

FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

(Replaces Staff Training Policy)

Code: HR16

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Next review: By November 2025

Cross reference: EVH H&S Employee Handbook
EVH H&S Control Manual
HR26 Terms & Conditions of Employment



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FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

LEARNING AND POLICY

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Forth Housing Association recognises the important contribution of employee development in the creation of a highly skilled and motivated workforce, which is essential to achieve value for money, continuous improvement and the delivery of high-quality services to its tenants and customers.
- 1.2 We will ensure that learning and development opportunities are available to all staff members, in order that individuals have sufficient skills and information to fulfil the requirements of their role in an effective, efficient, accountable and legal manner.
- 1.3 Staff Members should take full advantage of the training opportunities available in order to ensure that they have the skills and ability to manage their business effectively.
- 1.4 Forth welcomes all forms of blended learning and development activity including personal study, e-learning, internal or external courses, work shadowing and planned experiences.
- 1.5 Management Committee Members will ensure that annual training plans are agreed, and sufficient budgets are approved in order to implement such plans.

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 The following principles govern the operation of this policy:
 - Be clear and understood by all employees
 - Be fair, equitable, inclusive and non-discriminatory
 - Reflect the needs of a diverse organisation
 - Reflect statutory requirements and best practice
 - Be flexible and adaptable to changing needs

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1 The objectives of this policy are to:
 - Promote the development of a culture aligned to the association's values

- Ensure new and existing employees are supported within their role and ultimately reach their potential through work related career and personal development
- Subject to available resources; provide access to appropriate learning opportunities which will enhance knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or qualifications
- Provide the association with skilled, experienced, and suitably qualified employees to meet current and future ongoing needs
- To promote an ethos of high performance, innovation and continuous improvement that is customer driven ensure continuing effectiveness of service delivery
- Ensure that employees can meet their responsibilities regarding relevant legislation, codes of practice, compliance and defined procedures
- Ensure that all employees have equality of opportunity and access to learning and development, encouraging all employees to participate and be accountable for their own development
- Support the achievement of Forth's Business Plan and strategies through the provision of appropriate learning and development solutions

4.0 Learning and Development Framework

4.1 Responsibilities

The Management Committee in its formal approval of the policy acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy lies with the Director and heads of departments. All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed and that they are familiar with the responsibilities in their job description and with other sources and publications which define their job role such as

- Performance guidance and requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator
- Sector good practice guidance
- External agency guidance notes in operation, particularly those pertinent to the functions of the individual officer
- Approved policies and procedures of Forth Housing Association
- Business Plan and strategies
- Relevant Legislation

4.2 Learning definitions

Forth will provide a broad range of learning and development opportunities to staff. These fall into the following categories:

Induction Training: Induction training will be available to all new employees and where any training is provided by external agencies they will participate in the next available course following their appointment. New staff will undertake both formal and informal induction activity as part of a formal job specific induction plan. The staff member's line manager will undertake to induct new members to the team and will include information about the job, office procedures, and initial on-the-job training. The Health and Safety Administrator will deliver the H&S induction and direct staff to the EVH H&S Employee Handbook and the H&S Control Manual.

Mandatory: Learning deemed compulsory to fulfil their legal responsibilities in the safe and efficient delivery of services,

Core: Learning that is specific to a job role or business area to ensure the staff member can fulfil the role to a consistent and required standard

Individual: Learning identified from induction and/or appraisal and development discussions to ensure the post holder meets the essential requirements of the person specification based on their individual skills, knowledge, and experience. Training can be requested by the line manager or the individual.

Qualifications: A learning activity that leads to an academic or professional qualification.

Health & Safety: Health and Safety awareness and any specific, job related Health and Safety training will be provided to all staff during their induction period and at regular intervals during their employment

4.3 Funding and Support

The association will provide appropriate funding, leave and support to employees attending authorised work-related learning and development as appropriate to their job role. Employees may be required to enter a **Training/Qualification Fee Agreement** that sets out the terms and conditions, circumstances and timescales of which the cost of any courses may be recovered from the employee when leaving the association.

The extent of support outlined here is intended to be indicative and not restrictive and will be subject appropriate approvals and available budgets.

- Course Fees & Materials - materials will include the purchase of essential materials such as textbooks or equipment
- Professional Memberships & Subscriptions

- Business Travel Expenses – reasonable expenses will be paid for travel to and from the learning event
- Travel time must be preauthorised by the employee’s line manager before the training activity takes place
- Attendance at Residential Courses - paid leave to do so.
- Study Leave - where examinations must be taken during working hours, employees will normally be granted one day of paid study leave per exam, plus the day of the exam. There is no right to study leave during normal working hours but where this is taken, it must be authorised in advance by your line manager. This will be subject to operational business needs.
- Examinations – paid leave to attend exams
- Exam Re-sits – costs and time for re-sits will be the responsibility of the employee, if an employee fails a re-sit then the association may not support costs or time for repeating the course. Exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Director.
- Public Holidays & Weekends If any training, exam day falls on a public holiday or weekend students will be permitted to take the time back
- Progress to be discussed with line manager and any unsatisfactory progress may result in paid support being withdrawn
- Withdrawal from the course – intention to withdraw from the course should be discussed in advance with your line manager and may result in repayment under the terms of the Training/Qualification Fee Agreement

5.0 Complaints and Appeals

- 5.1 Employees have the right to appeal any decisions made on matters covered by this Policy in accordance with Grievance Procedures

6.0 Review

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by the Management Committee and staff are responsible for ensuring that it meets legal and good practice requirements.