



Learning & Development Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1. York St John Students' Union believes that staff development and learning should be an integral part of the organisation's culture so that staff can perform effectively, continually develop personal growth, and, in doing so, ensure that the organisation achieves its objectives.
- 1.2. YSJSU aims to provide all staff with an environment where continuous development can take place and where staff are encouraged, supported, and enabled to meet the changing demands and priorities of YSJSU and its service users.
- 1.3. Learning and development will require regular review 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, etc.

2. Core Learning

- 2.1. YSJSU have identified specific areas of learning which are essential for all employees and cover a continuous programme of needs; identified as part of a core programme of learning and development. 'Core Learning' is to include the following areas:

3. Induction Programme

- 3.1. 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 essential induction programme including an introduction to YSJSU staff, the mission, goals, and values of the organisation, key workplace policies such as the Equal Opportunities and Equity policy, and basic working practices and procedures. The Induction Programme will (normally) be the responsibility of the appropriate Line Manager and/or supervisor.

4. ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)

4.1. It is important that all employees are given opportunities to enhance their ICT skills. 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 all extranet, internet, email, other electronic facilities and computer software packages that they will be utilising as part of their day to day role. Initial information and training will be provided on commencement of employment and when any changes in the use of technology occur.

5. Identifying and Assessing Learning Needs

5.1. Operating in an ever changing political, technological and economical environment, YSJSU believes that the identification of learning needs for staff, volunteers and committee members should be an ongoing exercise. Individual staff learning needs will be identified with the Line Manager or Chief Executive Officer during regular one-to-one meetings and the yearly appraisal process. Collective learning needs may be identified within staff groups or teams and discussed with the appropriate Line Manager.

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

6. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that records of employee learning are created and maintained, and that all learning and development activities are monitored and evaluated in terms of suitability, effectiveness, and value for money.

6.2. Employees and Line Managers have responsibility for reporting on the effectiveness of any staff development programmes undertaken to the Chief Executive Officer via the learning and development log (found currently on BreatheHR).

7. Performance Management

7.1. 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.

8. Appraisals

8.1. 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.

- 8.2. 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.
- 8.3. It is an opportunity to build on strengths and address areas, which require support, thereby enhancing the potential skill base of the individual employee.

9. Support for External Learning

- 9.1. YSJSU is committed to ensure that all staff have the opportunity for self-development by acquiring skills and knowledge for 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 flexi record.
- 9.2. Should staff wish to undertake training which is not directly related to day to day work activities (excluding conferences) or complete an accredited programme of study which leads to a qualification, guidance about the level of support provided by YSJSU is highlighted below:
 - Discuss the training at the Performance and Development meeting in the first instance and seek agreement for any related expenditure;
 - Staff are required to have worked at YSJSU for two years before pursuing training or qualification of this nature, unless it has been agreed during the recruitment process that staff should undertake the training at an earlier stage;
 - Financial assistance towards course fees will be offered at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer and/or the People and Culture Committee; it is not a contractual entitlement;
 - The number of applications that YSJSU can support may be limited by budget constraints;
 - The staff member will be responsible for the payment of any repeat course and examination fees;
 - If a staff member leaves 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 the staff member leaves before completing the programme, the staff member will be required to repay 100%;
 - The staff member will be given paid time off to take examinations forming part of the approved course of study. Staff will also be granted 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 Officer (up to 10 days in any academic year). Traveling expenses will not be paid.
- 9.3. If staff wish to make an application for support towards external learning and development, the 'Fee Payment Form' should be submitted to the Line Manager in the first instance. The Line Manager should retain a signed copy for future reference.

10. Summary

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