

Staff Development Policy

News Associates recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. A strategic, professional approach to staff development helps us attract and retain high-calibre staff with the skills and competencies necessary to deliver award-winning journalism training.

We are committed to providing staff with development opportunities to ensure that individuals and teams are able to contribute fully to the achievement of the organisation.

As an educational provider, News Associates aspires to create and maintain a culture of 'lifelong learning' for all members of staff, as well as students.

This policy applies to all staff. Formal endorsement of staff development should be given by the line manager or head of department.

Staff development embraces all forms of educational activity including personal study, e-learning, internal or external courses, workshops, work shadowing and planned experiences which have a direct relevance to the individual's role or objectives of News Associates. We will aim to support individuals through a variety of means within the prevailing budgetary provision and identified business need.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the policy is to provide managers and staff with a framework that supports and encourages staff development in line with the delivery of News Associates' departmental objectives as agreed during the annual planning and budgetary cycle. Guidance notes are provided to support the achievement of the following objectives:-

- Leaders and managers are provided with the skills, knowledge and competencies they need to work in partnership with their staff to support their continuous development.
- All staff are supported and encouraged to acquire and develop the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies to enhance their performance in their current role and, where they are involved in succession planning, for their next role at News Associates.
- An appropriate balance is created between the desire for individual staff members to maximise their potential and for News Associates to obtain a return on its investment in staff development.

General principles

- News Associates shows commitment to the development of its staff through encouraging an environment conducive to learning and progression.
- All staff have equal access to staff development opportunities, appropriate to their role and aligned to their objectives.
- All internal training activities will support the need to heighten awareness of equality and diversity issues.
- News Associates is subject to a number of statutory regulations and it must ensure that staff are trained to levels appropriate to their roles in order to perform legally in

the best interest of themselves, of others and of the organisation. Participation in certain staff development activities will therefore be mandatory.

- In order to gain the most benefit, News Associates' staff development processes need to be closely aligned to other planning and review cycles including staff induction; performance review programmes; the annual planning cycle; annual academic and periodic subject reviews.
- Funding and/or study leave for the purpose of staff development must be approved by the appropriate Course Director or nominee.
- Course Directors and senior staff are expected to encourage and support all staff (regardless of job role, grade and work patterns) to take advantage of internal and external staff development opportunities relevant to their identified development needs.
- News Associates also recognises that, for its Staff Development Policy to be effective, staff must take responsibility for their own development – committing to development opportunities provided to enable them to keep their skills updated and respond flexibly to change.

Identification of needs

Staff development needs are identified in a number of ways:

- Managers are expected to discuss staff development needs with each of their staff at least annually as part of the Performance Review Process.
- The needs of staff new to News Associates should be identified in accordance with any probation periods.
- Through the needs identified by departments during their annual planning and budgetary cycle.
- Heads of departments observations and requests.
- Evaluation of feedback from current programmes.
- Requests from staff.

Responsibilities

There is a shared responsibility for the development of staff at News Associates. It is recognised that there will be differences between departments as to how these responsibilities are fulfilled.

Course directors/line managers are responsible for:

- Demonstrating appropriate behaviours, especially commitment to excellence and continuous development.
- Identifying needs for development of their staff arising from internal and external change.
- Providing appropriate resources (time and money) for staff development activities.
- Ensuring that individuals have the opportunity at regular intervals, to discuss their development needs.
- Giving staff constructive, honest and timely feedback on their performance.

- Identifying individual and team development needs which take into account relevant aspirations of individuals.
- Where appropriate, approving attendance at relevant staff development activities and making appropriate provision for the release of staff from their duties.
- Ensuring equal opportunities in access to staff development is in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Individuals

Individuals are responsible for:

- Reflecting at regular intervals upon their performance in their current jobs and future career aspirations and identifying their appropriate development needs.
- Discussing these with their line manager during performance review meetings.
- Taking full advantage of such opportunities.
- Applying newly-developed knowledge and skills to their work and the development of their careers.
- Where difficulties occur, raising issues with their line manager in the first instance.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

- All staff development activities will be evaluated regularly. All staff are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of what they provide, as part of the 'lifelong learning' culture.
- We are committed to the continuous improvement of our staff development provision and encourage feedback from staff. Where appropriate, best practice will be shared as part of our commitment to improve.
- Those responsible for managing staff should, together with the staff member participating in staff development activities, evaluate the extent to which development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives, and where necessary agree appropriate next steps with the staff member during their annual performance review.

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