



Learning and Development Policy

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1. Purpose and Context

Our purpose, outlined in our 2030 Strategy, is to challenge our students and staff to realise their talent and thrive, for their own benefit and for the wider good. By doing this we will think and make the world better.

The skills and knowledge of our people are core to achieving the goal of providing high quality education, learning and research and improving our student experience.

Bath Spa is committed to the ongoing continuing professional development of all staff, irrespective of their working hours or contract type. They are encouraged and expected to commit to continuous learning and development as part of their own personal development and career planning.

This policy explains our approach to learning and development, responsibilities of staff and managers, the process for identifying and accessing learning and development activity, and how the return on the University's investment will be secured.

2. Identifying learning and development needs

Learning and development embraces all aspects of professional development and training for all employees at Bath Spa University. It includes any learning opportunity or activity which:

- Enhances the ability of individuals and teams to deliver school and departmental service plans;
- Enables employees to develop new skills for their current or future roles so that they can respond positively to change;
- Improves the quality of teaching, research, and professional services and the services that support this.

All employees are expected to engage in learning and development activity that improves their effectiveness and efficiency. In order to meet institutional priorities and legal responsibilities, attendance or completion of specific learning and development activity is required of all employees, and these will be regularly published, promoted and reviewed.

Individual learning and development needs are identified in several ways:

- As part of the programme of induction;
- Through the Staff Development Review (SDR) and Probation process;
- From institutional development needs identified in the University's Strategic Plan and in the University's People Strategy, including regulatory and governance requirements and updates;
- From operational development needs identified through school and department plans as part of the annual business planning cycle;
- As part of an individual's personal development and career planning.

Continuous review and discussion will allow flexibility for staff and managers to agree additional development as these needs arise.

We actively encourage each individual to create a personal development plan (PDP) to help them plan and achieve their own development goals. This will be made up of a programme of activity to support their continuing professional development based on the needs and priorities of the role and the University. It may also include attendance on training courses or at conferences where appropriate.

It is the policy of the University to:

- Support and encourage employees to acquire knowledge and skills which will allow them to fulfil their job responsibilities more effectively;
- Help them to develop skills and/or gain qualifications which contribute to the achievement of agreed University goals;
- Support the development of teams and effective team working;
- Facilitate the effective assimilation of organisational change in the University, school, college or department;

- Ensure that all learning and development activity is evaluated and the impact monitored to ensure the intended outcomes are realised.

3. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of learning and development activity

- All learning and development activities will be evaluated to ensure a return on the investment of the University.
- The Human Resources department and other providers of in-house staff development activities are responsible for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of development activities provided.
- Those responsible for managing staff must, together with the staff member participating in learning and development activities, evaluate the extent to which development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives, and where necessary agree appropriate next steps with the staff member. This can be done at any time or through the SDR process.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Managers

Managers with line management responsibilities will be given appropriate development and support to enable them to manage effectively. Each manager will carry out Staff Development Reviews with their staff annually.

As part of their discussion the staff member and manager should identify any developmental needs as they arise and agree how they will be met.

Managers should ensure that developmental needs of employees working on short-term contracts or part-time basis are addressed on an equitable basis, supporting the developmental needs of all employees.

As part of the Staff Development Review process, managers are expected to:

- Provide constructive feedback on past performance;
- Agree an action plan with realistic SMART objectives, with commitment to its review at least once during the year;
- Generate a development plan which benefits the school or department and individual; and offer support for the individual to meet agreed objectives and development activities;
- Undertake a mid-year review of objectives and the development plan.

4.2 Individual Staff

- Members of staff are expected to be proactive in identifying their own development needs to support them in their role or to enable them to develop their roles.
- Staff are required to keep up to date with the needs of their job and to take personal responsibility for progressing their personal development plan.

- Individuals must attend training when arranged.
- They are expected to fully participate in the Staff Development Review, and to review the impact of any development activity with their managers.
- Individuals should choose the most cost-effective methods of development when selecting formal staff development activities and use existing mechanisms, resources and expertise wherever possible.
- Staff are expected to take part in pre- and post- development activity discussion with their manager, attend development activities and complete all evaluations that take place at appropriate points as required by the University.

4.3 Heads of Schools and Departments

The Heads of School/Department should identify the development needs of their staff as part of their plans and monitor the Staff Development Review activity.

It is the responsibility of Heads of School and Departments to:

- Ensure all their staff are aware of local learning and development opportunities and processes;
- Ensure the timely authorisation of any funding applications from their School or Department in line with the criteria identified in section 2 of this policy;
- Produce a learning and development plan which identifies staff learning & development needs, priorities and budgetary provision as part of their Business Plan.
- Encourage their staff to record any additional ad hoc, internal and external learning and development activity (e.g. conferences) - that are not booked through HR - onto their personal learning and development plan and included in annual SDRs;
- 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;

5. Equality of opportunity

Access to learning and development activity will be given to all employees regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, disability, age, employment grade, part-time status or any other prejudicial factor. Specific equality and diversity issues will be considered for each course and where possible the University will offer a flexible approach to meeting any particular need.

Staff will be invited to identify any particular requirements they may have to enable them to participate fully in all staff development events offered, e.g., materials in alternative formats, sign language, interpreters, ergonomic seating.

6. Additional Information - Linked Pages on Sulis

6.1. Find out more about Learning and Development Opportunities at BSU

The University aims to assist every member of staff to develop to their full potential in the work that they undertake within the University. For a range of opportunities to progress identified learning and development needs:

Development Opportunities

Courses, Resources and opportunities are offered both centrally and by different Schools and Departments – for example by Human Resources, Centre for Learning and Teaching, Library Services, and Researcher Development:

Staff Development

Specific Courses and learning opportunities developed in response to planned and emerging organisation need, will be communicated BSU Newsletters:

BSU this week - weekly on Monday
HR News - Monthly on the first Wednesday

6.2. Learning and Teaching Practice at BSU

All new lecturers to the University are required to obtain Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA), before probation can be completed. This can be achieved in a number of ways:

For lecturers with 5 years' teaching experience at a minimum of .8 fte, without FHEA, there is a probation requirement to gain FHEA before probation can be completed. An allowance of 20 hours per annum is allocated to support attainment of this Fellowship. The Higher Education Practice Team have a PRO-SPACE Scheme. This is accredited to assess and award

- Associate Fellow (AFHEA)
- Fellow (FHEA)
- Senior Fellow (SFHEA)

internally on the basis of applications for recognition from experienced staff.

The Masters in Professional Practice in Higher Education (MAPPHE) can also be used as a route to gaining AFHEA.

For new lecturers with less than 5 years' teaching experience, there is a requirement to complete the Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) (a 2 year course). Completion of this qualification leads to FHEA. An allowance of 80 hours per annum is allocated to support attainment of this qualification.

The above courses are delivered by the Higher Education Practice Team in the School of Education and available to eligible Bath Spa staff without fees.

A range of professional services staff can also apply for and gain fellowships, in particular, learning support staff, PhD students who teach, library staff, technical demonstrators, senior policy and strategy staff and more.

For more information about our activities to support and enhance your learning and teaching practice, visit the [Learning and Teaching](#) pages on Sulis.

6.3. Funding Process for courses (internal & external), professional qualifications and conferences

When choosing appropriate learning and development activities the most cost-effective methods should be considered, utilising internal resources and expertise wherever possible.

Principles

Funding is allocated from a defined annual budget and applications can only be approved when there are sufficient funds available. Funding approval is made on an annual basis and approval in one year will not necessarily guarantee funding throughout the qualification. Applications for funding must be made for each year of study. The maximum period for which a PhD course will be funded is 5 years.

Decisions on whether the development event is supported will depend on a variety of factors:

- Staff are employed on a permanent contract;
- Appropriateness of development activity in line with the requirement of the post;
- Availability of funding and the cost of the development activity;
- Availability of staff to ensure suitable workload cover whilst the employee attends the development event;
- Anticipated benefits from attendance at the training event for the University and the individual, in that order.

Funding will not be granted retrospectively and forms cannot be generated after an event date.

In the interests of fairness and equity, the authorising manager will consider previous support given and the extent to which the University has benefitted from prior learning, before authorising new requests.

Academic staff

Funding for individual staff development activities for academic staff is held by the individual School. Heads of School will determine how resources can be prioritised effectively to meet the needs of the School and the individual. Funds that are allocated for that purpose will be identified in annual School budgets and should be applied for using the individual School process.

Applications must be fully completed and countersigned by the line manager. Where the funding is held by the School as described in Resources above, then the line manager can authorise any Learning and Development within their budget. A copy of all requests that are

authorised in these circumstances must be sent to Human Resources for inclusion in the individual's record. All administration for attendance at the event is the responsibility of the individual employee.

Professional Services Staff

Funding for individual staff development activities for professional services staff is held by Human Resources. (HR)

Applications for this funding should be made using the '**Learning and Development**' form. This will be routed to your Line Manager for authorisation. It is helpful to give as much notice as possible for your application to be processed. Courses started without funding approval will not be funded. The form will be routed to your line manager, and then HR. Once the form is authorised by HR, a purchase order will be raised and you will receive notification of approval and the arrangements including purchase order raised.

Professional Qualifications for all Staff

Funding for job related professional qualifications is also managed by Human Resources.

Funding for professional updating; seminars, conferences, workshops and development relating directly to the individual's responsibilities are paid in full subject to available budget. This includes any qualifications that are required to progress through the Pay Framework as part of a Career Path i.e.PGCHE, CIMA & CIPD.

Application Process

Applications for funding of professional qualifications, studied internally or externally, are managed as follows:

Applications for this funding should be made using the '**Phd and Masters' Funding Application**' form.

Make sure to provide full information about expected annual and total costs, length of study and impact on working time. It is helpful to give as much notice as possible for your application to be processed. Courses started without funding approval will not be funded. The form will be routed to your line manager, and then HR.

Courses with External Providers

Funding for academic and professional qualifications, studied externally (Professional Body or another HEI), if applicable for the development of the job and the individual, may be approved at 50% of the fees due. This includes Degree and Masters programmes and Doctorates as well as any relevant professional qualifications e.g. PGCE, AAT.

On successful application you will receive notification of your PO Number together with an email from the HR team. To ensure prompt payment you should ensure that your provider has received the PO Details.

Courses at BSU

Funding for academic and professional qualifications, studied at Bath Spa, if applicable for the development of the job and the individual, may be approved at 75% of the fees due (50% from the School budget and 25% from HR).

On successful application you will receive notification of this by email and notification will be sent to the Accounts Payable team at BSU for the reduction in fees to be applied.

Funding for part-time professional qualifications will be approved for a maximum period of 5 years.

Reimbursement of Funds

Candidates who complete a University funded PhD successfully will be expected to continue to work with the University for a period of 3 years. Should staff leave, a sliding scale for reimbursement of fees will apply as follows:

- Staff leaving within a year of PhD completion, 100% of the PhD fees
- Staff leaving within two years of PhD completion, 75% of the PhD fees
- Staff leaving within three years of PhD completion, 50% of the PhD fees

7. Expenses and Study Leave for Learning and Development

Expenses for attendance for professional updating are paid in accordance with current agreed expenses and travel payments. These will be borne by the School or Professional Services Department and not by HR.

Expenses for ongoing academic or professional qualifications are paid as follows:

- Essential study material i.e. text books will be funded up to £40 per annum
- Exams fees will be paid in full for first attempts. Resits will be paid at 50%.

Time will be given for the following, if during the standard working day:

- Attendance for the course of study
- Study leave for exams, or written assessments, at a rate of a day and half per exam or assessment paper up to a maximum of one week per annum
- Time off to sit the exam.

Funds or time will not be provided for the following:

- Travel expenses for costs incurred attending regular classes connected with academic or professional qualifications
- Time for residential courses connected with professional or academic qualification
- Stationery, pens, postage, telephone calls, newspapers, professional journals, library subscriptions, membership subscriptions of professional associations etc
- Cost of childcare.

Part time staff attending staff development events that fall outside of their contracted hours, but within the standard working day, will be allowed time off in lieu.

Associate lecturers attending staff development outside of their contracted hours can claim an attendance rate, based on their basic hourly rate, up to a maximum of 5 hours.

Requests should be made in writing to the line manager and include the amount of time off requested. Please also copy HRcontact@bathspa.ac.uk.