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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Health Education and Improvement Wales

Access to Learning and Development Policy

Policy Owner: Deputy CEO and Director of Workforce and OD

Approved by: Executive Directors

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is committed to the continuing education, training, and development of its employees. Its aim is to ensure it has the people with the right skills and knowledge required to deliver its purpose and continually improve the quality of services we deliver.
- 1.2 This policy:
- demonstrates a genuine commitment to learning and development and continuous professional development
 - places the values-based performance appraisal and development review process at the heart of development, identifying and prioritising employee/employees' development
 - ensures all available resources are planned and used in the most effective way to ensure most value
 - encourages employee/employees to take responsibility for their own learning.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy seeks to provide guidance to all employees and line managers on the allocation of study leave and the funding of learning and development activities in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees within HEIW. Equality of access to opportunities for the development of skills should apply regardless of hours worked. Employees working less than full-time hours will receive the same entitlements on a pro- rata basis. Employees on fixed term contracts will receive the same entitlements to that of a comparable permanent employee. Every manager should ensure equitable and consistent treatment is applied to individual requests.
- 3.2 Study leave is defined as a period of time when an employee is allowed paid time out of the workplace to pursue a development need which has been identified as forming part of their values-based Performance Appraisal and Development Review (PADR).

4. Definitions of Terms Used

Study	Used to describe any learning or development activity that necessitates the employee being released from their normal work duties.
Study Leave	Leave granted with or without salary or expenses to enable employees to participate in learning or development activity. This may take the form of a course, event, conference, examination, continuing professional development activity, coaching, mentoring and shadowing. It also covers training for employee/employees representatives (which is a statutory right).
Statutory Training	Learning or development activity as defined by legislation
Mandatory training	Learning and development activity that is required to comply with HEIW policy and ensure best practice, defined at HEIW level.
Role specific training	Learning or development activity that is required for specific roles or departments, identified as part of the PADR process or within the role specification.
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Learning and development activity that may support an individual's work and/or professional registration, identified as part of the PADR process.
Personal development training	Learning or development activity that is not essential but that supports an individual's development or career progression, identified as part of the PADR process.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Individual/employee

All employees must take responsibility for their own learning and development requirements. Employees are equal partners in successfully achieving their development needs and therefore are responsible for:

- Completion of all statutory and mandatory training
- Ensuring that statutory mandatory training is at 100% compliance
- Notifying their manager of examination results and course evaluation

- Completion of the Learning and Development Request Form
- Keeping their learning record and evidence of learning is up to date via ESR
- Seeking additional information from the provider where requested by finance
- Payment to the course provider of any balance of fees where courses are part funded
- Abiding by the terms of this policy, including the conditions regarding the repayment of fees
- Providing feedback on the quality and effectiveness of learning activities and evaluating and sharing learning opportunities widely
- Fully participating in the HEIW PADR process to identify the development needs and where study leave may be required to support them
- Liaising with the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team for advice and guidance on the availability of current and future learning opportunities prior to application of any funded training courses
- Securing a suitable training provider by approaching them directly. Preferably they will need to be on the NHS framework (please enquire with HEIW.Organisational_Development@wales.nhs.uk for additional information)
- Ensure procurement advice is taken and adhered to (*i.e., obtaining a minimum of three quotes where the total cost of training exceeds £5,000 over the course of the duration of the programme (i.e., an annual cost of £2,000k over three years equates to a total of £6,000)*)
- Raising a ticket under the service desk for payment of an invoice, using the Access to Learning budget code (W201). Please note advanced approval should be sought from the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team
- Notifying their manager if they are unable to attend the training course/development activity. Where relevant this should also be in accordance with the All Wales Managing Attendance at Work Policy. This is in addition to reporting any absence to the relevant University or course provider if required.

5.2 Line Manager

It is the manager's responsibility to:

- Submit all approved study leave requests to ESR
- Monitor attendance and progress at agreed and funded training event
- Ensuring adequate work cover has been provided if necessary (e.g., backfill)

- Authorisation of the Access to Learning and Development form
- Record study leave so that it is open to scrutiny and can be monitored for equality purposes
- Ensuring the member of employee/employees is fully aware of the recovery of funding as outlined in section 7
- Complete the relevant sections of the Application for Funding and Learning online agreement
- Ensure that training providers are approached, and procurement guidance is fully adhered to
- Ensure that all associated expenses related to the study leave are scrutinised and approved within the necessary timescales.
- Follow up on individual's learning and value of the course/training being undertaken to ensure that learning is embedded in future practice
- Ensuring the employee is 100% compliant with their statutory/mandatory training requirements before approving a study leave application.
- Encourage employees, as part of the PADR process to identify development needs and where study leave may be required to support them
- Liaise with the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team for advice and guidance on the availability of current and future learning opportunities prior to approval of any funded training courses.
- Seeking prior approval from HEIW.Organisational_Development@wales.nhs.uk, then raising a ticket desk enquiry upon approval using the appropriate financial budget code, to be confirmed by the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team
- Ensure all employees have equal opportunities to access learning and development activities and that study leave, training costs and expenses are awarded to the relevant levels according to the categories of protected time and funding levels table below.
- Ensure that the employee has raised a ticket for processing invoices for any and all training activity, including procurement advice (*i.e., obtaining a minimum of three quotes where the total cost of training exceeds £5,000 over the course of the duration*).
- Ensure that all employees attend booked training events and ESR training sections are maintained and updated.
- Ensure that the employee take the appropriate action if it is found that the employee/employees member has not attended any training and has failed to inform them of this - examples of reasonable justification for non-attendance of a planned training course may be sickness absence, emergency/special leave circumstances or bereavement

5.3 Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team

It is the Organisational Development, Wellness Team responsibility to:

- Collate an organisation-wide Training Needs Analysis (TNA) based on submitted Personal Development Plans (PDPs) at three times per year, (as per paragraph 9.4)
- Take account of the content of the TNA when planning programmes of learning
- Provide advice and guidance on internal and external course offerings
- Provide advice and guidance to employees and line managers on how to record learning activity in ESR
- Monitor all access to learning requests and cross-reference with other similar requests to maximise return on investment through one provider
- Monitor and assign the training budget to requests. Budget is held with the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team.

6. Time off

- 6.1 Paid time off for learning and development defines the period(s) spent away from the workplace undertaking a development activity. This could include:
- External training/undertaking qualifications
 - Conferences (attending international conferences will be authorised on the basis that the employee is presenting/delivering training)
 - Study leave
 - Sitting exams
- 6.2 Time off must be recorded in ESR under the generic heading of 'study leave'.
- 6.3 The manager and employee may agree leave for a learning and development activity that can be taken as unpaid. This should only be agreed where the development activity falls under category 3 below and has no immediate benefit to the organisation, or where it is agreed it would be unfair to allow further leave to be paid – for example to re-sit an examination or take additional time out for revision.
- 6.4 Advice can be sought from the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team.



7. Funding

- 7.1 Development needs are discussed as part of the PADR process, and careful consideration needs to be given to applications incurring a direct cost to the organisation.
- 7.2 No application incurring a direct cost can be agreed until funding has been confirmed; please note applications will not be considered retrospectively.
- 7.3 Where funding is required, the amount will depend on the category of development, all subject to budget availability

Category	Types of Study Leave	Examples	Funding
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory training Mandatory training Role specific training Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Training where the employees are requested by HEIW to attend 	Development that is essential when it is needed to deliver the work; this could include statutory/mandatory training, learning required to meeting registration/revalidation requirements or learning linked to a new policy, procedure, or system.	100%
2	Personal development training	Development that enhances the skill/knowledge in the current role.	50 - 100%
3	Personal development training	Development that supports the progression or growth for the employee, linked to a future role or responsibilities (progression doesn't have to mean promotion).	0 – 50%

NB: the percentages shown cover the cost of the activity, essential materials and one exam attempt only – contributions towards or for any travel costs incurred, subsistence or where required accommodation are agreed at the manager's discretion.

- 7.4 Development activities can be sourced from the following, or a combination of the following:
- Central Access to Learning budget
 - Sponsorship/bursaries (including commissioned learning)
 - Self-funding

8. Recovery of funding

8.1 HEIW endeavours to support the development of all employees in so far as possible; however, we acknowledge that investing in employees is done so on the basis that the learning will help develop HEIW, and managers are asked to explore and consider that return when reviewing applications and discussing development.

8.2 If HEIW, makes any financial contribution towards development activity considered in categories 1 and 2 above, it reserves the right to reclaim costs on a sliding scale should the employee leave HEIW within the time frames set out below:

Leaving the organisation up to 1 year after completion	Up to 50%
Leaving the organisation within 1-2 years of completion	Up to 25%
Leaving the organisation within 2-3 years of completion	Up to 10%

8.3 HEIW reserves the right to recover costs associated with essential learning (category 1 above) whereby a qualification has been achieved as a result, for example academic qualifications or certified professional courses.

8.4 In the event a course is not complete at the time of leaving the organisation, or the employee fails to attend/leave the course during their employment, up to 100% of costs may be recovered.

8.5 If an employee fails an examination essential to the course, they are responsible for funding further attempts. If they choose not to re-attempt the exam, or are unsuccessful in further attempts, we may seek to recover up to 100% of course fees.

8.6 In all instances of cost recovery, the Deputy CEO/Director of Workforce and OD will make the final decision. And decision will take into account factors such as:

- Reason for leaving
- The return on investment gained to date
- Whether or not the employee is still working within the NHS/wider public sector

8.7 All monies will be deducted from final salary payments. Where the cost exceeds the final salary payment, the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team will agree a plan with the employee.

9. Central Funding

- 9.1 The Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team are responsible for the planning and deployment of learning organised for and open to colleagues in HEIW. This includes statutory and mandatory training, management and leadership development, skills development for employees, apprenticeships and other ongoing development programmes.
- 9.2 Where these programmes can meet employee development needs, this activity should be prioritised over externally provided courses/programmes.
- 9.3 If funding is required to undertake externally provided development, the manager may apply on the employee's behalf for central funding, subject to availability, priorities and the proportion of funding shown above. All externally provided development, regardless of funding arrangements will require approval by the Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team.
- 9.4 The manager may apply on the employee's behalf for central funding using the following timescales:

Activity start	Application due by	Decisions by
December – March	1st September	30th September
April – July	1st February	28th February
August – November	1st June	30th June

10. Procurement/Course Bookings

- 10.1 If HEIW is fully funding an employee's development activity, the employing team is responsible for course bookings and correspondence, procurement (following the guidance set out) and payment.
- 10.2 Where funding from the central budget has been approved, this will be transferred back to the paying cost centre after the invoice has been settled.
- 10.3 If the employee is contributing towards the development activity, payment can be completed by:
- Split invoicing – both the individual and organisation are separately invoiced for their proportion of costs
 - Employee pays and claims back via e-expenses
 - Employing team pays and is paid back via Payroll. Please note this should be agreed with the budget holder and Finance before continuing with payment

11. Memberships/Registration Fees

- 11.1 HEIW does not cover the cost of professional memberships or fees associated with course registration.

12. Evaluation of supported Learning and Development

- 12.1 All employees undertaking development are expected to participate in relevant post-course evaluation and discussions. It is essential to HEIW to understand and, where appropriate, measure the difference the activity has made, how the learning is being shared and utilised.
- 12.2 Employees should keep a reflective log of learning (which may be provided as part of the course) and discuss it with their manager both after the activity and the next PADR or appraisal conversation.

13. Audit and Quality Assurance

- 13.1 The Organisational Development, Wellness and Inclusion Team are responsible for and permitted to audit any part of this process to ensure its consistent and fair use across HEIW.
- 13.2 It is essential that any time off or out for learning and development, whether paid or unpaid, is recorded as 'study leave' in ESR and a short description included in the comments field – separate ESR guidance is available.
- 13.3 All employees, including line managers and budget holders, should participate in any audit process as needed.

