaining their own learning log, which will also lend itself to identifying and supporting continuous professional development. This log should be submitted for inclusion in the individual's personnel record each year.

Line Managers

Line managers are responsible for assisting staff to develop Individual Learning Plans and for ensuring that they review these with staff on a regular basis during support and supervision sessions. The employees' Learning logs should also be discussed at these sessions.

Line managers have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of learning for employees who have undergone training and development. Line managers should seek feedback on internal and external training programmes, including their quality and cost effectiveness. Line managers should ensure that employees implement the skills that they have gained through training.

Training & Policy Officer

The co-ordination of the learning and development process is the responsibility of the Executive Manager. The Executive Manager will therefore ensure that evaluation of learning activities is undertaken including an annual organisational audit of learning needs, and by liaising with line managers to ensure that any identified needs are addressed accordingly.

Executive Group

The Executive Group is responsible for agreeing the learning and development budget on an annual basis. The Executive Group will agree an overall budget and advise the Executive Manager. The training budget is controlled by the Executive Manager. Its subsequent allocation is monitored by the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Group.

5. Routes to Learning & Development

Options for learning & development may include:

- On the job learning including learning from other members of staff via job shadowing, mentoring, in house skill sharing, staff away days etc.
- Secondments and placements/visits to other organisations.
- Setting up job development opportunities such as public speaking, in house presentations at team meetings.
- Attending internal learning groups or events.
- Attending internal or external training days/workshops.
- Attending conferences, forums.
- An external course of study.
- Online training opportunities.

6. Key Professional and Skills-based Learning

The organisation aims to prioritise learning that focuses on areas which:

- Enable us to fulfil our strategic objectives.
- Pertain to any organisational statutory obligations.
- Are essential to generate and maintain income.
- Enable effective responses and management of legislative changes.
- Ensure IT skills are at a basic level of competency and developed in accordance with work needs.
- Are essential to ensure the quality of service provision.
- Enable employees to meet their responsibilities in completing continuous professional development required by relevant professional bodies.
- Enable management development in relation to those who have managerial/supervisory responsibilities.

7. Core Learning

There are specific areas of learning which are essential for all employees and cover a rolling programme of needs which have been identified as part of a continuous programme of learning and development. Core learning will therefore cover the following areas:

Induction

All new employees are given a timely programme of induction as this is regarded as an essential part of staff learning and development and integration into the working environment. It is important that new employees are given guidance and support on the organisation, its work and practices and their individual duties and responsibilities. This will normally be carried out with their line manager.

ICT

It is important that all employees are given opportunities to enhance their ICT skills-base. The organisation is committed to ensuring that all employees have competent grounding in the use of ICT in the wider context of their professional roles.

Performance Management

Performance Management is an ongoing communication process, which involves both the line manager and their employee in:

- Identifying and describing essential job functions and relating them to the strategic and operational objectives of the organisation.
- Developing realistic and appropriate performance standards.
- Giving and receiving feedback about performance.
- Participating in constructive performance appraisals.
- Planning learning and development opportunities to sustain, improve or build on employee work performance.

Appraisals

Appraisals are an essential component of our performance management framework and are supported by regular support and supervision sessions between line managers and their employees throughout the course of the year. The appraisal scheme allows for every employee to be formally appraised with their line manager through a structured discussion on work performance over the previous year and which, must also incorporate the employee's learning and development needs for the following year. These appraisals may take place annually or as a series of regular conversations. This can be agreed between employees and line managers, as appropriate.

It is an opportunity to build on strengths and address areas, which require support, thereby enhancing the potential skill base of the individual employee.

8. Identifying and Assessing Learning Needs

There are several ways that learning, and development needs are identified, these can be as follows:

- Occupational – As a result of introducing new technology, work methods, systems, or practices (internally or externally).
- Promotion – As a result of an increase in responsibilities within the organisation.
- Developmental – Is vocational in nature and provides the employee with additional skills that can be applied at present or increases the individual's potential for further growth.
- Organisational - Affects a particular function or department because of changing work methods, procedures, or practices and/or supports the overall strategy of the organisation.

It is the responsibility of line managers to identify and address learning needs through regular support and supervision sessions with individual employees, and during the annual appraisal.

9. Training Needs Appraisal

A Training Needs Appraisal is carried out annually, in line with Development Plan objectives for the organisation. This appraisal is prepared by the Executive Officer and submitted for approval to the Executive Group. The document assists senior management in the preparation of budgets and requests for funding and helps to prioritise requests for training funding from various sections of the organisation.

10. Individual Learning Plans

Where individual learning needs have been identified through support and supervision or the appraisal process, employees are encouraged to discuss this with their line manager and develop a learning plan.

This should set out the learning required, by what method it will be achieved, what organisational objective it relates to, whether there are cost implications and the timescales involved.

11. Staff Training Record/Learning Logs

Employees are required to keep a record of all training, learning and development that they have undertaken or achieved.

Learning logs are a way of evaluating individual learning. It allows employees to record, self-evaluate and discuss their learning experiences with their line manager, identifying how their learning can be used further to benefit others, and/or the organisation. Alternatively, if the learning has been unsuitable and has not complimented an individual's learning style and/or needs, this can be discussed. It allows employees to 'log' what has been achieved against planned learning as determined through any training needs analysis and agreement of individual learning plans through the appraisal process. Employees are encouraged to make entries on their learning forms as often as possible for further discussion at their support sessions.

Development of the log will help both line managers and employees, e.g., will inform annual appraisal discussions, support and supervision discussions, department plans, learning budgets, succession planning and career development.

12. Recording, Monitoring & Evaluating Learning

The Executive Manager is responsible for ensuring that a central record of employee learning is created and maintained, and that all learning and development activities are monitored and evaluated in terms of suitability, effectiveness, and value for money.

The Executive Manager will have responsibility for reporting back on the effectiveness of any staff development programmes to the Executive Group.

13. Study Leave

Study leave allows employees to pursue a recognised qualification or accreditation, which is seen as valuable and relevant to their work and provides a means of ensuring that the organisation attracts, retains, and develops high quality staff. Study leave permits employees to take paid time off for exam preparation, sitting an exam and building a portfolio of work for accreditation, or attend a day release course.

An employee may be granted paid leave of absence as follows:

- Up to 2.5 days study leave in any 12 months period. Requests for study leave in excess of 2.5 days will be considered by the CEO, to ensure fairness across the organisation.

Applications for study leave should be made as soon as reasonably possible to line managers

14. Higher Education

The organisation will consider requests for financial assistance towards programmes of higher education and approved professional qualifications where the course is relevant and will be of benefit to the employee and the organisation in the long term.

Employees should submit a request to their line manager for signing. The line manager should then forward this to the CEO for approval. For costs in excess of £1000, a formal contract will require to be signed by both the employee and the Line Manager (see 15 below)

15. Reimbursement of Fees

Where the organisation has agreed to contribute towards course fees the employee will be required to reimburse the full amount should the employee leave the organisation during the course or if they do not complete the course.

A percentage of the course fees would be reimbursed to the organisation if the employee leaves within a specified period of completion of the course as follows:

Percentage to be repaid	Employee leaves within
100%	6 months
50%	1 year
25%	1.5 years
15%	2 years

Any monies that are owed will be deducted from the employee's salary.

Where a level of financial contribution has been agreed, employees are required to complete a 'Return of Study Costs Agreement Form'.

16. Related Policies

- (a) Staff Handbook
- (b) IT Acceptable Use Policy
- (c) Equal Opportunities Policy