

## **Professional Training and Development Policy**

The application form should be downloaded, completed and sent to your HR Team at [hr@paediatrics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hr@paediatrics.ox.ac.uk) who will collate it and pass it to the Training Budget Holder. Applications may be made by 1 November or 1 May.

### **Introduction**

The University, the Medical Sciences Division and henceforth the Department of Paediatrics are keen to encourage staff development of all levels through the support for training that is relevant to the work of the Department and their career. Therefore, the Department is committed to supporting the development of all staff with a maximum of ten days (pro-rated for part-time employees) for their professional development, e.g. study leave or attending a training course. Unless financial support is requested, no formal application through this policy must be made to be granted paid time off for their professional development (please refer to point 3 below). Irrespective of this, the staff member must have any training days pre-approved by their line manager.

This policy is aimed at all staff members independent of their grade and contract type. To this end, support for study (financial, leave, materials and guidance) will be provided for relevant administrative and managerial or scientific and clinical qualifications (this does not necessarily include the attendance at conferences, please see point 2.3). This support is aimed at first-time attempts at examinations and, therefore, will not be available for re-sits (or the re-taking of courses) other than in exceptional circumstances.

The purpose of the Professional Training and Development Policy is to link staff performance and development to the achievement of the University's operational and strategic objectives which include strong commitments to continuous improvement, excellence of performance and realisation of career development potential. It includes both provision for professional qualifications such as ACCA, AAT, CIPD, laboratory management etc., and also for job-related training that enhances the employee's ability to perform in their role to a professional standard, including time management, customer service skills and presentation skills training (Masterclasses specifically). Due to levels of funding required, MBAs and similar courses are not covered by this policy.

This policy is evolving to meet the needs of the Department and its staff and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

At present it is agreed that the following principles and rules will apply:

## **1. Principles and Objectives**

The following principles guide the Professional Training and Development Policy and apply to all aspects of staff development and training activity delivered both centrally and by individual academic or support areas. There is an institutional commitment to staff development and training.

- 1.1** All employees regardless of age, grade, gender, disability or ethnic background or nature of their contract of employment are invited to undertake staff development and training, which is viewed as a continuous process throughout employment.
- 1.2** Staff are required to assume responsibility for their own development and training, which includes both participation in planned activities and making use of opportunities to learn when they are presented.
- 1.3** Staff development and training is an obligation for line managers who are responsible for identifying individual training and development needs and supporting and encouraging staff.
- 1.4** Accountability for staff development and training rests with management at every level.
- 1.5** Staff development and training provisions will be evaluated and reviewed to ensure that they are adequate, relevant, and effective and provides value for money.
- 1.6** It is the University's policy to provide induction training to help staff understand how their job role relates to the University. Induction training must also ensure an understanding of individual responsibilities in the workplace.
- 1.7** The Department expects line managers to:
  - i. Monitor and identify, by means of review procedures, areas of their work which could be assisted by training and development activities;
  - ii. Identify requirements for statutory training;
  - iii. Produce a matrix of post requirements, in line with the HR team;
  - iv. Prioritise non-statutory training such as soft skills opportunities;
  - v. Undertake or support staff development and training activities in order to achieve the Department policies and objectives.

**1.8** The Department expects its HR team to:

- i. Develop, and adhere to, a training and development strategy consistent with University departmental policies and objectives;
- ii. Produce a departmental list of mandatory training based on a needs analysis for each post or type of post e.g. lab staff would be required to do x training courses as part of their induction period;
- iii. Monitor the expenditure of training requests against the budget in liaison with the Departmental Finance Team.

**2. Fees**

**2.1** The Department will support staff training by paying costs subject to the following conditions:

- i. The course must be an accredited course, meaning it has been officially recognised and approved by the relevant professional body or organisation;
- ii. Agreement of the Training Budget Holder must be obtained by completion of the attached application form, taking into account workflow patterns and resourcing;
- iii. Available budget provision subject to the discretion of the Training Budget Holder. Please see point 6.3 on Budget Constraints;
- iv. Applicants are also expected to take all reasonable steps to secure any available funding from external sources (e.g. training councils, AAT Government subsidies, and external grant where possible and appropriate);
- v. Any funding claims are made with the Departmental Finance Team within one year of the application being confirmed as (partially) successful. Exceptions to this may include long-term sickness absence or family leave over 6 months, where an employee was unable to make use of their approved funds. They may roll over their approved budget into the next year once, which needs to be pre-agreed by the Department.

**2.2** The following fees and costs are covered:

- i. Course fees (towards the first sitting of an examination);
- ii. Examination fees (for the first sitting of an examination);
- iii. Revision course fees;

- iv. Necessary course books (see point 4 Books);
- v. Reasonable, associated travel costs (see point 6.4 Travel Expenses)

**2.3** The following fees and costs are not covered by the Department of Paediatrics:

- i. Costs related to the attendance of a conference. While applications may be made to cover these costs, non-conference related applications will be prioritised in the decision-making on the basis of available funds. Furthermore, applicants must showcase how attending the conference would benefit their professional development;
- ii. Initial registration and annual subscription fees for an institution or professional body, unless specifically requested, required as part of their job role and approved;
- iii. Any additional course materials not included in 2.2 above;
- iv. Any of the fees or costs identified at 2.2 above when relating to the re-taking of a course, module or examination for which support has previously been supplied by the University;
- v. Subsistence.

These costs must be borne by the individual and not by the Department's funds unless covered by a trust, award or donation.

**2.4** Agreed costs as defined in this policy are covered by the Department of Paediatrics' Training Budget or are found within research funding support, they are not chargeable to the line managers' cost centres.

**2.5** Fee Repayments

- i. Staff resigning from their post and leaving the University of Oxford during the course or within 3 months of the course end date/ completion date are required to repay 100% of any course fees and related costs provided.
- ii. Staff resigning from their post and leaving the University of Oxford within 12 months of the course end date, will be required to repay 50% of any course fees and related costs provided.
- iii. Staff taking a course for which the Department provides support as described in this policy will be expected to sit any examinations for that course at the end of the course or within the following 12 months. Where staff do not fulfil this requirement, and where there are no circumstances agreed by the manager which allow this condition to be waived, then staff will be asked to repay in full any costs or fees paid by the Department in respect of the course, including any penalty from the supplier.

Repayments shall not include salary paid in respect of time spent using a paid development day. Fee repayments do not apply when the employee leaves to go into full-time education. Equally, no repayment is due in redundancy cases, e.g. due to the absence of available external funding for contract extensions. However, should a staff member be dismissed (e.g. in relation to conduct/ performance), the fee repayment paragraph applies.

### **3. Paid Time Off Work, e.g. Study Release for Professional Qualifications**

**3.1** Staff have the right to request paid time off for training, up to ten days (pro-rata) per academic year. The purpose of dedicating time to professional development is to deepen and expand employees' professional skill sets in order to enhance their current role, equip them for the next one and broaden their career horizons. There is no obligation to grant more paid time off than the ten days, or to pay for the costs of any training but employees have the right to have eligible requests considered and apply for this using the attached application form.

- i. Staff members should obtain agreement of the line manager on the timing of their professional development, taking into account workflow patterns and required availability of colleagues to ensure the smooth running of operations;
- ii. Any time taken off for professional development should be recorded on the departmental leave system (TeamSeer under the miscellaneous category "Training and Development (10 days)").
- iii. Thought should be given by the applicant as to the appropriate length of time required for training, within the requirements of the course and their job role.
- iv. There is no obligation to grant more paid time off: In line with University staff handbooks (section 6), the line manager in agreement with the Departmental Administrator may grant unpaid time for training, or arrange for the employee to make up the time.

**3.2** Staff will not be granted study absence for the retaking of courses or examinations as identified at 2.3 above.

### **4. Books**

**4.1** The University will pay the full cost of all necessary course books, subject to the conditions identified at 2.1 above and the following:

- i. Textbooks will become and remain the property of the University;

- ii. Upon completion of the study course or after the examination has been passed the books should be returned to the Training Budget Holder. These books will then be used in the Cairns Library (found in the John Radcliffe Hospital) open to all members of the Department.

## **5. Progress**

- 5.1** Course and examination progress must be reported to the line manager and the Training Budget Holder.
- 5.2** Completion and outcomes of the course must be notified to the Training Budget Holder.
- 5.3** Absences must be reported to the line manager and the Training Budget Holder.
- 5.4** Equality and diversity principles are integrated through the monitoring and evaluation of general and specific initiatives, and through targeted staff development which promotes career progression amongst underrepresented groups.
- 5.5** Staff would be expected to complete a course before applying for funding for any future courses, we would not expect to have staff attending multiple courses at the same time, unless they are related to each other e.g. a management training package of courses.

## **6. Procedure**

- 6.1** Training Budget Holder Training Budget Holder Development Planning and Professional Career Development Reviews (PCDR)

Where possible, full development planning should occur as part of the annual PCDR and an application under this policy completed when this meets the identified training and development needs.

- 6.2** Seeking Funding and Approval for Development at a Cost

- i. The candidate completes the attached form and submits a signed copy to their line manager.
- ii. The line manager recommends approval or rejection of request for development support considering relevance and appropriateness to role.
- iii. Requests are submitted to the Department's HR Team for funding check. There will be 2 deadlines throughout the academic year (1st November and the 1st May)

for applications for funding, this is to ensure that all cases are considered at the same time and funding is split equitably. N.B. Even if a line manager rejects an application for training, the form should be submitted to the HR team for completeness

- iv. The Training Budget Holder confirms availability of funds with candidate and Line Manager by email, notifying the parties of the reference number (for GL reporting).
- v. The departmental Finance Team requests PO for funding or candidate requests invoice to Head of Administration and Finance following initial registration.
- vi. The Training Budget Holder will report termly to the Departmental Management Committee on training expenditure.

### **6.3 Budget Constraints**

In the event that the number of training applications exceeds the available budget for that application round, it may be necessary to consider and triage the applications based on specific criteria as outlined below. This approach ensures a fair and equitable distribution of resources, prioritising those who have demonstrated a commitment to the Department and have not previously benefited from training opportunities. If not all applications can be approved fully due to budget constraints, the Training Budget Holder will consult the Head of Administration and Finance to make the final decision. Criteria that will influence the approval decision include:

- i. The application form demonstrates the benefit for this course and the applicant successfully describes how this training would have a short and/or long-term benefit for them and the Department.
- ii. Length of Service in the University of Oxford and the Department of Paediatrics
- iii. Previous successful applications within the last four application rounds (i.e. two years): Employees who have submitted fewer or no previous applications may be given priority, as this ensures that training opportunities are distributed more evenly across the Department.
- iv. Previous applications that were withdrawn after being approved (incl. where employees have not claimed the approved amount within the appropriate timeframe) as the amount was still set aside and not allocated to another application.
- v. The sum requested in this application: In some instances, the Department may prioritise using available funds to support multiple smaller applications over a single large one to ensure a broader distribution of training opportunities.

## 6.4 Travel Expenses

- vi. In order to secure any special discounts, where public transport is being used, requests for tickets should be made, in advance, to the Training Budget Holder who will liaise with the Finance team to arrange purchase.
- vii. Where expenses need to be claimed, after seeking appropriate approval from the Training Budget Holder, an online expense claim form should be completed and then submitted to the departmental Finance Team for coding, approval and processing.
- viii. The University provides travel insurance for University employees and students traveling within the UK or worldwide on university business. Please see the university webpages to ensure you have applied for travel insurance [Travel Insurance | Finance Division \(ox.ac.uk\)](#).

## 6.5 Appeals

Should the Training Budget Holder not approve the application as requested, appeals should be made to the Head of Administration and Finance in the first instance.