

Policy

Training and Development Policy

Policy Statement

A training and development policy needs to translate the organisation's needs and priorities into actionable, value-added, affordable and effective learning solutions. Depending on the size of the organisation and its structure and function, the resulting policy can be either a short or long document. However, at a minimum it should contain the following headings and associated details.

- Executive summary — a concise summary of the training and development policy, mainly intended for those who wish to apprise themselves of the main points contained therein
- Introduction — to provide an overview of the training and development policy and the reasons for its existence, including a statement of the organisation's attitude to training and development
- Organisational aims and objectives — statements (ie aims) of what the organisation needs to achieve over a specified period of time and how (ie objectives) the aims will be achieved through training and development provision
- Satisfying training and development requirements — what is required to satisfy training and development requirements in the broad term, including all those who will be involved, eg the T&D/L&D department, line managers, external providers and providers of qualifications
- Training and development procedure — a brief description of the key components of the training and development procedure (see "Procedure wording" below)
- Identifying training and development needs — a description of the process, procedures, and standards required for identifying training and development needs, including the use of any appraisal/performance review systems. Training and development needs will need to be prioritised in relation to organisational priorities, and initiatives and needs. Therefore, special training initiatives should reflect larger-picture issues, problems or initiatives which face the organisation
- Designing training provision — a description of the process, procedures, and standards required for designing training provision. This should also include a list of the various formal means of training and development delivery available to the organisation, such as face-to-face, online and action learning
- Developing training provision — a description of the process, procedures, and standards required for developing training provision
- Assessment policy — this will set out how employees will be assessed as a result of training and development provision. Reference will also need to be made to any vocational competencies and qualifications which are required for employees to undertake their job roles
- Evaluation policy — this will set out how training and development provision will be evaluated in order to provide information that "stakeholders" need with regard to how provision has helped to meet the organisation's aims and objectives. Most leaders of organisations expect that training and development provision to be evaluated to ensure that they are delivering results, specifically with regard to expenditure related to key organisational initiatives, or those that require significant investment. While some leaders are satisfied with less rigorous

- analyses of training performance (such as employee satisfaction), others will require proof of learning transfer or performance improvement
- Development of individuals — this will set out how development opportunities will be provided, based on identified needs
- Individual requests for training and development — this will detail how employees can request training and development at any time
- Induction training — this will set out what is provided to all new employees and for those who are changing their job role
- Training and development support — this will describe the use of coaching and/or mentoring in order to provide appropriate levels of training and development support
- Training and development providers — this will set out who will be responsible for training and development provision (ie internal and external providers) and the criteria by which they will be selected and appraised
- Training and development administration — this will provide details with regard to the means by which training and development provision will be administered. This will address the means by which training and development provision is allocated, booked, monitored, and recorded. Almost all organisations expect basic reporting as a by-product of training and development provision. When training is required for compliance, certification or licensing, the expectations for accurate reporting are extremely high because detailed reporting is usually required by law. Without training statistics, preparation of organisational plans and budgets cannot be completed. The reporting of learning outcomes and impact is required by some, if not all, organisations.

Procedure

An essential part of any training and development policy is a description of the process of how training and development will be provided. Accepted best Company suggests that the following procedure for provision should be adopted, which should be regarded as a circular series of steps, ie when the last stage has been completed, the first step comes back into the frame.

- Defining the needs and objectives of the organization (this must be the starting point for all training and development programmes).
- Establishing performance competences (what is it that employees are required to be able to do in the workplace?).
- Conducting a needs analysis in order to ascertain if there are any training and development needs and, as a result, what the learning needs are of: employees in relation to the organization; a group of job holders; and, individuals in relation to the business objectives of the organization
- Defining learning objectives (what is it that employees will need to be able to do at the end of a training or development programme?) in order to achieve the desired performance competences/competencies and to fill any performance gaps.
- Identifying the body of content (what do employees need to learn in the way of new knowledge and skills and/or to do by changes in behaviour?).

- Devising a training or development strategy (how, when, and where are employees to learn the knowledge, skills and behaviours they require? This will result in the selection of suitable methods by which the training or development should be delivered).
- Selecting or designing and developing the training or development programme in accordance with the instructional strategy (selecting an already existing programme or designing and developing all the materials and training/developing the human resources required for delivering the programme).
- Developing or checking the assessment tools for the training or development programme (how will employees be assessed on their achievement of the objectives?)
- Delivering the training or development programme to all those who require it.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the training or development programme (determining how effective the programme has been, and linking this where possible to the transfer of learning into the workplace).

Using this Document

Use this document to provide a model for producing a training and development policy.

Law Relating to This Document

None, except where compliance, certification or licensing regulations are relevant for some or all job holders.

Note:

There are also express provisions in anti-discrimination legislation outlawing discrimination in the field of training and development provision because of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, or because of pregnancy or maternity leave.

Note:

A training and development policy is a set of guidelines and requirements reflecting the organisation's values and culture, and is based on a set of principles to which the organisation adheres in its overall management and development of the workforce. The policy should:

- help both employees and managers understand the philosophy and overall approach taken by the organisation to its investment in the workforce
- recognise that a balance must be struck between organisational/business needs and helping employees to develop their full potential
- demonstrate to employees and managers how decisions on who receives training and development and the reasons for this allocation are made
- emphasise that training and development opportunities are open equally to all employees, including both part-time and fixed-term employees.

A clear policy on training and development enables any auditing or benchmarking of activities, as they relate to the provision of training and development, to be undertaken in a straightforward way.