Learning & Development Policy

Developing a learning culture to enable our people to continually improve and perform at their best

Dated: 23rd January 2020 following BMT, Staff Hub, SLT review

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# 1. Main Principles

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) recognises that all employees are key to the delivery of services we can be proud of. In order to achieve this, MVDC will support and enable continuing professional development (CPD) wherever appropriate, with access to learning & development for staff at all levels.

This policy reflects a fundamental belief in the need to develop employees to enable them to do their job effectively; achieve their potential, enhance performance; and provide quality, value for money services to the Mole Valley community.

The policy ensures MVDC maximises organisational capacity, performance and resilience to deliver the Council’s objectives through people, which means:

* Developing and supporting all of our employees to do their job well, for the benefit of our customer and communities
* Having the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, to the required capacity to deliver the Council’s priorities
* Seeking to encourage further development for those most keen to progress their career
* Recognising that we have many highly capable and motivated employees who may not choose or be in a position to participate in extra-curricular learning. We value these people just as much as those who are seeking additional learning for further progression
* Endeavouring to derive maximum value from any learning and development – both for the individual and the organisation - by encouraging regular evaluation of any learning and development activity
* Recognising that there are ever growing ways to learn – many of which can be accessed independently, privately and at any time, and in some cases these may be the best way to plug a self-identified learning gap/need
* There is an expectation that as well as quality, the cost of any learning and development opportunity is carefully considered. The Council will use the opportunity to access fully funded apprenticeship qualifications and training to develop the current skills base of our employees and to ensure we have the right skills in the future. To support managers in achieving this, the [Apprenticeship Levy funding](#_5._Apprenticeships) must always be explored prior to any other expenditure commitments.

# 2. Summary of Responsibilities

All our line managers have a key role to play in the development of their staff.

## 2.1 Line Managers

It is the role of a line manager to:

* Induct new employees/employees new to post and ensure staff complete [Essential Training](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/new-starters/) within the required timeframes.
* Identify individual and collective training and development needs through formal and informal routes. This includes the [Performance Development review (‘PDR’),](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/performance-and-development-discussions-2/) [monthly 1:1s](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/performance-and-development-discussions-2/121-meetings-guidance-and-form/), team meetings, performance discussions and day-to-day observation and interactions of how the job can be done in the best way
* Encourage all staff to look for and request relevant training
* Adopt a positive approach to any agreed training
* Look at the bigger picture – i.e. – moving beyond a “time off for courses” mentality, to assess whether there is higher value and longer lasting benefit, and, if so, championing the value of the identified learning.
* Make decisions on training fairly – this does not mean that everybody should be treated the same, but it means that decisions are based on robust and justifiable factors and ignoring irrelevant criteria.
* Make sure everybody has an opportunity for some form of development at least every year and preferably more frequently, unless there are reasons particular to that individual why this would not be appropriate (such reasons to be able to be justified in case of challenge)
* Cost any training (and conferences) to training (or conference) budgets as applicable so that all organisational training expenditure can be measured and investment in their people can be demonstrated by each Business Manager
* Authorise agreed training as quickly as possible
* Ensure all training is logged on the individual’s HR file ([through i-Trent](https://ce0203li.webitrent.com/ce0203li_ess/ess/#/login))
* Support staff to practise and develop skills gained through training
* Encourage sharing of learning amongst the team
* Recommend appropriate employees for further development
* Explore the opportunity to utilise [Apprenticeship Levy](#_5._Apprenticeships) funding prior to any other expenditure commitments.

## 2.2 All Employees

Effective learning and development requires proactive and willing engagement and participation.

It is the role of individual employees to:

* Participate in the formulation of individual development plans in conjunction with their line manager
* Take responsibility to request, attend and participate in learning events
* Take ownership and adopt a proactive approach in identifying their own development needs
* Take ownership for any learning and development undertaken and to complete the training to the best of ability
* Review whether learning needs can be best served by the growing number of digital resources (e.g., Ted Talks, You Tube, etc.). This may depend on the individual’s preferred learning style. If you want to find out more [click here](http://nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/vak.html)
* Recommend training and development that are considered to be of particular value to the organisation and/or to the team
* Assist in the evaluation of any training provided by MVDC that they undertake
* Record their own learning events on their [HR records in iTrent](https://ce0203li.webitrent.com/ce0203li_ess/ess/#/login)

## 2.3 Line Managers and Employees

The Line Manager and employee have a shared responsibility to prioritise ongoing learning and development.

There will be an opportunity to discuss development needs through the [PDR process](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/performance-and-development-discussions-2/121-meetings-guidance-and-form/) and to agree appropriate courses of learning and/or study.

## 2.4 Business Managers/Senior Leadership Team

BMT/SLT have a key role to play to encourage and facilitate a learning organisation.

It is the role of Business Managers and Senior Leaders to:

* Monitor their departmental learning and development priorities through PDR discussions and the [Workforce Planning Process](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/workforce-planning-process/) including the use of reports on completed learning available through [iTrent People Manager.](https://ce0203li.webitrent.com/ce0203li_web/wrd/run/etadm001gf.open)
* Recommend development priorities for the team and wider organisation in line with workforce and business planning needs
* Encourage changes considered to have positive impact to ensure MVDC reflects modern times
* Align the development of staff with effective, and future proofed, delivery of services wherever possible.
* Evaluate effectiveness of Learning & Development policies and activities

## 2.5 HR and OD team

The HR and OD (Organisational Development) team have a role to develop content in conjunction with specialist leads and to facilitate access to different forms of learning.

It is the role of the HR and OD team to:

* Develop a training programme that fits MVDC’s needs in conjunction with external partners
* Provide and maintain access to online booking process and websites for classroom based learning
* Assist managers and employees with access to appropriate learning routes
* Endorse, monitor and promote the use of [apprenticeships](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/professional-qualifications-and-apprenticeships/)
* Support managers to identify new and alternative development opportunities for employees through the [Workforce Planning Process](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/workforce-planning-process/) and other appropriate discussion routes
* Regularly review investment across the Council

# 3. Types of Learning and Development

Enhancement of services requires continual development of our people and we each have personal responsibility for our own learning.

For an individual – self-development is about “learning” not just “training” and therefore MVDC promotes “time for learning”, which can be through a whole variety of means and deliver multiple longer lasting benefits that if chosen effectively can outweigh any time away from day to day tasks.

MVDC provides a wide range of training and development opportunities.

These opportunities are delivered through a mix of different methods:

* Face –to-face events – a mix of taught sessions, seminars, workshops, conferences and briefings
* Digital resources – including e-learning and subscriptions
* A ‘[coaching](#_8._Coaching_and)’ approach to management – supporting the development of staff by bringing learning into the workplace
* Dissemination of good practice and lessons learned – operational experience, recommendations and sharing success about what is working well

## 3.1 [Essential Learning](http://molly.mole-valley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=14206)

Essential learning is any learning that is required for the effective execution of an employee’s current role. This may be organisation wide (e.g. data protection) or service/job specific (e.g. manual handling). Essential learning may be through varied means, including on-line or classroom based.

Essential learning will be required to be completed within specified timeframes. It will therefore be monitored and reviewed by the relevant department, completion recorded centrally and reported to internal management meetings (e.g. Corporate Governance Board) to ensure appropriate levels of statutory compliance.

All essential learning will be streamlined so much as possible whilst ensuring it covers the basics and, in recognition of time pressures, will be accessed through e-learning wherever possible.

Essential Learning includes:

### 3.1.1 Induction Programmes for All New Employees

A short video comprising a welcome speech and introduction to the Council is the beginning of every employee’s induction to MVDC (coming soon).

Essential learning also includes e-learning to cover areas that have been identified as fundamental for all employees. Current examples include data protection, equality and diversity, freedom of information, Health and safety, safeguarding.

[Essential learning for casual workers](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/casual-agency-temporary-staff/) may be modified in order to take account of the requirements for speed of hire on some occasions, and due to the fact that some casual workers may work for MVDC sporadically and need essential training to be updated more regularly.

### 3.1.2 Essential Refresher Learning

Refresher learning includes organisation wide skills or knowledge requirements that have been identified as important enough to warrant refreshing.

Current examples include: Customer service skills, data protection, Safeguarding.

### 3.1.3 Service Specific Essential Learning

This type of learning is identified as applicable to specific service areas and/or roles. Current examples may include advanced safeguarding, first aid, manual handling and managing telephone aggression. Your Business or Line Manager will identify if this applies.

## 3.2 Leadership and Management Development Programmes

All employees deserve to have access to a manager who has undergone sufficient training to understand the impact that being a manager has on those they work with.

All managers are therefore given specific induction and access to a variety of learning programmes and courses that have a management or supervisory focus.

All new managers will be required to complete the Manager Induction (coming 2020/21).

Other learning includes [Surrey Learn Partnership’s Management Development Programme](https://www.surreylearn.co.uk/) which is available for new managers and experienced managers (a refresher course for established managers) and external individual courses appropriate for specific skills, e.g. coaching, delegation, supervisory skills for line managers etc.

All managers must attend a recognised management development programme, typically this will be the management development programmes provided by the Surrey Learn Partnership, but on some occasions a different programme from another training provider or region will be accepted if it is recent (generally, this will be within the last three years).

On occasion there will be mandatory development for all managers that will also form part of a ‘new manager’ induction programme. A recent example of this is the Mental Health for Line Managers training course introduced as Essential Learning for all managers during 2019/20. If you are a new manager and have not attended this course, please contact HR Admin.

Regular refreshers will also be required, subject to ongoing monitoring and discussion through the PDR process with line managers. Managers are expected to evidence how they have continued to develop themselves on a regular basis – this means at least every three to four years as a minimum, and more frequently if there is a desire to progress within the organisation.

## 3.3 Skills Enhancement

In many cases MVDC can offer programmes to enhance skills. This may include courses for technical learning, e.g. software packages, or specialist training to develop skills that will improve current job performance.

Courses can be accessed through a variety of routes including:

* [On-line](https://slp.learningpool.com/login/index.php)
* [Classroom based](https://www.surreylearn.co.uk/)
* [Professional Qualification/Apprenticeship](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/professional-qualifications-and-apprenticeships/)

Where there is an identified cost to the services (either financial or in working time), the employee must obtain relevant agreement to attend prior to enrolling.

Benefits and impacts for each service/role must be identified, discussed and agreed for each course or event. Apprenticeships should always be considered in preference to courses carrying additional cost. (This will tend to be more applicable to course programmes rather than individual conferences or workshops).

Classroom and work-based qualifications may incur cost and/or time away from the job. E-learning has the potential to be conducted away from the office where possible.

It may be desirable for skills learning **to enhance skills** to be conducted in the employees’ own time however skills training that is a job requirement for performance to an acceptable level should be conducted in working time. This is an area that will very much depend on the individual circumstances and managers are expected to ensure that decisions are made responsibly.

This will need to be subject to discussion with the line manager to take into account assessment of organisational benefit, reason for the agreement to the course(s), prior work performance, specifics of the employee’s role and team capacity.

## 3.4 Professional or Academic Qualifications

Where there is assessed to be organisational need, e.g. to develop a solid pipeline of appropriately qualified staff, employees will be encouraged to pursue continuous professional development including gaining further qualifications. Increasingly there are likely to be suitable [apprenticeships](#_5._Apprenticeships) available, and these must always be considered in preference to courses carrying additional cost.

Types of professional development will vary depending on services areas. In some cases progression through grade may be linked to successful completion of qualifications. However, it may not always be possible to progress to a higher grade by virtue of securing a professional qualification. Job progression will always depend on an objective assessment of the need for the work to be conducted at a higher level by a more qualified individual.

There are occasions where we may agree to develop an individual beyond the requirements of their current role (see [LEAP](#_4._LEAP_–)). This may mean the individual has a greater chance of succeeding at interview as opportunities become available either within MVDC or another organisation.

It is fully recognised that development of an individual to allow him/her to progress their career elsewhere may be considered a success for both MVDC and for that individual. As with any small employer we would be unlikely to be able to meet the diverse career aspirations of all our staff, however if we can offer development of a marketable skillset alongside work that is of value to us for a defined period, we will continue to offer job satisfaction and therefore attract dedicated and capable staff.

## 3.5 Cross-cutting Skills or Higher Cost Learning and Development Options

In some cases these types of skills development will support cross-cutting projects of wider organisational benefit.

On occasion it may be suitable for employees to undertake additional training for upcoming organisational challenges where the skills do not already exist within the organisation, or where there is a growing demand for skills for work we do not have enough people to assist with. This would be particularly desirable if the development of an employee in-house reduced or negated the need to procure an external contractor or interim, where the area of development is into a hard to fill area and/or where there are thought to be benefits for staff familiar with MVDC’s culture to support cross cutting work streams.

Decisions on the suitability and applicability of programmes will be determined through the PDR process, and are likely to fall within the LEAP section below.

# 4. LEAP – “Learn, Engage, Apply, Perform”

## 4.1 What is LEAP?

LEAP is designed for those who have the skill and the desire, assessed through the Performance and Development Review (PDR) process, to progress further in the organisation. LEAP is potentially for any member of staff – whatever their current level or job if they are assessed as capable/willing to progress and performing strongly in their current roles. There are many ways to progress. It could be within current specialisms, beyond current service areas, and/or further within other local government organisations.

LEAP provides an opportunity for eligible individuals to have focussed attention paid to their development needs, with the potential for a bespoke plan drawn up to assist. It is an enhancement to the PDR process facilitating this discussion/attention for those who are eligible – it is not a programme. One size very much does not fit all.

These individuals could therefore be given bespoke opportunity for enhanced development or could tap into existing development options, in line with individual aspirations and ambitions.

Individuals who are assessed as eligible/wishing to progress within their own service area should be nominated through the LEAP process even if the manager/individual have their own expertise, ideas and means to provide the development. This is so that we can build collective awareness of people within our organisation we are supporting to progress.

Additional development may raise the chances of the individual succeeding to secure or perform well at interview, where new opportunities become available, and can therefore assist with succession planning within teams.

As above, it is important to note that additional development that is agreed to, in itself, does not lead to the guarantee of a promotion. It will always depend on opportunities becoming available.

## 4.2 What kind of development may be on offer for participants?

Any development plans will need to be affordable, and with active assessment of organisational benefits in conjunction with individual motivations. Participants assessed as eligible to be considered for additional training beyond current roles under LEAP may be encouraged to undertake existing programmes, including Apprenticeships. On occasion small amounts of funding will be provided, if available, depending on all factors that will be assessed collectively by SLT – there is no guarantee of this.

There is also no guarantee that development plans will be unique or not available to anybody else. The difference for these individuals is that they will be given additional organisational attention and support to draw up motivational development plans.

Sometimes there may be the opportunity to work on additional non-service specific projects from time to time, however this will always be assessed on a case by case basis bearing in mind individual aspirations and existing job pressures. Additional development is designed to incentivise, not to make unsustainable or unwelcome additional work demands.

On occasion participants may be encouraged to apply to externally hosted programmes (such as those provided by the Local Governments Association (LGA) or the District Council’s Network (DCN)) if assessed by SLT as beneficial.

There will always need to be a cost/benefit analysis to ensure return on investment (see Section 7). Individuals through LEAP have the potential for enhanced manager attention, as well as learning and development that may be beyond requirements for effective performance of the current role. This will only, therefore, be appropriate for individuals who have been assessed through the PDR as high performing, and collectively agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team.

As part of the PDR process individual training and development needs will be identified within a [Personal Development Plan](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/performance-and-development-discussions-2/having-a-pdr/), specifically through the Development Summary section, assessing readiness for enhanced development opportunities.

## 4.3 How do people request additional skills development training under LEAP?

Individuals can either nominate themselves for consideration or be recommended by their line manager. This will be discussed and agreed through PDRs including a section to assess current performance and therefore readiness/eligibility.

SLT will have an annual collective discussion to confirm the individuals agreed as suitable for stretch development under LEAP or noting those that are being developed for stretch development in current specialisms.

MVDC fully recognises that we have many talented and committed individuals for whom LEAP will not necessarily be appropriate at a particular point in time. This could be, for example, because job and home pressures are such that there is no capacity for the additional time commitment that is inevitable in extended learning. Or it could be that the individual is happy performing highly in their current role with no desire to make changes. If, however, your manager suggests that you consider it, and/or you wish to put yourself forward, your manager will discuss with you whether you are eligible, and will work with you to identify any appropriate learning interventions that are in keeping with your career aspirations alongside discussion with the relevant Executive Head about potential inclusion in the LEAP programme as relevant.

Anybody who is identified through their PDR and approved by their line manager, but who is not assessed as eligible at this time will be given feedback by the relevant Business Manager/Executive Head and, if appropriate, a development plan will be put together with their line manager to plug any identified gaps.

## 4.4 What if you want to be considered for additional development but are not successful?

Individuals who nominate themselves and are not considered eligible by their line manager (or by SLT in the annual discussion) will be given feedback by the relevant manager/Executive Head and, if appropriate, a development plan to assist chances for future success will be drawn up between the two parties.

Similarly, if an employee does not succeed in year one, he/she is encouraged to taken on board any identified development points and try again. Every year provides a fresh opportunity.

## 4.5 What is the purpose of LEAP?

The purpose of LEAP is to encourage progression and career enhancement, improving retention alongside organisational performance, raising individual motivation, encouraging variety and aiding succession planning.

It is not intended to signal that MVDC does not value everybody who works for us. It is fully recognised that there are many talented, hard-working, fully committed individuals who may not be in a position to participate at a particular point in time. All employees are encouraged to take a fresh look at their situation at least every year, and to plan whether at any point in the future they may wish to put their hand up, either for consideration – for the first time or a subsequent time.

Success of additional career focus given to those eligible under LEAP will be reviewed after year one, and on an ongoing basis and it is likely that there will be changes and improvements based on experience and feedback.

# 5. Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a government backed way of learning on the job that central government heavily encourages, and financially incentivises, all organisations above a certain size to provide.

By providing apprenticeships MVDC can recoup mandatory charges paid in advance. These can be drawn down and set off against training fees.

Apprenticeships are no longer just for school leavers. [Apprenticeship Standards](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/professional-qualifications-and-apprenticeships/) (qualifications) are open to existing employees as a way to progress their careers. Continuous and higher level skills development can increasingly be provided to existing employees, enabling an ‘earn while you learn’ programme, alongside current jobs. There is a wide range of qualification levels starting at the equivalent to GCSE level up to and beyond graduate level.

The duration of an apprenticeship is a minimum of 365 days with possible additional time required to complete the end point assessment, funded by the Apprenticeship Levy that MVDC holds.

Funding from the Apprenticeship Levy can only be used to pay for the training and assessment of apprentices and cannot be used to pay for other costs associated with apprentices such as salary.

It is a requirement for anyone undertaking an apprenticeship that 20% of their working time is spent on learning. This may require attendance at a further education venue however this is not always the case - many can be organisation based activities (providing benefit for organisation as well as employee) and sometimes the employee can undertake remote learning. Agreement on how learning can be managed in advance is advised in order to reduce the potential for problems part-way through the course. If you would like further guidance on this please contact the HR team for suggestions and ideas as to how this can be achieved with a positive (or minimal) impact on services.

Whilst we encourage full take up of apprenticeships, there will always need to be manager approval and assessment of benefit for anyone wishing to take advantage of this scheme. Sometimes managers will wish to phase their apprenticeship starts in order to assess/manage any impact on the team. Agreement to apprenticeships will also depend on available funding month to month. This will be tracked by the HR team in conjunction with SLT. In the event that there is significant organisational demand, which exceeds the available funding, it will be necessary to freeze new starts until more funding becomes available.

Apprenticeship Standards are under continuous development therefore managers and employees are encouraged to check with the HR and OD team whether a desired qualification or skill can be obtained through an apprenticeship.

# 6. Planning and Implementing New Initiatives

Any new learning initiatives will be planned as a result of learning needs analysis, which form part of our PDR and workforce planning processes.

In addition, we are committed to reviewing and improving learning initiatives so that we continue to adapt to changing skills requirements, e.g. where work procedures have changed, where new standards are introduced or where smarter ways of working have been identified.

New learning and development programmes offered to staff will be regularly publicised through our normal communication channels, including the intranet (Molly), staff notices and any departmental meetings. Where appropriate good use will be made of remote training options such as e-learning.

# 7. Monitoring and Evaluating Investment in Training and  Development

We believe that it is critical to the success of both the planning and delivery of training and development activities that any resources invested are monitored and outcomes achieved are measured so far as it is possible to do so. Investment in learning and development activities is based on assessment of cost effectiveness and affordability as well as developmental requirements of the individual, team, or organisation. Sometimes it will be more applicable to conduct a ‘return on expectation’ analysis as opposed to measuring purely financial return on investment.

Outcomes may be demonstrated and measured at an individual, departmental and/or organisational level. Senior managers have a role to play in this process.

Evaluation findings may therefore be shared with the Senior Leadership Team to inform future business planning and continued investment in staff learning and development.

# 8. Coaching and Mentoring

We encourage our line managers to adopt a coaching and mentoring approach for all employees. All managers have a responsibility to ensure that the skills and knowledge of more experienced staff members are shared with more junior employees, and that fresh perspectives of junior or newer employees are taken on board. In this way learning is happening all the time, on the job, and not just in a formal learning environment.

All managers therefore strengthen their value to the organisation by continually developing their coaching and mentoring skills and are therefore encouraged to ensure they take responsibility for these aspects of their development in particular.

Surrey Learning Partnership has regular courses that are applicable however as they are popular, on occasion if we are aware of a number of managers on the waiting list, we will consider arranging and hosting a course in our offices.

Managers are encouraged to email HR.Admin for further details.

# 9. Recording of Learning and Development Activities

Following the PDR discussion, a copy of the PDR form must be emailed to HR.Admin.

Learning and development take up and demand is collated annually to form the basis of the organisation's forward learning and development plan.

All training attended must be recorded on the employee’s [iTrent Learning Events](https://molevalleydc.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/Team-HRa/EW1eou0lJvdKiZBIRI5QpGkBGgFzEExWV4nEl2xl1hFBlg?e=Dz6DzQ) record. This can be done via self service.

# 10. Agreement to Fund

Wherever there is an identified cost to the service (either financial or in working time) the employee must obtain relevant agreement to attend prior to enrolling.

The benefits and impact for the service need to be identified, discussed and agreed for each course or event.

Managers must always use the relevant budget code to record training (or conference) expenditure. The usage of these codes will be assessed through the workforce planning process and will serve to demonstrate that a manager is investing in his/her staff, which is in keeping with the principles this policy is based on.

## 10.1 £1,000 or less

Where the cost is £1000 or less and within budget for training costs, the relevant budget holder can agree attendance. (In some cases a Business Manager will need to authorise this – this will depend on the working practices within each service and each Line Manager will need to have an agreed policy with their BMT as relevant).

The Application for Funding form ([Appendix A](#_Appendix_A)*) may* be used for this purpose. Usage of this will be stored locally with the manager. Recovery of costs will not normally be expected but this will be a manager led decision as it may depend on the circumstances.

## 10.2 More than £1,000

Where the cost is more than £1,000 additional authorisation will need to be agreed and the Application for Funding form ([Appendix A](#_Appendix_A)) must be used.

Courses more than £1,000 will typically be courses of study such as the Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diplomas and professional qualifications.

For any courses or learning initiatives exceeding the current threshold value of £1,000 there will need to be agreement by the relevant Executive Head. Further, if the development is not requested in order to plug a service specific gap, collective SLT consideration will be required – through consideration of those eligible under LEAP.

Some services with highly technical roles may be working to build talent pipelines to ensure vacancies in senior posts can be filled quickly. This will only be applicable to services with particularly specific recruitment needs where it can be demonstrated that demand often outstrips supply when advertising for new candidates.

In some cases, depending on the assessment of the value/need for the training, a co-contribution by the employee will be agreed.

In all cases there will be a need to record the funding provided by using the template in [Appendix A](#_Appendix_A) and forwarding to HR.Admin for the employee’s file.

## 10.3 Repayment of Costs

On agreement to fund a course of study that exceeds £1,000, the employee will be required to sign a learning agreement to repay costs in the event of resignation within 2 years of completion of the course.

Repayment will therefore be required in respect of training expenses incurred by MVDC in connection with the qualification where an employee leaves voluntarily within 24 months of obtaining completion/qualification. This will normally be the cost of the course however in some cases it may include travel and accommodation costs – this will be at the discretion of the manager.

Costs associated with lost working time for the employee to attend will not be expected to be recovered.

Unless otherwise specified repayment will be reduced by 1/24th for every month after the course.

On occasion there will be agreement to waive this requirement in cases of hardship, such agreement to be at the discretion of the relevant Executive Head, in conjunction with discussion with SLT including HR.

Apprenticeship Qualifications are exempt from repayment due to the nature of the funding.

## 10.4 Additional Costs and Exam/Study Leave

**Additional Costs**

Additional costs such as examinations, course materials including books/equipment should be identified in advance. Agreement to fund additional costs will be at the manager’s discretion.

Professional Subscriptions

A professional subscription will be paid if it is a requirement of undertaking the training. See the [Pay & Expenses Policy](https://molevalleydc.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/Team-HRa/EYc3Adl6zN9Kos7vk7U5hyoBykE58s87fXg7vHfjR_c31g?e=JoBuR3) for further detail on subscriptions.

**Exam Leave**

One day’s paid leave will be granted to sit approved examinations. This must be booked in [iTrent self service](https://ce0203li.webitrent.com/ce0203li_ess/ess/#/login) as Other Leave.

**Study Leave**

One paid day study leave per exam or dissertation (or similar) may be granted. Where there are a number of exams/dissertations, it will be managers’ discretion as to the number of study days granted. Any study days must be agreed in advance in order to factor in considerations for the employee and for the service.

**Resits**

Normally funding will only be granted for first examination sittings (where relevant), but in some cases discretionary additional assistance can be granted for a further attempt where the individual circumstances merit this concession.

#  11. Equal Opportunities

Decisions relating to training and development must be made fairly and based on objective considerations, however this does not mean that everybody will be treated the same.

Training and development needs, suitability, applicability, benefit/impact will be assessed on a case by case basis and will depend on a number of factors including current work area, prior work qualifications, job performance and capacity for the additional expectations created by entering into a learning agreement.

Decisions must be made on the basis of an objective assessment of relevant criteria such as those above and ignoring irrelevant criteria.

In this way we can ensure there is incentive for those employees who are keen and able to develop further than their current environment may allow.

# 12. Data Protection

When managing an employee's training and development, MVDC processes personal data collected in accordance with its Employment Privacy Policy.

Data collected as part of the operation of the learning and development policy is held, accessed by, and disclosed to, only those individuals relevant for the purposes of managing learning and development, implementing agreements to fund and recover costs if appropriate and workforce planning purposes (e.g. relevant individual line manager and HR team).

Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and must be reported in accordance with our data protection policy.

As with any breach, inappropriate disclosure may in some situations also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under our [Disciplinary Policy](https://molevalleydc.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/Team-HRa/EficgH1mknlHuN7y44HbOE0B16lyKbdqxHQ1A-Pzd_YY-w?e=tbuCUK).

### Appendix A

**APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FOR STUDY FOR A QUALIFICATION**

This form should be used for training expenditure in excess of £1,000

**SECTION 1 - TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE**

Name: Ext No:

Job Title: Department:

Title of course/qualification seeking funding for:

Provider of the training (please indicate whether you have investigated a number of providers for courses and costs):

Address of training provider for invoice purposes:

Please give details of any qualification awarded on completion of the course:

Is the training: Job specific Yes/No

An organisational requirement Yes/No

For personal development Yes/No

Is the training included in your personal development plan? Yes/No

Start date and duration of course:

**COST**

Tuition fees Yr 1 £ Yr 2 £ Yr 3 £

Total Tuition fees £

Other costs

Total requested payment by MVDC £

**LEAVE REQUIREMENT**

Number of study leave days required for attendance:

Revision leave (max 1 day per exam):

Exam leave:

Total number of days:

Employee’s contribution to study time. eg (use of flexitime, annual leave or unpaid study leave):

Please give details of previous courses undertaken in this field and indicate how they were funded:

**BUSINESS CASE**

To enable the Senior Leadership Team to fully understand and consider your application, please submit a business case for your training in the box below (max 500 words). Why do you wish to undertake the training? How will completing the training benefit MVDC, your current role and you personally? Please include any other information you consider relevant to your application?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**SECTION 2 - TO BE COMPLETED BY LINE MANAGER**

Please read the submission and ensure its accuracy. You are also asked to endorse the application below if you support it.

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT** Please explain from a management perspective:

|  |
| --- |
| How MDVC will benefit from the investment in this training? |
| How do you plan to support the member of staff undertaking the training? |
| In relation to courses requiring significant absence from the office, please demonstrate how you plan to mitigate this impact on other team members and the general workload of the team? |
| How do you plan to ensure that the learning is brought back into workplace practice, share new knowledge with the team with the aim of improving organisational performance? |
| Please demonstrate that you have considered whether there are other, more cost effective options for delivery of this training that will achieve the same end result for MVDC. |

Line manager signature

Date

**SECTION 3 - TO BE COMPLETED BY EXECUTIVE HEAD**

Has funding for the above training been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team? Yes/No

Has departmental budget provision been made for this training in the current financial year? Yes/No

Is any other member of staff undergoing similar training at the moment? Yes/No

Are there any other comments or additional considerations to be taken into account prior to agreement:

**SECTION 4. DECLARATION BY EMPLOYEE**

I have read and agree to the conditions set out in the MVDC Training Policy regarding repayment of all or part of the above fees which have been paid on my behalf by the Council.

Employee signature:

Name (print): Date:

**SECTION 5. AUTHORISATION**

Executive Head of Service Signature:

Name (print):

Date:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Version Status**  | **Date** | **Version Comment**  | **Version Author** |
| V1.0 | Final | January 2020 | Following BMT, Staff Hub, SLT review |  |
| V2.0 | Review | Due January 2023 | Policies to be reviewed at least every 3 years or in the event interim changes are needed (e.g. changes in legislation, work practices). | CS |