

Training and Development Policy



Introduction

We recognise the importance that training, and development has in supporting the Council to deliver our services safely and effectively. We also understand how important training is in supporting your professional and personal development.

The policy outlines how we approach training, how you can request training and the process which managers should follow to consider these requests.

This policy also covers matters relating to:

- Study leave
- Repayment of training fees
- Professional memberships/subscriptions

Services may have their own local policies in respect of training and development, particularly where there are significant health and safety training requirements. You should ensure you have read and are familiar with both this and any local policies that may apply to you.

OurValues

We support learning of all types and Learning and Encouraging is one of OurValues.

As such, throughout your employment, we expect you to:

- Support and encourage others
- Recognise and appreciate the contribution that everyone makes
- Take responsibility for finding opportunities to learn for yourself and develop
- Support others to develop and learn

What is training and development?

Training and development can be both formal and informal and it is important to understand that a significant proportion of your development will happen on the job.

Various activities can fall under the banner of “Training and Development” including but not limited to:

- Attending a seminar or conference
- Shadowing another member of staff in your own or another service
- On-the-job practice at a new task or work activity

- Attending an information seminar
- Undertaking a qualification course/apprenticeship
- Attending an in-house or external course
- Completing a piece of e-learning
- Undertaking a piece of project work

How and when are training needs identified?

It is your manager's responsibility to identify the essential training required for your role and to check that these are reflected on the HR system.

Please speak to your manager to check the essential requirements for your role.

You can also discuss your training and development during OurConversations. This is a time when you and your manager/team leader meet and talk together about the things that matter to you at work. These might be included in 1-1 meetings or scheduled separately throughout the year.

Where you would like to undertake formal training, such as a classroom course or qualification, you will need to complete the learning event application form which is available on the intranet and, where applicable, the financial assistance form. If you don't have access to the intranet, please speak to your manager.

Health and Safety training

The Council is committed to achieving the highest standards of health and safety, and training plays a major part in this by providing you with the skills and knowledge appropriate to your role.

The Council has in place a programme of health and safety training which reflects the aspirations of the Government and Health & Safety Executive (HSE). This is reviewed regularly by the Corporate Health and Safety team and representatives from HR.

Corporate Health and Safety, HR and Managers aim to:

- Set clear standards of competence
- Ensure that health and safety training needs are properly identified, taking account of the outcome of risk assessments.

- Provide a full programme of health and safety training, covering the range of risk areas encountered.
- Tailor training to the needs of the Service and individual using a range of training methods.
- Measure the outcomes of health and safety training
- Ensure that health and safety training needs are properly identified as part of the induction process, taking account of the outcome of:
 - risk assessments,
 - information from active and reactive monitoring,
 - consultation with the employees and trade union representatives.

The large majority of roles at the Council will have an assigned H&S training level. For most this will mean that you need to undertake Health and Safety Awareness e-learning. Other roles may be required to undertake IOSH Working or Managing Safely. Your manager will advise you which training you need to undertake and if there is any additional or technical H&S training required for your role.

If you have any concerns or questions in relation to health and safety training, you should speak to your manager.

Internal development activities

You can search for and book internal development activities via the HR system. Courses will also be advertised via the online staff newsletter which can also be accessed on the intranet.

If you would like to attend an internal event you should speak to your manager to ensure that they can release you on that day and follow the booking instructions for the event.

Your team or Service may also organise events that are specific to your service function or job role. Your manager/team leader are responsible for ensuring that the details of these courses are sent to HR so that your training record can be updated.

Where you attend an in-house course please ensure that you complete the evaluation form for the event. If this is not issued by the trainer you can find this on iTrent Employee Self Service.

External training courses

If you or your manager identify an external event that you would like to attend, then you will be required to complete a Learning Event Application Form (LEAF). This is available on the

intranet. If you do not have access to this, you can ask your manager to complete this on your behalf.

The LEAF requests the following information:

- the title of the course, conference or seminar that you would like to attend
- date/s and duration of the course
- name of the training provider
- location of the course
- cost of the course
- how the course will be funded (i.e. by your service or if central funding is required)
- how you will put into practice the learning from the course.

It is expected you will have already discussed the course with your manager and sought agreement to your attendance (subject to funding).

If you are considering making a request in relation to study or training, it is recommended that you do so as soon as possible and as far in advance of the date on which you would like this to commence.

Making an application for a qualification course

We recognise that you may wish to study for qualifications related to your employment whilst working for the Council and you are encouraged to consider courses which enable you to gain professional accreditation.

As qualification courses tend to have a higher cost and can require significant time out of the business, anyone wanting to undertake one that is funded by the Council will need to complete a financial assistance form. This is a formal request for the Council to provide funding to cover course fees, examination fees and other approved expenses and is required for qualification courses (excluding apprenticeships) regardless of duration.

In submitting the financial assistance form, you will be agreeing to repay the Council any financial assistance you receive if you:

- leave local government service before completing the whole of the qualification;
- fail to sit an examination without good reason * within a reasonable period * of time;
- discontinue the course without good reason *;
- fail, without good reason *, to attend classes regularly;
- fail to make satisfactory progress *.

* Reasonable period of time/good cause/good reason/satisfactory progress to be determined by the Director of Connected Chelmsford.

If you leave Chelmsford City Council within two years of the date of gaining the qualification, you will be required to repay the financial assistance that you have received based on the following sliding scale.

- 100% if you leave within 6 months of gaining the qualification
- 75% if you leave between 6 and 12 months of gaining the qualification
- 50% if you leave between 12 and 18 months of gaining the qualification
- 25% if you leave between 18 and 24 months of gaining the qualification

In signing the financial assistance form you agree that the Council may deduct from your salary those monies liable to be refunded unless alternative repayment arrangements have been agreed with the Director of Financial Services.

If the amount required increases, i.e. examination resits are necessary you must contact HR.

Study Leave

You are entitled to study leave to support you in completing course work and for exam revision for qualification courses.

Study leave entitlement is calculated based on the total duration of exams or amount of course work required for the academic year.

Where you are required to submit course work and undertake exams, for the same qualification, your study leave should be calculated on the predominant assessment method.

| Total duration of exams / length of course work (per academic year) | Study Leave (per academic year) |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Up to and including 6 hours and / or Up to 6000 words | 1 day |
| Between 7 and 12 hours and / or 6,100 – 12,000 words | 2 days |
| 13 hours + and / or 12,100 words + | 3 days |

If you need to resit an examination or resubmit course work you will not be granted any further study leave. You can request annual leave or time off in lieu which should be discussed and agreed with your manager.

Apprenticeships

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a method of study which allows you to gain knowledge and skills in a particular career area whilst you are working. Apprenticeships vary in length from a minimum of 14 months and if you undertake an apprenticeship you will be given 20% of your working time to assist you in completing the elements required (no additional study leave will be granted).

You do not have to be in an apprenticeship role to undertake an apprenticeship. These can be undertaken alongside any role at the Council and apprenticeships can be used to gain professional qualifications from level 2 (GCSE equivalent) to Level 7 (Masters' equivalent).

The institute for apprenticeships lists all the apprenticeships currently available and those in development.

What do I do if I am interested in undertaking an apprenticeship?

If you are interested in undertaking an apprenticeship, please speak to your manager as they will need to agree to:

- Give you 20% of your working time to complete the apprenticeship (this could include attendance at a college or university)
- Support you by giving you work which will aid the completion of your apprenticeship which could include special projects
- Meet with you and your tutor throughout your apprenticeship for progress meetings

Once you know the apprenticeship standard you are interested in and have the agreement in principle from your manager, please speak to HR who can confirm if funding is available and will support you through the procurement process.

You should allow at least two months for application and contractual documentation to be completed before your apprenticeship commences.

Applications for apprenticeships do not have to be accompanied by a financial assistance form in accordance with ESFA guidelines.

What happens if I start an apprenticeship but then leave before I complete this?

If you leave the Council before you complete your apprenticeship you can speak to your training provider and see if this is something you can continue with your new employer. You would also need to get the agreement of your new employer.

If you are not taking up alternative employment then you can stop your apprenticeship but would not be able to recommence this or start again at a later date.

Why a request for a course or apprenticeship may be declined

There are occasions where it is not possible to grant requests in relation to study or training. The circumstances in which the Council may have to refuse a request include where:

- the proposed study or training would not improve your effectiveness at work, or the performance of the Council
- the cost to the Council of granting time off for training would be too great
- granting your request would have a detrimental effect on our ability to deliver services to our customers
- the Council would be unable to satisfactorily cover your absence on training
- there are planned structural changes which are likely to impact the need for the study or training.
- there is insufficient funding to enable the Council to grant your request.

If you disagree with the decision to decline your request for training, you can ask for this to be reconsidered.

Subscriptions

The Council will pay the annual subscription to one professional body, if this is a requirement of your job role i.e. it is an essential requirement on the person specification for your role.

Requests and renewals should be sent through to HRSupport@chelmsford.gov.uk and HR will arrange for it to be paid on your behalf. Manager approval will be sought as appropriate. You will not be able to request petty cash or reimbursement via payroll for subscriptions you have paid personally so please ensure you pass any necessary paperwork to HR so that they can process payments for you.

Further information is available on the training and development intranet site.

Right to request training

The law grants employees who have a minimum of 26 weeks continuous service the right to make a formal request in relation to study or training and to have their request considered by their employer.

Requests can be made either in relation to an accredited programme leading to the award of a recognised qualification, or in relation to unaccredited training that will help the employee to develop specific skills relevant to his/her job.

The request must be relevant to the individual's employment within the Council.

Valid requests under the new right would include:

- a request that the Council facilitate "on the job" training in relation to particular work;
- a request to be given one day off a week to attend a further education college;
- a request that the Council allow the employee to work part time while he or she completes a degree course;
- a request that the Council pay the employee's college fees;

For a request to be valid, you should put your request in writing to your manager and state that you are making the request under s.63D of the Employment Rights Act 1996. You will also need to confirm whether or not you have made a previous application in relation to study or training within the last 12 months.

The Council is not obliged to agree to a request in relation to study or training but are under a duty to consider a valid request.

Where a valid request has been submitted, your manager will arrange a meeting with you to discuss the request as soon as practicable. The meeting will normally take place no later than 28 days after the date on which the request was submitted. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the request, its appropriateness to your role and the needs of the business and any possible alternative arrangements that might meet your training needs. A decision will be given to you, in writing within 14 days of the meeting.

If your request in relation to study or training is refused, you will have the right to appeal against this decision to a more senior manager who was not involved in the decision to refuse the request. Any appeal should be submitted within 14 days of the decision to refuse the request. The appeal notice must be sent to the HR Services Manager in writing and must include the grounds on which you wish to base the appeal.

If you fail more than once (without good reason) to attend a meeting to discuss a request in relation to study or training, the Council will treat the request as withdrawn.

The Council will endeavour, wherever possible, to accommodate your request in relation to study or training, provided that the needs of the business are not likely to be adversely affected if the request is granted.

Each request will be dealt with individually, taking into account the nature of the request and any likely effects of granting it, eg any effects on your work or on your colleagues. Agreeing to

one request will not set a precedent or create a right for other employees to have their requests in relation to study or training granted.

Although the Council encourages you to undertake courses of study or training that are relevant to your employment, it will not always be possible to grant requests in relation to study or training. The circumstances in which the organisation may have to refuse a request include where:

- the proposed study or training would not improve your effectiveness at work, or the performance of the business itself;
- the cost to the business of granting time off for training would be too great;
- granting your request would have a detrimental effect on the organisation's ability to meet customer demand;
- the employer would be unable satisfactorily to cover your absences on training;
- there would be a detrimental impact on quality or performance; or
- there are planned structural changes in the organisation.

Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for:

- Undertaking essential courses for their role and any necessary refreshers in a reasonable time period.
- Identifying learning opportunities to support their personal and professional development
- Supporting others to learn
- Committing to any agreed training and ensuring that sufficient time is devoted to the completion of this and the application of knowledge and skills back in the workplace.

Managers are responsible for:

- Identifying the essential training requirements for roles within their team and ensuring that employees and casual workers complete this training and any refreshers in a reasonable time period.
- Discussing training and development needs with employees and encouraging continued development to ensure that the Council has a trained and skilled workforce to meet future Service needs.
- Responding to formal requests for training in accordance with the process outlined in the right to request training section.

- Providing appropriate support to any team member to support them in applying new knowledge or in the completion of their training course or apprenticeship.
- Ensuring there is fair access to training opportunities (including time to attend training) and that teams are regularly updated on the courses available.

Access

Training is delivered through a variety of formats. Wherever possible, we will look to vary the days, time and methods of training deliver to support all to attend.

Where online/remote delivery occurs, employees in operational roles or without access to a PC can request to attend a Council site to undertake training. HR will endeavour to facilitate these requests and arrange access to the necessary equipment for training. Managers of operational staff are also asked to support and accommodate requests to attend online/remote courses, wherever practicable.

| Version Number | Creation Date | Changes Made | Changes Made By: | Authorised/Checked? | Date of Changes |
|----------------|---------------|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 2.0 | May 2021 | Rewritten to reflect org changes | HR Team | | May 2021 |
| 1.2 | Sept 2012 | Replaced two ticks with disability confident | HR Team | Y | Oct 2016 |
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