

Grampian Valuation Joint Board

Staff Review and Development Scheme

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Most large organisations have a process for reviewing employee performance and support needs. Such mechanisms might be referred to as, 'employee review scheme', 'appraisal', 'performance management' or 'annual assessment'.
- 1.2 The Grampian Valuation Joint Board on the advice of its external auditors now propose to introduce a Staff Review and Development Scheme (SRDS).

2. AIMS

- 2.1 The aims of the SRDS are to prepare employees with appropriate skills for future service delivery, to ensure high quality services and continuous improvement.

3. STATEMENT

- 3.1 *The Board believes the performance of individual employees is an important factor in successful organisational performance. We are committed to pursuing continuous improvement, in our services and support activities. To do this, it is important that each employee understands how he/she can contribute to achieving service objectives.*
- 3.2 We recognise that employees are entitled to receive:
 - clear direction about what is expected of them
 - information on current priorities and future plans
 - regular feedback on performance.
- 3.3 In return, each employee will then commit to delivering his/her agreed contribution and co-operate with managers' directions.
- 3.4 We also believe that improvement is more likely when there is genuine two-way communication between employees and their line managers. Managers should provide employees with opportunities to:
 - be involved in planning their work
 - offer suggestions about how jobs might be done better
 - offer suggestions about how services might be improved
 - discuss their development needs and aspirations
- 3.5 The Grampian Valuation Joint Board Staff Review and Development Scheme (SRDS) provides a mechanism for the top-down translation of corporate and service objectives into individual work plans, while obtaining the bottom-up flow of ideas that contribute to the improvement of services.

4. Scope

- 4.1 The policy and process applies to all Scottish Joint Council employees. The Assessor will be responsible for implementation of SRDS to the Depute Assessors and will report annually to the Board on his own personal development aims and objectives and outcomes.
- 4.2 The principles of SRDS are also applicable to temporary and part-time employees. However the Board recognises some practical difficulties.

Examples might be:

- employees contracted for a year or less (e.g. maternity cover), where time-off-task spent in development activity is impractical and uneconomic
 - part-time canvass staff who have limited face-to-face contact with supervisors and are trained for a very specific, short term task.
 - part-time employees on temporary contracts where potential benefits of full SRDS are offset by unacceptable costs.
- 4.4 In such cases, managers must ensure that the aims of SRDS are achieved by other means, for example, group review sessions, or simple self-review, using the SRDS guidelines. All employees should be offered the opportunity of a one-to-one meeting with his/her line manager in addition to regular meetings with their direct supervisor.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Assessor and Deputes will implement SRDS with all staff that report directly to them to include staff to Principal Valuer level. Each Assistant Assessor and PV, having participated in SRDS with his/her manager, will then implement SRDS with valuation and technical staff or senior admin staff within the Division. The Principal Admin. Officer will review senior admin. Staff at HQ and so on. In this way SRDS cascades to service delivery level.
- 5.2 Employees have a duty to co-operate with managers and contribute to SRDS to the extent they are able. For example, employees have a responsibility to commit to and deliver reasonable work objectives. Employees should participate in necessary training. Employees have both a responsibility and a right to identify problems, ask for support and offer suggestions.
- 5.3 In the case of difficulty SRDS interviews may be conducted at a more senior level.

6. Procedures

- 6.1 Guidance Notes have been published and will be kept under review in the light of user feedback. Initial and refresher training for all manager required to conduct SRDS interview will be arranged through Moray Council Employee Development Team.

7. Training

As part of the introduction of this SRDS the Board recognises the need to establish a formal Training Policy for all of its staff so as to provide a proper basis for the establishment of an annual review mechanism. Appendix 1 therefore details the Board's Training Policy to be put in place.

7.2 In the same way the Board recognises the need for initial training, it also recognises the benefits of Post Entry Training and ongoing CPD for all staff which is detailed in Appendix 2.

8. Career Grade Progression

8.1 The existing arrangements for Career Grade Progression as set down in the approved Career Grade Schemes for Professional and Technical Staff are not affected by the introduction of this SRDS, the Training Policy or the Post Entry Training arrangements. Indeed the Career Progression arrangements can best be seen as the forerunner of an overall SRDS and will, in future, operate within the broad aims of SRDS.

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Training Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The importance of ensuring quality in the choice of training and of finding effective ways of delivering it is recognised.
- 1.2 The Board acknowledges the important contribution all employees make towards ensuring effective service delivery and achieving corporate aims and objectives.
- 1.3 Training and development is a vehicle through which new skills can be acquired and existing skills developed, to allow individual employees to give maximum contribution to the benefit of the Board.
- 1.4 Grampian Valuation Joint Board is committed to the provision of equality of opportunity in training and development regardless of age, gender or marital status, race or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 *We are committed to the ongoing development of all employees to enable them to make a full and effective contribution to the Board's aims and objectives.*
- 2.2 This policy extends to all employees.
- 2.3 **We aim to:**
 - Assist all employees to achieve their full potential through appropriate training and development.
 - Develop clear training plans from identified service and employee based needs.
 - Encourage employees and managers to take responsibility for their own development and to assist in the development of others.
 - Provide innovative, effective and cost effective training and development opportunities through partnership working.
- 2.4 *We will provide support and guidance to employees and managers to assist them with their training and development.*

3.0 SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS

3.1 Induction

All new employees will receive coaching in immediate work processes and tasks. Inducting new employees into the Board, will be the responsibility of the appropriate line manager, by issuing an Induction pack, supported by work-based Induction.

3.2 Ongoing Identification Of Training And Development Needs

The Board is committed to ensuring all employees receive systematic training needs assessment on at least an annual basis through its Staff Review and Development System (SRDS).

3.3 Annual Training Plans

It will be the responsibility of the Assessor to ensure that Annual Training Plans which take account of corporate and service objectives as well as individual training and development needs are prepared and reviewed.

3.4 All professional trainees will be subject to the RICS Assessment of Professional Competence with support available through the Counsellor and Supervisor requirements specified by APC rules and guidance.

4.0 PROVISION OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Course Programme

- A course programme which will be available to all employees will be devised and updated at least annually.
- Information on local facilities available for self development will be made available to all employees.
- Information on local training events will be advertised on the Board's intranet site.

5.0 DELIVERY

5.1 The Board will provide training and development opportunities, utilising the services provided by its constituent councils. Where specialist expertise is required consideration will be given to the training being provided by an appropriate external source.

5.2 The Board will utilise the Moray Council advisory service to employees offering advice on education and training both internal and external.

- 5.3 The Board recognises the importance and value of on the job coaching/mentoring. Encouragement will be given to utilise this informal training method as part of self development.
- 5.4 The use of departmental expertise will be promoted throughout the organisation. Divisions will be responsible for job or service related training and the Management Team will be responsible for general training. A Depute Assessor will be designated as Training Officer for the purpose of co-ordination of both internal and external training

6.0 EVALUATION

- 6.1 A system of evaluation will be implemented by the Board to ensure value for money training. The process of evaluation will be advised by Personnel Services, Moray Council using evaluation documentation.

7.0 PERSONNEL SUPPORT

- 7.1 The Board will offer support and guidance to enable employees to take ownership of their continuous development.
- 7.2 The Training Officer will be available for advice, assistance and support to Divisional Managers to enable them to fulfil their responsibility regarding training.
- 7.3 Guidance and support will be offered in relation to formal Continuing Professional development for all RICS members.

8.0 MONITORING THE POLICY

- 8.1 The Training Officer will be responsible for monitoring the policy throughout the department
- 8.2 The Assessor will monitor the overall application of this policy document.

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Post Entry Training (CPD)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Grampian Valuation Joint Board will encourage employees to undertake training and educational development which is directly linked to the achievement of its objectives through performance management, and SRDS. When the Board cannot provide training through the corporate training programme of the constituent councils or on a commissioned basis staff may apply for individual sponsorship.
- 1.2 The priority for training and development will be relevant to the Individual's present or immediately foreseeable work responsibilities and will take due account of the departmental budget.

2.0 PROVISION OF POST ENTRY TRAINING

- 2.1 The general principle of distinguishing between "essential" and "desirable" training programmes or events will apply.
- 2.2 "Essential" training activities are deemed to be those which are directly related to the employee's duties and required by the Board in order to fulfill its obligations. (eg RICS, AEA)
- 2.3 "Desirable" training activities may not be directly job related but could nevertheless be of benefit to the Board in securing a wider range of skills and competencies.
- 2.4 Divisional Managers are responsible for the provision of support to employees who wish to embark on post entry training and development.
- 2.5 Divisional Managers are responsible for the identification of the training and development needs of employees and in such cases - where practicable support will be given to employees in respect of finance, time off and mentoring.
- 2.6 Employees also have a responsibility to identify on an ongoing basis training and development which will enhance effectiveness and improve performance.
- 2.7 In cases where employees decide to undertake training and development and make application for financial support, time off or mentoring support, such applications will be assessed by the Training Officer against the following criteria:
 - i. Relevance to achievement of the Board's objectives
 - ii. In keeping with the standards or performance targets identified as appropriate to the department.

- iii. Relevance to the employees's present or immediately foreseeable duties.
- iv. Ability of the employee to undertake and complete the course of study.
- v. The overall cost
- vi. The length of the course of training or study
- vii. The exigencies of the service

It should be emphasised that where e-learning, distance learning or evening classes are available, day release may not be approved.

It may be that some or all of the three supports (finance, time off and mentoring) can be made available but this decision is entirely for the Training Officer to make. The granting of financial support will not automatically give staff access to time off or mentoring support. Financial support may be for less than 100% of the costs.

The overall guiding principle governing the provision of support will be the exigencies of the service at the time of application.

3.0 COURSES/PROGRAMMES CONSIDERED RELEVANT FOR SUPPORT

- 3.1 The Board, through its constituent councils can provide access to a wide range of training courses eg through the Moray Council Employee Development Team.
- 3.2 In addition, in relation to RICS graduate trainees, specific courses are available to APC candidates at relevant stages of their training programme.
- 3.3 It must be noted that each application for support to undertake post entry training must be judged on its merits. The Board recognises the changing situation in respect of educational methods used and will constantly review the relevance and appropriateness of post entry training available.

4.0 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 On deciding to pursue a course of study, employees should complete the application for Post Entry Training and discuss the course content with the Training Officer who will - before giving approval - consider the criteria at paragraph 2.7 taking into consideration financial assistance, time off and mentoring support. All training should be recorded as part of the SRDS interview. The Training Officer will establish whether the Board is already providing the requested training in-house (via the constituent councils) and use in-house training wherever possible.
- 4.2 Training courses or programmes deemed as "Essential" may require day release during working hours (eLearning, distance learning or evening classes might also be considered). The full cost of registration, tuition and examination fees will be reimbursed on production of appropriate receipts or may be invoiced to the Board with prior agreement.

- 4.3 Training courses or programmes deemed as "Desirable" may require day release during working hours (eLearning, distance learning or evening classes might also be considered). It might be possible to release the employee during the working day in which case the cost of the registration, tuition and examination fees will be borne by the employee. Or - if working time is not available the employee will be required to study in their own time and they may receive help towards the cost of the programme. It may be possible to arrange unpaid leave.
- 4.4 It is the employee's responsibility to advise their manager and the Training Officer if they are unable to complete the course. In such circumstances the Training Officer, in consultation with the Assessor will determine whether any fees etc paid by Board should be refunded by the employee (but see 4.5.4 & 4.5.5 below).
- 4.5 Requests for study or exam leave should be made at the outset of the academic year in order to give sufficient notice to all concerned. In the case of RICS APC candidates arrangements will be governed by announcement of the annual assessment schedule.
- 4.5.1 Employees will be granted a half-day's leave on the day of the Examination plus travel time.
- 4.5.2 Should the employee need to resit an examination, a half-day's leave on the day of the examination will be granted. No further time for study nor additional fees will be considered.
- 4.5.3 Continued approval will depend on standards of attendance and performance.
- 4.5.3 Fees will not be paid in retrospect to any employee who has not been given approval either by the Training Officer or has failed to complete an application for Post Entry Training. Special arrangements will be made in respect of RICS APC candidates joining the Board's staff while already undertaking preparation for assessment
- 4.5.4 The employee may be required to repay 100% of the course fees if they cannot complete the course, resign or are dismissed during the course of study, or within 12 months of completion of study (other than on redundancy or ill health grounds). Resignation between 12-18 months after completion of study will require 50% of the costs to be repaid and between 18-24 months after completion of study 25% of the costs to be repaid.
- 4.5.5 Every member of staff undertaking training, other than in-house training arranged through the constituent councils, will be required to complete a Training Mandate where details of the refund of training costs as outlined in 4.5.4 above will be set out for formal acceptance.