

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Employee Learning and Development Policy

DEVELOPING A LEARNING CULTURE
TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE COUNCIL'S VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	TITLE	3
2	STATEMENT	3
3	AIM.....	3
4	SCOPE	3
5	EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY	3
6	RELATED NMDDC POLICIES/PROCEDURES/PROCESSES	4
7	DEFINITIONS.....	4
8	HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING	6
9	LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS	6
10	APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE	6
11	EVENT ATTENDANCE.....	6
12	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	7
13	EVALUATION	8
14	MONITORING.....	8
15	COMPLAINTS	8
16	POLICY OWNER	9
17	CONTACT DETAILS IN REGARD FOR THE POLICY.....	9
18	POLICY AUTHORISATION.....	9
19	POLICY REVIEW DATE	9
20	EQUALITY SCREENING	9

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
L&D Policy

1 TITLE

- 1.1 Employee Learning & Development Policy.

2 STATEMENT

- 2.1 Newry Mourne and Down District Council's (NMDDC) Learning and Development Policy puts in place systems and processes to support the delivery of the Council's vision, purpose and values.
- 2.2 The development of all Council employees is integral to the pursuit of quality, effectiveness and success. The Council seeks to maximise individual contribution at all levels by providing appropriate opportunities for on the job, personal and professional development as well as part-time study.
- 2.3 NMDDC Learning and Development Policy aims to establish and maintain a culture which values life-long learning and development amongst employees.

3 AIM

- 3.1 The main aims of this policy are to:
- 3.1.1 ensure that employees are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands of the Council and its service users so that the Council achieves its strategic objectives,
 - 3.1.2 facilitate employee development through assisting employees to broaden, deepen and thereby further enhance their existing skill and knowledge base,
 - 3.1.3 provide a working environment where continuous learning and development take place to help employees gain more enjoyment from their roles, increase their motivation and enhance employee retention.

4 SCOPE

- 4.1 This policy applies to all full time, part time, temporary and permanent employees of NMDDC.

5 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

- 5.1 Employees of NMDDC will have the opportunity to benefit from learning and development opportunities, regardless of gender, including gender reassignment; marital or civil partnership status; having or not having dependants; religious belief or political opinion; race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller), disability, sexual orientation or age.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
L&D Policy

- 5.2 Employees will have equal access to information relating to learning and development opportunities. Please refer to 6.2 and 6.3 of the Council's Equality Scheme which outlines corporate commitments.
- 5.3 Employees will have equal access to participation in learning and development opportunities which support the needs of their roles and responsibilities.
- 5.4 All learning and development provisions will conform to the Council's equal opportunities policies and practices.

6 RELATED NMDDC POLICIES/PROCEDURES/PROCESSES

- Employee Qualification Assistance Scheme
- Performance & Development Review Process
- Learning & Development Application Process
- Travelling Expenses and Subsistence Policy & Procedure
- Guide to Evaluating Learning & Development in Local Government
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Equality Scheme
- Corporate Training Programme
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Health and Safety Policy

7 DEFINITIONS

7.1 Learning and Development

- 7.1.1 The term 'Learning' and 'Development' refers to formal and informal learning activities that are designed to lead to a change in knowledge, skills, attitude, belief, values, behaviour and performance.

7.2 Induction

- 7.2.1 Induction within NMDDC refers to the process where employees effectively adjust or acclimatise to their new jobs and working environment through departmental and corporate induction.

7.3 Performance and Development Management

- 7.3.1 Performance and development management is a process to assess performance, set objectives, review development activity and identify development needs.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
L&D Policy

7.4 Corporate Learning & Development

7.4.1 Corporate Learning & Development is training that has been identified by the Learning & Development Manager as being relevant to many, if not all employees of NMDDC.

7.5 Departmental Learning & Development

7.5.1 Departmental Learning and Development is training that has been identified by an employee and/or their line manager which is related to the employee's personal development and /or role within the Council.

7.6 Employee Qualification Assistance Scheme (EQA)

7.6.1 The Employee Qualification Assistance Scheme (EQA Scheme) refers to work related training undertaken by an employee which leads to the award of a recognised academic/vocational/professional qualification.

7.7 Blended Learning

7.7.1 Blended Learning is defined as using two or more training methods to create an effective learning experience e.g. eLearning together with traditional classroom style lessons. Other training methods could include long distance learning, coaching, mentoring or independent study as determined by the requirements of the course / trainer.

7.8 E-Learning

7.8.1 E-Learning is a term for learning that is delivered, enabled and supported by the use of electronic technology.

7.9 Informal Development methods

7.9.1 Informal Development methods include:

- On-the-job Coaching and Counselling
- Job Enrichment
- Individual or team Assignments
- Cross departmental working
- Job Rotation
- Making presentations/chairing meetings
- Attending higher-level staff meetings
- Study of manuals and internal documents such as business plans and proposals.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

- 8.1 Effective health and safety training contributes towards making Council employees competent in health & safety
- 8.2 All health and safety training is co-ordinated by the Health & Safety Department.

9 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

- 9.1 Learning & Development budgets are allocated each year in line with estimates.
- 9.2 Allocation of Resources
 - 9.2.1 Not all learning and development opportunities have a direct financial cost. E-Learning, Coaching, Mentoring, work shadowing, on the job training etc. all have an indirect cost in Officer time. This should be recognised and built into work schedules.
 - 9.2.2 The management and control of learning & development budgets will be in accordance with decisions taken by the Senior Management Team in conjunction with the Council.

10 APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE

- 10.1 Applications for Departmental/ EQA learning & development activities will be considered in line with the appropriate application process/Scheme rules.
- 10.2 Other than applications submitted under the EQA Scheme, there is no appeal for non-approval of learning & development applications.

11 EVENT ATTENDANCE

- 11.1 On occasion, training will be identified that is mandatory for an employee to attend. Employees will be notified in advance that attendance is compulsory. Non-attendance at mandatory training events may result in disciplinary action.
- 11.2 The Council recognises that attendance at events contributes to the personal and professional development of employees. As such, attendance must be consistent with the Council's objectives.
- 11.3 Attendance at an event whether free of charge or fully/ partially funded by the Council should be relevant to the needs of the individual, the department and the Council. Attendance at such an event must provide value for money.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
L&D Policy

11.4 Employees shall be granted leave with pay for attendance at approved learning and development events. Employees shall not receive any additional compensation for services rendered while on a Council approved event but will be authorised to claim travel time to and from the approved event between the hours of 8am-6pm (or equivalent working day where shift work applies).

11.5 Time-in lieu may be claimed beyond the standard working hours for attendance at approved learning and development events in exceptional circumstances such as:

- When the duration of the training day exceeds normal contracted hours, lieu leave can be claimed for the difference in hours
- Where the employee has to travel to/from an approved learning and development event prior to 8am or after 6pm (or equivalent start/finish time where part time hours/shift work applies), a maximum of two hours per day can be claimed for travel accordingly.

11.6 Employees will not be authorised to claim time for travel the day prior to and the day following attendance at an approved learning and development event beyond specified at 11.5

11.7 Reimbursement of expenses

11.7.1 For the reimbursement of expenses related to the attendance of a Council approved learning and development event, please refer to NMDDC Travelling Expenses and subsistence Policy and Procedure.

12 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 Line Managers are responsible for:

- implementing the Council's Learning and Development Policy
- ensuring learning and development needs are identified and addressed at both individual and team level
- encouraging / facilitating employee's involvement in learning and development activities and in providing guidance/feedback with regard to the skills and knowledge required for their current role
- ensuring the development needs of all employees are given fair consideration and that the needs of those employed on a part-time or short-term basis are addressed equitably
- reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of learning and development at both individual and team level in relation to a change in knowledge, skills, attitude, belief, values, behaviours and performance.

12.2 Employees are responsible for:

- identifying and addressing their own job related development needs
- seeking opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their potential at work

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
L&D Policy

- completing mandatory/ arranged learning & development activities and sharing learning experiences with their peers
- discussing all learning and development activities with their Line Manager and completing relevant application / evaluation documentation in relation to same
- applying the knowledge and skills developed through attending learning and development events to their job within the council.

12.3 Human Resources are responsible for:

- administering and reviewing the Council's Learning and Development Policy
- advising and assisting employees and managers on all learning and development matters
- the coordination and delivery of learning and development activities organised centrally
- evaluating the effectiveness and impact of learning and development on the Council.

13 EVALUATION

13.1 Learning and development activities will be evaluated in respect of their effectiveness from both an organisational, individual and team perspective in line with the 'Guide to Evaluating Learning and Development in Local Government'.

14 MONITORING

14.1 The Council recognises the need to provide equal access to learning and development opportunities to all of its employees regardless of gender, including gender reassignment; marital or civil partnership status; having or not having dependants; religious belief or political opinion; race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller), disability, sexual orientation or age.

14.2 The Human Resources department will monitor relevant learning and development activity and report on same to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and other relevant bodies as required.

15 COMPLAINTS

15.1 If at any stage there are any issues within the policy which are perceived by an employee as conflicting with their rights, the employee should raise the issue with their Line Manager and the HR Department.

16 POLICY OWNER

16.1 Assistant Director of Human Resources

17 CONTACT DETAILS IN REGARD FOR THE POLICY

17.1 Human Resources Department

18 POLICY AUTHORISATION

18.1 Senior Management Team- **11/11/16**

18.2 Corporate Management Team-**15/11/16**

18.3 Strategy Policy and Resources Committee-**19/01/17**

18.4 Adopted by Council-**06/02/17**

19 POLICY REVIEW DATE

19.1 The Policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every four years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner as necessary, to ensure that it remains up-to-date with legislative advancements etc.

20 EQUALITY SCREENING

20.1 The Policy has been equality screened and it is recommended it not be subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required).