



Version Control Statement

Version	Date	Changes	Reason	Author	Next review
1	Aug 2024	New Policy		Principal	Aug 2025

External Reference Points

Related Policies and Documents

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- Value for Money Strategy
- Staff Handbook
- Resourcing Policy



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WCOL Staff Development Policy

Introduction

Winston College of London (WCOL) is committed to the ongoing continuing professional development of all staff, irrespective of their working hours or contract type. All staff are encouraged and expected to commit to continuous learning and development as part of their personal development and career planning. This policy explains our approach to learning and development, the responsibilities of staff and managers, and the process for identifying and accessing learning and development activities.

Staff development refers to a process that supports the development, engagement and retention of staff at WCOL. It refers not only to participation in taught courses, but also to online learning, secondments, shadowing, taking on projects, guided experimentation, participation in conferences and exhibitions, coaching, mentoring, and any other activity which provides the opportunity to reflect and develop knowledge, skills, confidence and understanding across all departments.

Aim:

The Staff Development policy aims to ensure the following:

- all staff are provided with development opportunities that help them maximise their contribution within their current roles and where possible, are supported to develop their careers and maximise their learning potential.
- employee learning and development activities are linked to WCOL's strategic objectives, at both institutional and local levels.
- That funds are allocated responsibly to support staff development activities to enable staff to achieve their plans and priorities both in the immediate term and with a view to organisational resilience and future requirements.
- that investment is focussed on staff development where it can have the maximum impact on the success of the College and the motivation of staff.
- that equality of opportunity and diversity is encouraged and supported through consistent and regular assessment, reporting and response to learning and development needs.
- that staff are encouraged and supported to achieve relevant work-related qualifications where applicable.



- that staff learning becomes part of WCOL culture and is integrated into dailywork.
- to identify and respond to staff development needs in a proportionate and timely manner and in line with the organisation's vision and mission statement and strategic plan.

General principles

WCOL's staff development policy is informed by the following principles:

- All staff have reasonable access to staff development opportunities commensurate to their role and aligned to their objectives and those of WCOL;
- To gain the most benefit, WCOL's staff development processes will be closely aligned to other planning and review cycles, including staff induction, lesson observations and annual monitoring of programs.
- Funding and/or study leave for staff development must be approved by the Director of Finance.
- WCOL recognises that, for its Staff Development Policy to be effective, staff musttake responsibility for their development and ensure that they are up to date with their programme area.

Identification of needs

Individual learning and development needs are identified in several ways:

- As part of the staff induction process.
- Through the Staff Development Review and Probation process;
- Through the annual appraisal process
- From institutional development needs identified in the College'sStrategic Plan, including regulatory and governance requirements and updates.
- From operational development needs identified through Board of Directors (BOD) and Senior Leadership Team;
- Through Compliance review
- in response to lesson observations and learner feedback
- As part of an individual's personal development and career planning

Continuous review and discussion will allow flexibility for staff and managers to agree on additional development as these needs arise. We require everyone to create a personal development plan (PDP) to help them plan and achieve their own development goals. This will be made up of a programme of activities to support their continuing professional development based on the needs and priorities of the role and



the College. It may also include attendance in training courses or at conferences where appropriate.

Responsibilities

There is a shared responsibility for the development of staff at the College, which is summarised below.

Line Managers

Managers with line management responsibilities will be given appropriate development and support to enable them to manage effectively. Each manager will carry out Staff Development Reviews and appraisals with their staff annually. As part of their discussion, the staff member and manager should identify any developmental needs as they arise and agree on how they will be met.

Managers should ensure that the developmental needs of employees working on short-term contracts or part-time basis are addressed on an equitable basis, supporting the developmental needs of all employees. As part of the Staff Development Review process, managers are expected to:

- Provide constructive feedback on past performance.
- Agree on an action plan with realistic SMART objectives, with a commitment to its review at least once during the year;
- Generate a development plan which benefits the school or department and individual; and offers support for the individual to meet agreed objectives and development activities.
- Undertake a mid-year review of objectives and the development plan.

Individual Staff

- Members of staff are expected to be proactive in identifying their development needs to support them in their roles or to enable them to develop their roles.
- Staff are required to keep up to date with the needs of their job and to take personal responsibility for progressing their development plan.
- Individuals must attend training when arranged.
- They are expected to fully participate in the Staff Development Review and to review the impact of any development activity with their managers.
- Individuals should choose the most cost-effective methods of development when selecting formal staff development activities and use existing mechanisms, resources and expertise wherever possible.
- Staff are expected to take part in pre- and post- development activity discussions with their manager, attend development activities and complete all evaluations that take place at appropriate points as required by WCOL.
- Individuals are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of their individual personal development and CPD.



- Staff are expected to apply newly developed knowledge and skills to their work and the development of their careers.

Heads of Departments

The Heads of departments should identify the development needs of their staff as part of their plans and monitor the Staff Development Review activity. It is the responsibility of Heads of Departments to:

- Ensure all their staff are aware of local learning and development opportunities and processes.
- Ensure the timely application to the BOD of any funding applications from their staff.
- Oversee the production of a learning and development plan which identifies staff learning & development needs, priorities and budgetary provision as part of their Operational Plan.
- Encourage their staff to record any additional ad hoc, internal and external learning and development activity (e.g. conferences) - that are not booked through HR - onto their learning and development plan and included in the annual CPD record.
- Scan the environment to analyse and evaluate internal conditions and external factors that affect the organisation and their area and thus ensure staff are adequately developed to cope with a changing landscape.

Equality of opportunity

Access to learning and development activities will be given to all employees regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, disability, age, employment grade, part-time status or any other prejudicial factor.

Specific equality and diversity issues will be considered for each course and where possible the College will offer a flexible approach to meeting any need.

Staff will be invited to identify any requirements they may have to enable them to participate fully in all staff development events offered, e.g., materials in alternative formats, sign language, interpreters, and ergonomic seating.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- All staff development activities will be evaluated by the Board of Directors (within the context of its evaluation of the College's strategic plan, i.e. the extent to which staff development contributes to the achievement of the WCOL's strategic plan).



- All learning and development activities will be evaluated to ensure a return on the investment of the College.
- The Human Resources department and other providers of in-house staff development activities are responsible for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of development activities provided.
- Those responsible for managing staff must, together with the staff member participating in learning and development activities, evaluate the extent to which development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives, and where necessary agree on appropriate next steps with the staff member.

WCOL is committed to the continuous enhancement of its staff development policy, procedure and activities and encourages feedback from staff. Where appropriate, best practices will be shared as part of WCOL's commitment to improving its service provision.

The application of this policy will be monitored annually by the Senior Leadership Team.

Funding Process for courses (internal & external), professional qualifications and conferences

When choosing appropriate learning and development activities the most cost-effective methods should be considered, utilising internal resources and expertise wherever possible.

Principles

Funding is allocated from a defined annual budget and applications can only be approved when there are sufficient funds available. Funding approval is made on an annual basis and approval in one year will not necessarily guarantee funding throughout the qualification. Funding applications must be made for each year of study. The maximum period for which a PhD course will be funded is 5 years.

Decisions on whether the development event is supported will depend on a variety of factors:

- Staff are employed on a permanent contract;
- Appropriateness of development activity in line with the requirement of the post;
- Availability of funding and the cost of the development activity;
- Availability of staff to ensure suitable workload cover whilst the employee attends the development event;
- Anticipated benefits from attendance at the training event for the College and the individual, in that order.

Funding will not be granted retrospectively and forms cannot be generated after the event date.



In the interests of fairness and equity, the authorising manager will consider previous support given and the extent to which the College has benefitted from prior learning, before authorising new requests.

Academic staff

Funding for individual staff development activities for academic staff is held by the department head. SLT will determine how resources can be prioritised effectively to meet the needs of the Department and the individual.

Applications must be fully completed and countersigned by the line manager. All administration for attendance at the event is the responsibility of the individual employee.

Professional Services Staff

Funding for individual staff development activities for professional services staff is held by Human Resources (HR). Applications for this funding should be made using the 'Learning and Development form'. This will be routed to your Line Manager for authorisation. It is helpful to give as much notice as possible for your application to be processed. Courses started without funding approval will not be funded. The form will be routed to your line manager, and then HR. Once the form is authorised by HR, a purchase order will be raised, and you will receive notification of approval and the arrangements including the purchase order raised.

Professional Qualifications for all Staff

Funding for job-related professional qualifications is also managed by the Director of Finance in collaboration with HR and Line managers. Funding for professional updating; seminars, conferences, workshops and development relating directly to the individual's responsibilities are paid in full subject to the available budget.

Application Process Applications for funding of professional qualifications, studied internally or externally, are managed as follows:

Applications for this funding should be made using HR. Make sure to provide full information about expected annual and total costs, length of study and impact on working time. It is helpful to give as much notice as possible for your application to be processed. Courses started without funding approval will not be funded. The form will be routed to your line manager, and then the Director of Finance.

Courses with External Providers

Funding for academic and professional qualifications, studied externally (Professional Body or another HEI), if applicable for the development of the job and the individual, may be approved at 50% of the fees due. This includes Degree and Masters programmes and Doctorates as well as any relevant professional qualifications e.g. PGCE, AAT.



On a successful application, you will receive a notification email from the HR team.

Funding for part-time professional qualifications will be approved for a maximum period of 5 years. Reimbursement of Funds Candidates who completes a College funded PhD successfully will be expected to continue to work with the College for 3 years.

Should staff leave, a sliding scale for reimbursement of fees will apply as follows:

- Staff leaving within a year of PhD completion, 100% of the PhD fees
- Staff leaving within two years of PhD completion, 75% of the PhD fees
- Staff leaving within three years of PhD completion, 50% of the PhD fees

Expenses and Study Leave for Learning and Development

Expenses for attendance for professional updating are paid by current agreed expenses and travel payments.

Expenses for ongoing academic or professional qualifications are paid as follows:

- Essential study material i.e. textbooks will be funded for up to £40 per annum
- Exams fees will be paid in full for first attempts. Resits will be paid at 50%.

Time will be given for the following, if during the standard working day:

- Attendance for the course of study
- Study leave for exams, or written assessments, at a rate of a day and a half per exam or assessment paper up to a maximum of one week per annum
- Time off to sit the exam.

Funds or time will not be provided for the following:

- Travel expenses for costs incurred attending regular classes connected with academic or professional qualifications
- Time for residential courses connected with professional or academic qualification

Part-time staff attending staff development events that fall outside of their contracted hours, but within the standard working day, will be allowed time off in lieu. 10 Associate lecturers attending staff development outside of their contracted hours can claim an attendance rate, based on their basic hourly rate, up to a maximum of 5 hours. Requests should be made in writing to the line manager and need to be approved before the attendance of the development event.