



Learning and Development Policy

The University recognises staff are key to achieving its Strategic Plan and objectives. In order to achieve this, the University promotes continuing professional development (CPD) and provides access to learning & development for staff at all levels in order to be able to undertake their responsibilities effectively and with professionalism enabling them also to be responsive to the changing environment.

The University is investing in the development of its staff and as such is required to properly monitor individual and business performance to ensure the benefits and impact are maximised. This policy encompasses all staff learning & development (L&D) activity at the University. It aims to ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities for L&D, the funds in place to support this activity, the various mechanisms for identification of L&D needs alongside the importance of monitoring and evaluating the impact and benefits of the L&D activity to the area and University.

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1. Responsibilities for Learning & Development (L&D)

Learning and development needs arise to meet individual, team and ultimately University objectives. Senior management, managers and individuals have a role in ensuring the following:

1.1. Employees:

It is the responsibility of each employee to:

- [identify L&D](#) that will assist them to undertake their role more effectively or to enable them to expand their role. Where possible, individuals identify appropriate L&D solutions to support a discussion with their manager. Note: [Right for employees to request training](#)
- participate in pre- and post- L&D activity discussion with their managers.
- book and attend L&D activities and complete all evaluations that take place at appropriate points as required by the University.
- give sufficient notice to any L&D provider should they be unable to attend. The University has a [cancellation policy](#) in place.
- update details under their Trent "[personal learning account](#)" for any additional (internal/external) L&D activity not booked through Trent.

1.2. Managers:

It is the responsibility of managers to:

- [identify staff L&D needs](#) to meet individual, team, area and University objectives.
- undertake a pre and post L&D activity discussion to agree and record the aims and impact/benefits of the development respectively.
- encourage their staff to identify L&D needs and consider all L&D requests sympathetically in light of team and area priorities and budgetary constraints. There may be occasions when L&D activity is postponed or refused as a result. Note [Guide for Managers on employees right to training](#)
- explain the L&D plans in place to build team capability to contribute to the achieving the organisation's objectives.

1.3. Senior Management:

It is the responsibility of College Deans and Heads of Professional Services to:

- ensure all their staff are aware of local L&D arrangements for identifying learning needs and seeking approval for learning events etc. alongside the University L&D policy.
- produce an L&D plan which identifies staff learning & development needs, priorities and budgetary provision in line with their Business Plan. This could be tabled in a senior management team meeting. The L&D plan should be communicated to managers in the College or Service.
- encourage their staff to record any additional ad hoc, internal L&D activity and external L&D activity (e.g. conferences) - that are not booked through Trent - onto their [personal learning account in Trent](#).
- scan the environment to analyse and evaluate internal conditions and external factors that affect the organisation and their area and thus ensure staff are adequately developed to cope with a changing landscape.

Staff Learning & Development can provide an annual 'L&D activity' report for your area as captured through Trent to assist with probation, promotion and annual reflection of L&D activity.

1.4. L&D providers:

It is the responsibility of L&D providers to:

- ensure that details of their L&D activities are available on the Trent system.
- take attendance records for the L&D activity (whether booked or ad-hoc) and update Trent accordingly.
- undertake, analyse, review and report on appropriate evaluations of effectiveness.

2. Funding of L&D activity

The University expects managers to prioritise L&D activity that is relevant, cost effective and timely. The funding sources available include:

2.1. Academic College/Professional Service funds

Each area is required to set a sufficient budget for L&D activity to ensure their staff receive the development required to meet the area's objectives.

2.2. Centrally held funds

Professional Services are allocated funds to provide specific L&D activity to support legislative requirements, other policies, best practice in University system and processes as well as Teaching, Research and Management development.

Centrally funded activity can be found at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/development/>

2.3. Fee payment for external Learning and Development

This scheme allows you to apply for funds to attend external training which relates to your job role. Further information and application form can be found at

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/development/your/career/support>

3. Identification of L&D needs

Learning and Development (L&D) takes place either formally or informally and occurs in many forms: Mentoring, Coaching, Books, Courses, Workshops, Online materials, Conferences, Meetings, Action Learning Sets, Self-study, Reflection, Secondments/Visits and more. L&D needs will arise at various times as outlined below:

3.1. Reviewing the Business Plan

Reviewing performance against the Business Plan and establishing new objectives is an ongoing process and may well result in learning & development being identified for teams or individuals.

3.2. Induction & Essential training

Induction is an important activity, ensuring that new staff become familiar with the University, their area and other staff, and ensuring that they are comfortable in a new work environment. This comprises:

- pre-arrival planning: office and equipment, including IT setup;
- dealing with the first couple of weeks: [University Core Induction](#);
- ongoing local induction: job role, team and area induction.

This is also an important time for new staff to book their place on [training which is essential for all University staff](#) and training which is an essential requirement for their specific role as well as any other identified L&D.

3.3. Restructuring or change in area objectives

Change is ongoing and may be identified as a result of internal organisational development or the external environment. Consideration must be given to significant change and the resulting impact on staff and their development needs to cope with the changing demands of their role.

3.4. Performance, Development and Review (PDR)

The annual PDR process is an opportunity to reflect on the previous year and clarify the objectives for the coming year. Individuals and managers are responsible for identifying and recording L&D activity to achieve success.

3.5. Individual/Team Meetings

Regular meetings between individuals, teams and their managers support an effective working, pro-active and responsive environment. L&D needs may be identified as a result. Managers should meet regularly with individual team members to review progress with performance and development objectives and refresh the plans agreed at their annual PDR.

3.6. Learning & Development for Staff

A dedicated website aims to bring together all scheduled [learning & development activity for staff](#). Bulletins are issued termly to promote L&D and are sent to nominated individuals who disseminate within their areas and also to bulletin subscribers.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

It is important to understand that all internal and external L&D activity incurs a cost so the University expects managers to monitor & evaluate the impact and benefit of L&D activity to ensure appropriateness, quality and cost effectiveness in order to understand where improvements are needed. As set out under heading "[Responsibilities for Learning & Development of your staff](#)", Senior managers, managers and employees themselves, when they participate in L&D activity are involved in this process.

4.1. Evaluation Levels

The University operates the following levels of evaluation¹

Level 0 – “Needs”: establish what L&D is required to support the individual to undertake their role to meet individual, team, area and University objectives and is completed prior to L&D activity. For example, through induction, discussions with managers, Performance & Development Review or as a result of restructuring or a change in job responsibilities.

Level 1 – “Reaction”: L&D activity satisfaction using feedback forms completed at end of the activity

Level 2 – “Learning”: on reflection what did the individual gain from the L&D activity in relation to their job? We no longer send an online survey for each activity as we focus more on Level 3.

Level 3 – “Impact”: what changes have been made by the individual that have made an impact on local processes, their performance or that of their team or area? This is undertaken selectively for specific courses. In most cases this will be via a discussion between a manager and employee resulting in the completion and return of a “Transfer of Learning evaluation” form to Staff Learning & Development, SLD. This is typically completed within an eight week period. In a few cases, SLD may undertake focus groups to collate feedback on impact.

5. Review of Learning & Development Policy

The policy will be reviewed periodically in consultation with a selection of staff from across the University.

Dr Claire Lambert
Staff Learning & Development
July 2014

¹ Based on evaluation levels identified in the Rugby Team Impact Framework (2008) – see Appendix 1 for details

6. Appendix 1- Definitions

Learning and Development (L&D) takes place either formally or informally and occurs in many forms: Mentoring, Coaching, Books, Courses, Workshops, Online materials, Conferences, Meetings, Action Learning Sets, Self-study, Reflection, Secondments/Visits and more.

L&D Providers

Any individual or group providing L&D for a specific purpose whether employed or contracted to provide to the University.

L&D Plan

The L&D plan is a College/Service level document which describes learning and development priorities, budgets and plans to meet the identified needs.

Annual Staff L&D Report

This is a University level report which reflects on activities and engagement in the previous academic year and describes the L&D priorities for Research, Education, Management Development and Policy.

Area

Area relates to an Academic College or a Professional Service.

Trent – HR database which allows L&D activity to be scheduled, booked and updated as well as enabling reports on L&D engagement to be produced for monitoring efficient L&D management by area.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is systematic, on-going, self-directed learning. It is an approach or process which should be a normal part of how you plan and manage your whole working life.

Continuing because learning never ceases, regardless of age or seniority

Professional because it is focused on personal competence in a professional role

Development because its goal is to improve personal performance and enhance career progression" (Institute of Personnel and Development 1997)

Rugby Team Impact framework (2008) Evaluation Levels

The evaluation levels are described as

Level 0 – "Needs": establish what L&D is required to support the individual to undertake their role to meet individual, team, area and University objectives and is completed prior to L&D activity.

Level 1 – "Reaction": L&D activity satisfaction using feedback forms at the end of the activity

Level 2 – "Learning": on reflection what did the individual gain from the L&D activity in relation to their job? Typically completed after a few weeks

Level 3 – "Impact": what changes have been made by the individual that have made an impact on local processes, their performance or that of their team or area? This is undertaken selectively. Typically completed after a few months