

Training and Development Policy

This document is relevant to:	
Staff	✓

Purpose

Dorset Mind recognises that the staff with their commitment, skills, knowledge and abilities are its most valuable resource. The organisation is committed to providing opportunities for training and development in the belief that increasing skills and knowledge will produce confident, highly qualified staff working as an effective and efficient team which will assist the organisation in achieving its aims and objectives.

Policy

Training priorities will be linked to the Business Plan. Training and development should be a conscious and integrated aspect of the work of all Dorset Mind staff.

Individual training and development needs will be identified through an annual performance appraisal, on going supervision meetings and requests from employees. Needs identified will be met through a variety of activities depending on the nature and extent of the requirements, and will be recorded in supervision and appraisal records.

The primary responsibility for training and developing each employee rests with his/her line manager. Staff, however, are also expected to take responsibility for their own self-development.

As part of the organisation's continuing commitment to training and development, employees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training and development they undertake. This information will be used to assess and improve the training process.

'Training' does not only mean attendance on formal courses. It can also mean attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars, shadowing a colleague, or distance learning.

It is recognised that training will not automatically lead to promotion or increased remuneration of staff. The intention is that it will develop skills and knowledge and lead to changed attitudes and increased motivation.

1. The Training Budget

The criteria used to determine the training budget should include:

- the current financial situation of the organisation
- the requirements of the Business Plan

- the current and future work programme(s)
- the outcomes of staff supervision and appraisals in terms of training needs identified
- records of training requested and agreed/denied
- the limits set by funders.

2. How Training Needs are Identified

2.1 Recruitment and Induction

Dorset Mind's recruitment and selection procedures allow for the successful applicant's strengths and weaknesses to be identified in terms of the key areas of their work. The line manager should give appropriate feedback to the new staff member concerned and assist in identifying relevant training opportunities to address any weak points.

All new members of staff should have induction as a part of their probationary period. It is the responsibility of the line manager, in liaison with the Chief Executive to arrange an induction programme that:

- ensures an understanding of Dorset Mind key policies
- explains the structure and functions of Dorset Mind
- explains the work concerned
- introduces the new person to colleagues.

The 6-month probationary review is an opportunity to review progress and development needs.

2.2 Supervision

Formal supervision sessions are a forum in which training needs can be identified and learning options discussed and agreed.

2.3 Staff Appraisals

The purpose of the annual appraisal is to clarify objectives, identify changes in the nature of the work done and probable new directions. It also aims to review the strengths and weaknesses of the individual staff member with a view to planning actions to assist development. These might include changes in work practice, identification of training needs, and consideration of long term future plans.

Line managers have responsibility for ensuring that appraisals are conducted at the appropriate times.

2.4 Complaints

In the context of the identification of training needs, complaints are a positive way of highlighting areas of improvement. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Dorset Mind complaints procedure and where this identifies training needs these will be dealt with by line managers.

2.5 Changes in the Work of the Organisation

Dorset Mind is not a static organisation but an organic one. Consequently, new areas of work identified in work programmes may necessitate training in order to meet targets.

3. Information About Training Opportunities

Information about training may be circulated to Dorset Mind staff in a number of ways including:

- staff meetings
- supervision sessions
- email.

4. Organising Training

There may be ongoing training needs that Dorset Mind believes to be essential for all staff and/or volunteers or certain groups of staff and/or volunteers, or one off needs identified in response to a particular issue.

Examples might include Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Equal Opportunities or Information and Technology skills.

Managers will be responsible for organising in-house training, in consultation with the Chief Executive (and where necessary, the Board).

The manager will be responsible for identifying a suitable trainer, liaising with the trainer, arranging the administration of the event and ensuring evaluation. In certain cases, the training may also include members of the Board – or indeed be organised specifically for Board members. In such cases, this should be agreed at the Board meeting.

5. Access to Training for Individuals

Access to training for individual staff should be agreed by the line manager and authorised by the Chief Executive. Training will include conferences, seminars and workshops as well as formal courses, as all are learning opportunities.

In considering access to all types of training, account will be taken of:

- budgets and the cost of training
- relevance of the training to the duties of the postholder
- appraisal and supervision records
- appropriateness of courses or other training opportunities
- time and workload implications.

In addition, the manager will consider how much training the individual has had already and whether there are equal opportunities considerations.

6. Attendance on Training Courses run by Dorset Mind

There is no charge for attending courses run by Dorset Mind provided there is space on the course, the course is breaking even financially and no paying customers want a place. However, there are still considerable costs involved in staff attending such courses in paid time, and therefore managers will need to apply the considerations set out at (5) above.

The Chief Executive may set an upper limit on how many Dorset Mind staff attend any one course, as this could bias the event towards the concerns of one organisation.

Members of the Board of Dorset Mind may attend an internal training course when space is available, but should first contact the Chief Executive who will monitor usage by Trustees so that any concerns or issues arising from this can be brought to the attention of the Board.

7. Outcomes from Training

In cases where staff attend external courses or conferences the Line Manager has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate feedback or debriefing occurs after staff have attended a training event, and is disseminated through staff meetings or internal memo where appropriate. Using supervision sessions, the line manager has responsibility for assessing whether the training has been implemented in the workplace.

Objectives for in-house training should be agreed by the trainer and relevant manager. All in-house training should be evaluated and the relevant manager should give feedback to the Chief Executive regarding the extent to which objectives have been met.

A central record of training received by staff should be held.

8. Support for Courses/Study Leave

Dorset Mind recognises that some courses, especially those leading to formal qualifications, require a longer commitment of time, and wishes to be able to assist staff to undertake relevant courses of study. Such a commitment however, has to be balanced against the limited staff and financial resources.

Where a course is of value in terms either of benefit to Dorset Mind or for the ongoing personal development of the individual all or some proportion of the financial cost and time involved may be supported. In reaching a decision account will be taken of the considerations as at 5, the benefit to Dorset Mind and the length of service of the individual. Dorset Mind will not provide financial support or time for courses with no direct benefit to the organisation during an employee's first year of service but will give consideration to allowing some flexibility in working hours in order to enable staff to pursue such training where this does not conflict with operational requirements. Such flexibility must not impede the organisation in achieving its objectives.

'Direct benefit' might include increasing the knowledge and skills of the individual leading to an improvement in performance or an expanded role within agreed Dorset Mind objectives.

'Indirect benefit' includes increased motivation of the individual, promotion of Dorset Mind as a responsible employer, assisting in the achievement of career aspirations beyond the scope of the current post or role and other non-post specific learning and development.

Whenever Dorset Mind provides support of any kind to an employee in order for them to attend a training or development event 'proof of attendance' may be requested. No employee will be required to attend or participate in any event for which the costs and time commitment are not met in full by the organisation. Where an agreement is reached whereby only a proportion of costs and time will be covered then the employee is free to choose whether or not they participate and no criticism, either express or implied, will follow as a result of them declining the opportunity provided this decision is made before any costs have been incurred by the organisation.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for managing this policy and overseeing its implementation. Managers are responsible for implementing the policy within their areas of work, and for overseeing adherence by staff. Every member of staff should take personal responsibility for conforming to it.

Associated Policies and Procedures

- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Probationary Period Policy

The equality impact of this policy has been considered and Dorset Mind believes that it complies with its commitment to equality as stated in its Equality Policy

Policy Ownership

Policy Name	Version	Doc ref
Training and Development Policy	1.0	Training and Development Policy

Policy Owner	Chair of Trustees
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Approval Status

Date adopted by Trustees	January 2016		
Date published	January 2016	Date for next review	January 2018

Consult the Dorset Mind website for the latest version of this policy.

Document Control

Reviewers

Name	Position
Chris Price	Chair of Trustees
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Change History

Issue	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	Dec 15	Chris Price	New policy