



Learning & Development Policy

Purpose and Scope

York St John Students' Union believes that staff development and learning should be an integral part of the organisation's strategic planning so that staff can perform their individual jobs effectively and, in doing so, ensure that the organisation achieves its objectives.

The central aim is therefore to provide an environment where continuous development can take place and where staff are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands and priorities of YSJSU and service users.

To achieve this aim, learning and development needs will be regularly reviewed and staff will be encouraged to play an active part in identifying their own learning needs, selecting appropriate learning methods and in assessing the outcomes and effectiveness of their learning. Options for learning and development may include:

- On the job learning / learning from others in the organisation
- Internal workshops / learning for groups or teams
- Mentoring
- Management Development – essential and optional
- IT Staff Development
- Development for All – diversity, personal and professional development, technical skills

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 continues programme of learning and development. Core learning will therefore cover the following areas:

Induction

An induction programme helps new staff to familiarise themselves with the organisation, get to know others and to become more quickly at ease in a new work environment. All new staff will take part in an induction programme including an introduction to YSJSU staff, our mission, goals and values, equal opportunities policy, working practices and procedures. Coaching in immediate work processes and tasks and for inducting new staff into the organisation will be the responsibility of the appropriate line manager and supervisor.

ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)

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. Employees are positively encouraged to become familiar with the extranet, internet, email, other electronic facilities and computer software packages at their disposal. Initial information and training will be provided on commencement of their role or when any technology changes occur.

Identifying and assessing learning needs.

YSJSU believes that this should be an on-going process for all staff, volunteers and committee members. Individual staff learning needs will be identified with the Line manager or Chief Executive during regular 1 to 1's meetings and the yearly appraisal process. Collective learning needs may be identified within staff groups or teams and discussed with the appropriate Line Manager.

Each Line manager has the lead responsibility for the development of their staff, for assessing their learning and development needs and identifying suitable learning methods.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Chief Executive 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.

Employees and Line Managers have responsibility for reporting on the effectiveness of any staff development programmes undertaken to the Chief Executive via the learning and development log.

Performance Management

Performance management is an on-going communication process, which involves both the line manager and their employee in:

- Identifying and describing essential job functions and relating them to 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 YSJSU's performance management framework and are supported by a regular support and supervision session 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.

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

Support for external learning

We are committed to ensure that you have the opportunity to develop yourself by acquiring skills and knowledge for your personal development. All permanent employees will therefore be required to spend a minimum of 14 hours and a maximum of 35 hours within recorded working hours per year in the pursuit of their own personal development. This should be agreed with their line manager and recorded in their learning and development log, calendar and flex record.

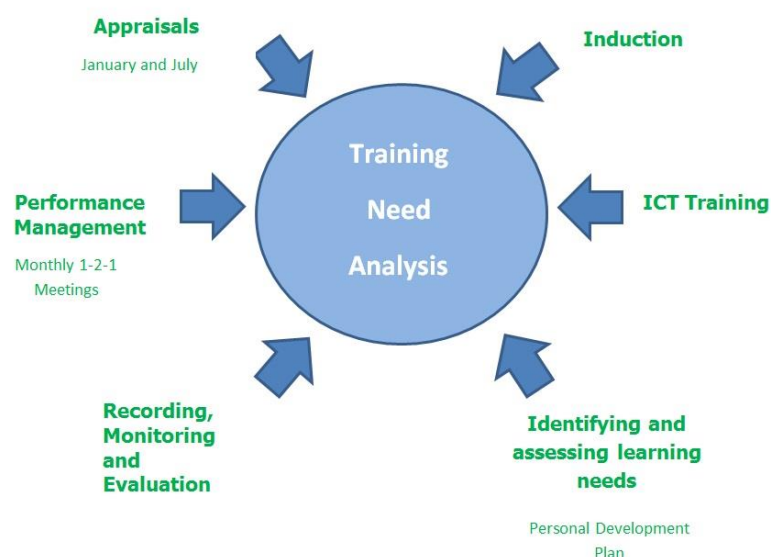
In particular, if you wish to undertake training which is not directly relevant to your work (excluding conferences) or complete an accredited programme of study which leads to a qualification, guidance about the level of support you can expect is provided below:

- You should discuss the training you wish to undertake at your Performance and Development meeting in the first instance and seek agreement for any related expenditure
- You will need to have worked at YSJSU for two years, unless it has been agreed during the recruitment process that you should undertake the training at an earlier stage
- Financial assistance towards course fees will be offered at the discretion of the Chief Executive and/or the HR & Remuneration Committee; it is not a contractual entitlement.
- The number of applications that a YSJSU can support may be limited by budget constraints
- You will be responsible for the payment of any repeat course and examination fees
- If you leave the employment of the Students' Union, for any reason, within 12 months of completing the programme/course of study, 50% of the fees will be recoverable by YSJSU. If you leave before completing the programme, you will be required to repay 100%
- You will be given paid time off to take examinations forming part of the approved course of study. You will also be given ½ day paid study leave for each examination
- YSJSU will not reimburse the purchase of books which are not included in the fee
- Time off work to attend training events or a course of study will be at the discretion of the Chief Executive (up to 10 days in any University term). Traveling expenses will not normally be paid

If you wish to make an application for support towards external learning and development, please use the Fee Payment Form and submit it to your line manager. Your manager should retain a signed copy for future reference.

Summary

The YSJSU Learning & Development Policy is summarised in the diagram below which aims to demonstrate the various inputs to an overarching organisational Training Needs Analysis.



Further support and related documents such as PDP and 1-to-1 templates can be found in the Shared Drive under 'Human Resources' then 'People Policies' then 'Learning & Development Policy'.