

Ulster University Professional Development (PD) Policy

Introduction

The University is committed to supporting and developing its staff to enable the achievement of institutional objectives and realisation of its staff's potential not only in the early stages of their career but throughout their employment. This is articulated in both the University value "provide quality learning and development for students and staff" and the Corporate Plan (2011/12-2015/16) key supporting objectives to encourage all academic staff to undertake scholarly activity to support learning teaching and enhancement in their subject" and "to ensure that staff engage on an on-going basis in appropriate career development and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities" based on the definition of CPD below.

Continuing Professional Development may include forms of professional support and development such as briefing sessions, workshops, seminars, conferences, coaching, mentoring, work shadowing, work-based projects, peer learning, online support, secondment, self-directed learning and is applicable to staff at all stages of their career.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning commissioned the CPD sub-committee by to draft and review the Ulster CPD Policy, with agreed Terms of Reference to consult and advise on the implications and implementation of the University's Professional Development Policy and associated accreditation frameworks. The PD Policy is for all Ulster University staff, supported by relevant Codes of Practice.

Guiding principles underpinning the PD Policy

1. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is defined within Ulster as:

any process or activity, planned or otherwise, that contributes to an increase in, or the maintenance of knowledge, skills and personal qualities related to the person's role.

2. **Appropriate PD activities** supported by the organisation and aligned to strategic and operational goals will include:

- **ESSENTIAL activities** where resources will be provided for the development activity which is either a requirement of legislation, condition of employment or compulsory for the role; with personal, professional and organisational responsibilities.
- **DESIRABLE activities** where the professional development activity is explicitly linked to the achievement of agreed organisational and departmental objectives for which resources will be prioritised.

3. Everyone employed by the Ulster University will be encouraged to engage, on an ongoing basis, in appropriate professional development to ensure standards are

achieved and/or maintained in good standing and that staff are enabled to respond to change and challenges within the University

4. Where possible and reasonable, PD activities will be designed to ensure that they are universally accessible and designed with equal opportunities in mind and accessible.
5. PD activity in terms of level of participation, quality of provision and learning outcomes and enhanced professional practice will be reviewed and evaluated by the individual staff member and his/her Line Manager.

Ulster University PD Policy

1. Purpose

The Ulster University seeks to create an environment that leads, develops and motivates all staff through processes of continuing personal and professional development consistent with the current and future needs of the University. The intent of this PD Policy is to outline the Ulster University's commitment to *"ensuring that **staff** engage in continuing professional **development activities and appropriate career development**".*

2. Aims of the PD Policy:

1. To provide a framework within which decisions about continuing professional development may be made and supported;
2. To define the responsibilities of individual staff members, managers and the organisation for either engaging in, or enabling others in personal and professional development; and
3. To identify and ensure the support for a range of development opportunities available for the continuing development of Ulster University staff.

3. PD Responsibilities

- 3.1 Individual members of staff are responsible for taking an active role in:
- planning their personal professional development;
 - undertaking the agreed development activities;
 - keeping records of their personal/professional development activities; and maintaining and developing their personal PD profile
 - sharing the learning outcomes in their respective Developmental Appraisal Reviews.
- 3.2 Line Managers are primarily responsible for ensuring all staff members' support and development needs are identified and responded to appropriately via:
- local induction;
 - interim and final probation period reviews; and
 - informal and formal professional performance and practice reviews
- 3.3 The Staff Development Unit will advise and assist where required:
- individual members of staff;
 - managers; and other internal providers of PD activities

Staff Development will facilitate a comprehensive range of internal learning and professional development opportunities aligned to the University's strategies and prioritised CPD objectives.

- 3.4 Staff Development will be responsible for maintaining records of all centrally-provided PD activities.
- 3.5 Internal providers of PD activities and managers have a joint responsibility for ensuring that staff are kept informed about the professional learning and development opportunities open to them.
- 3.6 Internal providers of PD activities will be responsible for maintaining Attendance Records and submitting these to the Staff Development Unit for annual monitoring.

4. PD support available and how to access this support

- 4.1 The University will support with time and provide core professional development activities, ensuring the access and provision of all internally provided essential PD activities. Support will also be provided by the Line Manager for those desirable (aligned) PD activities which will enable achievement of organisational objectives, where the substance of the conference/professional and engagement activity is aligned to and enables organisational development objectives.

Funding for approved PD activities may be provided from one of the following sources:

- directly via Line Manager's recurrent budget;
- indirectly via internal Ulster University providers and/or external providers contracted by Staff Development;
- generation of additional funding via internal and external consultancy/facilitation fees; and personal.

PD will usually take place during work time with cover arranged by the Line Manager where necessary. Where possible and reasonable, delivery of PD activities will be flexible to accommodate staff contracted to work out of office hours. If part-time staff are required to participate in PD activities outside their contractual hours they will normally be able to agree either time-in-lieu or payment for the additional hours.

- Staff employed in either temporary or fixed-term contracts will be required to participate in the **essential** PD activities deemed necessary for their role.
- Some PD activities, especially award-bearing courses, may involve attendance and study in the individual staff member's own time, during evenings or at weekends.
- The University may also support PD that individuals wish to undertake out of personal preference; however the Line Manager needs to assess such applications using the following criteria:
- the proposed PD activity is relevant and enhances the individual's performance and/or longer term professional development, related to their role;
- the amount of PD is reasonable for any one member of staff to undertake within a given period; and
- the school/department can provide adequate staff cover.

Where a member of staff covers (with no additional payment) the work of someone undertaking a PD activity, managers will need to ensure that, as far as possible, arrangements are perceived as equitable by all concerned.

Support for staff wishing to undertake Ulster University or other FE/HE institutions' award-bearing courses on a part-time basis will need to be approved by his/her Line Manager.

Arrangements for all centrally funded PD activities are dependent on the funding available.

Staff members have the right to appeal PD applications not supported by their Line Managers. Appeals should be made to the Line Manager of the complainant's Line Manager who may request advice from the Sub-Committee for Continuing Professional Development via the secretary of the Sub-Committee.

- 4.2 The Line Manager may commit support (time and/or funding) for prioritised, externally provided and desirable (aligned) CPD activities for local specific needs.

Schools/Departments may fund and/or cover:

- prioritised external courses;
- conferences; and
- leaves of absence

The Line Manager will need to satisfy at least one or more of the following criteria to authorise support for attendance at conferences (funding, leave of absence and expenses):

- the individual staff member attending is presenting a paper relevant to the University's needs;
- the substance of the conference aligns to organisational development objectives respective individual staff member's professional area; and
- it is recommended that the individual staff member submit and present brief summary and evaluation report of the conference to his/her Line Manager and peers.

- 4.3 Access to formal internally provided PD activities will normally be via an online application process and for formal externally provided PD activities via a prior approval request completed by the individual staff member and approved by his/her Line Manager.

- 4.4 **The range of learning and professional development opportunities may be, inter alia:**

(i) Work-based

- Course team design and development workshops
- shadowing;
- delegation;
- coaching;
- mentoring;
- peer support review and learning
- role enlargement;
- active engagement in Committees, Working Groups, Projects;

- school, department, team Development Away Days;
- internal and external consultancy; and
- self-directed and online learning.

(ii) Internally facilitated by Staff Development and/or internal providers

A full list of available courses can be found at <http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?courses/all>
<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/>

(iii) Externally provided

- active membership of professional networks;
- attendance at a conference;
- secondment;
- external courses/programmes; and
- distance/online learning.

5. Study Leave

The University **guide** for staff with line manager approval regarding the study leave is as follows:

5.1 Exams and revision:

Leave for revision for examinations **may** be granted proportionate to the aggregated days of approved examination leave as follows:

<i>Examination Leave</i>	<i>Revision Leave</i>
1 day (or part thereof)	½ day
More than 1 day but not exceeding 2 days	1 day
More than 2 days but not exceeding 3 days	1½ days

Where examination leave in excess of three days is granted, revision leave must be granted pro rata.

Day release facilities or expenses will be granted only in exceptional cases to a member of staff on a stage of a course which he or she is required to re-sit.

A member of staff who withdraws from a course may be required to reimburse a proportion of the fees paid on his/her behalf.

Distance Learning

Completing Assessments that count toward final award ½ day per assessment

5.2 Unpaid leave of absence

Staff who wish to take unpaid leave to undertake personal and/or professional development will need to comply with the University's Flexible Working/Variation of Contract of Employment conditions. Further information is available at

http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/policies_and_procedures/

5.3 Appeals

The Line Manager will be required to formally record on the Application Form his/her reason for not approving the training request.

Any member of staff who wishes to appeal a decision regarding their access to Professional Development opportunities may do so using the Professional Development Appeals Procedure, available at

<http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php/?icpd>.

6. PD Policy Review

The Sub-Committee for Continuing Professional Development comprises representation from each of the staff constituencies within the University and is chaired by a Senior Academic.

6.1 This policy has been agreed by Academic Development and Enhancement Committee (ADEC) and Senate. The policy will be formally reviewed by the Sub-Committee for Continuing Professional Development every five years.

PD Policy reviewed by CPD Sub-Committee May to September 2013.

Committee () and approved by Senate on ()

Date of next scheduled review 2018.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE INITIAL AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF

Context

The University is committed to appointing well-qualified, high quality and performing staff to help achieve its objectives and to promote its mission. The University recognises the need to support and develop its staff in order for them to fully achieve their potential not only in the early stages of their careers but throughout their employment. This is articulated as the University value “Provide quality learning and development for students and staff” and the Corporate Plan (2011/12 – 2015/16) key supporting objectives *“To encourage all academic staff to undertake scholarly activity to support learning and teaching and enhancement of their subject”* and *“To ensure that staff engage on an on-going basis in appropriate career development and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities”* based on a broad definition of Continuing Professional Development as being *“any process or activity, planned or otherwise, that contributes to an increase in or the maintenance of knowledge, skills and personal qualities related to the person’s role.”*

This refers not only the more traditional forms of development such as briefing sessions, seminars, conferences and workshops, but also includes more progressive forms of development such as mentoring, work shadowing, individual advice sessions, peer review, secondments and self-directed learning and is applicable to staff at all stages of their careers.

The work based on national and institutional developments such as the:

- White paper 2011(for England) - Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32409/11-944-higher-education-students-at-heart-of-system.pdf
- Graduating to success: a higher education strategy for Northern Ireland
<http://www.delni.gov.uk/graduating-to-success-he-strategy-for-ni.pdf>
- UK Professional Standards Framework 2011 <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>
- Corporate Plan (<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/corporateplan>).
- Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18
http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/teaching_and_learning_strategy/
- Equal Opportunities Policy
(<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/secretary/policyimplementation/equality.html>)
- Professional Development Scheme <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/pds/>

The Ulster University, via CHERP, has recently gained HEA accreditation for a Professional Development Scheme (PD Scheme) that will enable Ulster staff to apply directly to an internal University panel that has devolved powers to make recognition decisions on the award of D1-D4. <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/pds/>

Following approval by Senate the University Framework for Continuing Professional Development was implemented for all staff, with a teaching and learning remit, appointed from 1st June 2004, updated June 2013.

(http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/index.php?higher_education_practice/cpd).

Purpose

This Code of Practice has been developed as a benchmark to establish good practice in the initial professional development and engagement with the Framework for Professional Development of all **new** staff and the involvement in continuing professional development of **existing** academic staff, recognising that the exact nature of the roles and responsibilities assigned to academic staff will vary and will reflect the prior experience of these staff. PD planning is defined as *“a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development”*.

1. Initial Professional Development

- 1.1. **Pre-Appointment** – the University requirements for and minimum entitlement to initial professional development via the Framework for Professional Development will be supplied to appointees, together with the particulars of that job, during the recruitment stages.
- 1.2. **Appointment** – appointees¹ will normally receive a letter of offer and a Statement of Terms and Conditions of employment from the Human Resources Department confirming their appointment. The letter of offer will endorse the normal expectation that all new academic appointees will fulfil the requirements of the framework for Professional Development i.e. attendance at Academic Induction and completion of accredited courses (http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/higher_education_practice). Staff promoted through the academic promotion route do not get a new contract of employment. They receive a letter of offer which confirms their change of grade.
- 1.3. **Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice (PgCHEP)** – It is a requirement that the appointee¹ will complete the Pg CHEP or equivalent during probation. Grounds for exemptions in relation to the framework for Professional Development will be established initially by the Head of School, in conjunction with guidance from Staff Development, based on Exemption Criteria. Formal ratification of a claim for exemption is conducted by the PGCHEP course committee, following which the member of staff and Head of School will receive confirmation of the approved exemption. (http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/higher_education_practice/pgchep)
- 1.4. **Post- Appointment** – appointees¹ may request exemption at any stage after they receive their letter of offer. It is their responsibility to provide, for their Head of School, any documentary evidence necessary to support their request.

¹ new member of staff or new to role

- 1.5. **Appointment of Mentor** – to support the appointee's initial professional development a mentor for all new appointments will be appointed, by the Head of School, prior to the member of staff taking up his/her post (http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/index.php?higher_education_practice/induction/).
- 1.6. **Induction and Initial Professional Development** – within the first week, new staff will be supported by their Heads of School to attend the soonest available academic induction sessions run by Staff Development and to fulfil the requirements of the framework for Professional Development. Local induction must be arranged to ensure new staff settle effectively into their roles. The appointee will establish, in conjunction with his/her Head of School, a programme of work duties and development activities in order to enhance his/her skills. Guidelines for local induction are provided at http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/index.php?higher_education_practice/induction/ and at http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?corporate_policies/induction
- 1.7. **Probation** – the appointee's probationary requirements will be identified from the time of appointment by his/her Head of School. The appointee will establish, in conjunction with the Head of School, a programme of work duties and development activities in order to enhance their skills and to meet their probationary requirements. Progress towards these will be monitored and reviewed annually in accordance with probation policy (http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/employee_relations/Probations/academic.html) Heads of School may access records of the appointee's completion of the requirements of the Framework for Professional Development on request from Staff Development.
- 1.8. **Peer Observation of Teaching** – during probation at least two different forms of teaching will be assessed annually by a senior colleague. Before completing probationary reports the Head of School will discuss teaching performance in terms of planning, implementation, structure and organisation and interaction with students (see Probationary Guidelines http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/employee_relations/Probations/academic.html). Some opportunities for Peer Observation will occur whilst undertaking the PgCHEP, further advice is available at: <http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?icpd>

2. Continuing Professional Development

Professional Development – All University staff are encouraged to reflect on, plan for and engage in a range of continuing professional development activities. Line managers are expected to monitor and plan for their staff's engagement in CPD. This includes a range of professional academic support and development activities.

2.1. Developmental Tools

- 2.1.1. **Centre for Higher Education Research and Practice (CHERP)** - all academic staff are invited to an extensive programme of events and activities designed to support enhancement in teaching, learning and assessment and scholarly practice. Further details are available at: <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/>
- 2.1.2. **Peer Supported Review** – all academic staff, once probation is signed off, are required to engage in a process of peer review of their teaching, learning and assessment practice on an annual basis. The aim of this process is to encourage continual reflection on practice and the enhancement of the student experience. Further details are available at: http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/peer_supported_review/
- 2.1.3. **Developmental Appraisal Review**, undertaken at least once every two years, provides an opportunity for the individual member of staff to meet their Line Manager/Appraiser to discuss and agree:
- their shared reviews of how the individual member of staff has performed in relation to their agreed key work objectives.
 - the individual member of staff's future key work objectives
 - what support, if any, the individual member of staff needs to achieve his/her future key work objectives
 - the individual member of staff's short and long term developmental objectives and how these objectives may be met.
- 2.1.4. **Researcher CPD Framework** – was developed by the Researcher CPD Working Group and approved by the Research and Innovation Committee in March 2012 and in line with the concordant requirement to provide “a CPD Framework with internal and external developmental opportunities to develop research excellence and transferable professional skills of researchers to increase career options and enhance employability”. The Ulster University Researcher CPD Framework may be accessed at: http://www.ulster.ac.uk/staffdev/Research_Training/docs/ResearcherCPDFramework.pdf

2.2. **Recognition Opportunities** – a number of opportunities exist for staff involved in teaching and learning to apply for recognition of their achievement and the impact that they have had on the student learning experience. These include:

- 2.2.1. **CHERP Membership** - The University recognises the valuable contributions to teaching and learning made by an increasingly diverse range of staff. The vitality of this community, committed to the enhancement of the student learning experience and their own higher education practice, has long been evident through the engagement in teaching and learning initiatives and events. In progressing its work, CHERP wishes to recognise and acknowledge the professionalism of those staff who demonstrate commitment to the delivery of a high

quality student experience. CHERP supports and facilitates the development and expansion of this community of practice, through the appointment of Associates and Fellows.

<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/membership.html>

- 2.2.2. **Professional Development Scheme (PD Scheme)** - The UK Higher Education sector has recently re-defined its professional standards framework (PSF) for teaching and learning. The PSF enables staff to benchmark their professional practice and experiences against sector wide standards and to use these to guide and inform their professional development (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>). With the development of the UK PSF, there is a need for the University to align practices to it. More recently, Senate has agreed that the achievement of Descriptor 2 via the Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice (PgCHEP) or Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA experienced route) should be a probationary requirement and also will become a requirement for some academic promotions. In addition, information on staff teaching qualifications and/or recognitions is publicly available through HESA. The Ulster University has recently gained HEA accreditation for a Professional Development Scheme (PD Scheme <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/pds/>) that will enable Ulster staff to apply directly to an internal University panel that has devolved powers to make recognition decisions on the award of D1-D4.

Ulster staff are now able to draw on both certificated and experiential learning to evidence a case for recognition against all categories of fellowship:

Descriptor 1: Associate Fellow of the Academy (AFHEA)

Descriptor 2: Fellow of the Academy (FHEA)

Descriptor 3: Senior Fellow of the Academy (SFHEA)

Descriptor 4: Principal Fellow of the Academy (PFHEA)

- 2.2.3. **Distinguished Teaching and Learning Support Awards** - The University recognises and celebrates excellence in teaching and the facilitation and support of learning through its Distinguished Teaching and Learning Support Fellowship awards scheme. Recipients of awards will be staff who have made a difference to the student learning experience. The ways in which this is achieved may be many and varied, including direct engagement with students through programme delivery, involvement in the design of programmes, teaching methods or forms of assessment, commitment to the support of learners, or leadership of/participation in innovative enhancement projects. Full details on the awards and how to apply is available at:

http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/internal_award_scheme.html

2.3. Other CPD Opportunities

- 2.3.1. **Access** to internal and external courses/ events in terms of time and financial fees support will be decided by line managers using the principles outlined in the PD Policy.
- 2.3.2. **Leave of Absences** – staff who wish to take unpaid leave to undertake personal and/or professional development will need to comply with the University's Flexible Working Policy. Further information is available at <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/policies and procedures/>
- 2.3.3. **Study Leave** - may be granted, related to exam activities, with line manager approval for degrees/awards. A member of staff who withdraws from a course may be required to reimburse a proportion of the fees paid on his/her behalf.
- 2.3.4. **Appeals** – Any member of staff who wishes to appeal a decision regarding their access to Professional Development opportunities may do so using the Professional Development Appeals Procedure, available at <http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/icpd>.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Appointee¹

The appointee¹ is expected to:

- meet the requirements of the framework for Professional Development as stated in his/her letter of appointment.
- seek support and guidance from his/her mentor, Induction Colleague, the Head of School, Staff development and other colleagues as required.
- reflect on, plan for and engage in other appropriate professional development activities.
- access online SD resources for induction support (<http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/>) for personal and organisation development, policies and procedures.

3.2. Existing Staff

Existing staff are expected to:

- reflect on, plan for and engage in a range of continuing professional development activities.
- engage with developmental tools as required e.g. CHERP, DAR, Peer Support Review (PSR), and PD Scheme.

3.3. Human Resources

The Human Resources Department will:

- Co-ordinate the appointment procedure ensuring that necessary documentation is issued to the new appointee¹ and relevant documentation is returned to the University.
- confirm appointee¹ and appointment start date to the line manager once signed Statement of Terms and Conditions has been received.
- provide new appointees¹ to the University with details of the Welcome and Orientation Programme.
- forward to Staff Development a monthly report detailing the names of new appointees¹
- Co-ordinate the probation process ensuring the relevant forms are issued and returned in accordance with the policy.

3.4. Heads of School or their delegate will:

- establish, if appropriate, any exemptions to the appointee's requirements in relation to the framework for Professional Development utilising the criteria for exemption to support decisions, in conjunction with guidance from Staff Development.
(http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/higher_education_practice/pgchep)
- agree and appoint an Induction Colleague to act as an initial point of contact for the appointee¹, and communicate this information to the appointed Induction Colleague.
- agree and appoint prior to his/her start date, an appropriate mentor to provide developmental support for the appointee throughout his/her probationary period, and communicate this information to both mentor and mentee in writing.
- ensure that appropriate arrangements have been made for the appointee's local induction, to coordinate, communicate and sign-off the Induction Checklist for local, institutional and role specific induction.
- ensure appropriate arrangements have been made regarding office accommodation and access to IT and other appropriate resources prior to the appointee's start date.
- meet with the appointee¹ on or soon after his/her start date to determine workload, probationary arrangements and expectations.
- support and facilitate the appointee's ability to attend and fulfil the requirements of the framework for Professional Development.
- meet regularly with appointees¹ to monitor and review their progress towards probationary targets and to determine further developmental needs.
- Liaise with Staff Development to determine and plan development activities for the next academic year addressing staff, School, Faculty and Institutional priorities.
- facilitate appraisal in accordance with University policy.
- ensure staff employed on either a temporary or fixed term contract have access to appropriate developmental opportunities e.g. First Steps to Teaching, or stand-alone modules from the PgCHEP.

3.5. Staff Development

Staff Development will:

- communicate details of induction courses to all new appointees¹ (<http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/>).
- make available induction courses regularly throughout each academic year.
- maintain a record of attendance at these courses.
- manage and deliver Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice (PgCHEP) course and modules.
- make available, on request, records of completion of PgCHEP modules in conjunction with the Course Director of the PgCHEP.
- provide a range of professional support and development opportunities for all staff
- collaborate with the Centre for Higher Education Research Practice to provide PD opportunities and recognition opportunities via the Ulster PD Scheme.
- liaise with Heads of Schools to determine and plan development activities for the next academic year, in line with Faculty strategic priorities.

3.6. Induction Colleague

The Induction Colleague is expected to provide an initial point of informal contact and support for the appointee¹ during the appointee's early career experience.

3.7. Mentor

The mentor is expected to provide developmental support to his/her mentee throughout the probationary period in accordance with the University's Guidance on Mentoring in Higher Education for Academic Staff.

http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/index.php?higher_education_practice/induction/)

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE INITIAL AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS SUPPORT STAFF

Context

The University is committed to appointing well-qualified, high quality and performing staff to help achieve its objectives and to promote its mission. The University recognises the need to support and develop its staff in order for them to fully achieve their potential not only in the early stages of their careers but throughout their employment. This is articulated as the University value *“Provide quality learning and development for students and staff”* and the Corporate Plan (2011/12 – 2015/16) key supporting objectives *“To encourage all academic staff to undertake scholarly activity to support learning and teaching and enhancement of their subject”* and *“To ensure that staff engage on an on-going basis in appropriate career development and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities”* based on a broad definition of Continuing Professional Development as being any process or activity, planned or otherwise, that contributes to an increase in or the maintenance of knowledge, skills and personal qualities related to the person’s role.

This refers not only the more traditional forms of development such as briefing sessions, seminars, conferences and workshops, but also includes more progressive forms of development such as mentoring, work shadowing, individual advice sessions, peer review, secondments and self-directed learning and is applicable to staff at all stages of their careers.

Purpose

This Code of Practice has been developed as a practical guide to support the implementation of the University’s Professional Development (PD) Policy for Business Support staff.

1. Initial Professional Development

- 1.1. **Appointment** – appointees¹ will receive a letter of offer and a Statement of Terms and Conditions of employment from the Human Resources Department confirming their appointment.
- 1.2. **Induction and Initial Professional Development** – new staff will be supported by their Line Managers to access the online Welcome and Orientation Programme within the first week of employment.
- 1.3. **Local Induction** will be arranged within the first week of the new staff member commencing their employment/new role to ensure they settle in effectively. It will be the responsibility of the appointee’s Line Manager to ensure the Local Induction will be provided by an appropriate key staff member within the appointee’s area of work.

An Induction Colleague i.e., an experienced/competent team member will be appointed as a supportive first point of contact for the new appointee¹

Further information and guidance on induction is available at
http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?corporate_policies/induction.

- 1.4. **Probation** – the probationary period for Grades 1-5 normally covers a period of six working months from the date of appointment. For grades 6 and above, the probationary period is extended to 1 year from the date of appointment. The appointee's probationary requirements will be identified from the time of appointment by his/her Line Manager. The appointee¹ will establish, in conjunction with his/her Line Manager, a Personal Development Plan i.e., key work objectives and professional development activities to meet their probationary requirements. Progress towards the initial key work/developmental objectives will be monitored and reviewed regularly in accordance with probation policy. Guidance notes for the management of probationary periods are available at:
http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/policies_and_procedures/

2. Continuing Professional Development

Professional Development – All University staff are encouraged to reflect on, plan for and engage in a range of appropriate Continuing Professional Development activities.

Individual and/or Team Developmental Appraisal Review undertaken at least once every two years, provides an opportunity for the individual member of staff or teams of staff to meet their Line Manager/Appraiser to discuss and agree:

- future key work objectives aligned to their agreed key responsibilities
- what support, if any, is required to achieve the future key work objectives
- short and long term developmental objectives and how these objectives may be met
- how he/she/the team have performed in relation to their agreed key work objectives

Appraisal forms, policy and guidelines are available at
<http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?icpd>

2.1. Professional Development Opportunities

Access to internal and external Professional Development opportunities in terms of time and financial support will be decided by the Line Manager using the principles below, as outlined in the Professional Development Policy:

Essential where the professional development activity is:

- a requirement of legislation;
- a condition of employment; or
- compulsory for a specific role.

Desirable where:

- the development activity is considered a relevant and appropriate priority linked to achieving the work, aims and objectives of the University, department and/or individual career development; and
- the activity enables:
 - Professional Enhancement (including expert knowledge, practice based development, management and leadership development); and
 - Personal Effectiveness
- there are sufficient resources to facilitate the development activity including the provision of cover to ensure service delivery is not compromised.

A Business Support CPD Framework has been developed to encourage staff to take responsibility for their own professional and career development and to help identify appropriate professional development activities on an individual basis. It provides a structure to help staff consider, plan and implement their personal development in the following developmental areas:

- Role specific
- Institutional
- Core skills
- Leadership & management
- Career planning

Further information on this framework, including Personal Development Planning guidance, and relevant developmental opportunities, is available on the Staff Development website at:

http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/business_support_staff_development_opportunities

Professional Development opportunities are provided by Staff Development. An application form for internal or external Professional Development opportunities is available at <http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php>. Support for external Professional Development must be approved and resourced by the individual's line manager based on the completion of a Prior Approval at: http://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/regulations/exp_policy.pdf#page=1?x=timestamp.amp

Where managerial approval is given to a member of staff to pursue an Ulster University award such as a degree, a letter of approval is usually required to inform the Finance Department that the individual is a member of staff supported in their studies. This is available at http://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/fees/staff_fee_exemption.pdf

3. Other CPD Opportunities

Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Appointee¹ is encouraged to:

- seek support and guidance from his/her Line Manager, the Induction Colleague, Staff Development and other colleagues as required.
- reflect on, plan for and engage in appropriate Professional Development activities.

3.2. Existing Staff are encouraged to:

- reflect on, plan for and engage in a range of appropriate Professional Development activities.
- engage with developmental processes as required e.g. Developmental Appraisal Review.

3.3. The Human Resource Department will:

- co-ordinate the appointment procedure ensuring that necessary documentation is issued to the new appointee¹ and relevant documentation is returned to the University
- confirm appointee¹ and appointment start date to the Line Manager once signed Statement of Terms and Conditions has been received
- provide the new appointee¹ to the University with details of the online Welcome and Orientation Programme arrangements
- forward to Staff Development a monthly report detailing the names of new appointee's¹
- co-ordinate the probation process ensuring the relevant forms are issued and returned in accordance with the Probation Policy.

3.4. Line Manager or their delegate will:

- agree and appoint an Induction Colleague to act as an initial point of contact for the appointee¹, and communicate this information to the appointed Induction Colleague.
- ensure appropriate arrangements have been made regarding work location/accommodation including access to IT and other appropriate resources prior to the appointee's¹ start date
- ensure that appropriate arrangements have been made for the appointee's Local Induction
- meet with the appointee¹ on or soon after his/her start date to agree their workload and probationary arrangements
- support and facilitate the appointee's role related development needs
- meet regularly with appointee's¹ to monitor and review their progress towards probationary targets and to determine further developmental needs
- co-ordinate, communicate and sign off the Induction checklist
- facilitate Developmental Appraisal Review with all staff members in accordance with University Policy
- ensure staff employed on either a temporary or fixed term contract have access to appropriate Professional Developmental opportunities

3.5. Staff Development will:

- communicate details of online Welcome and Orientation Programme to all new appointees¹ (also available at: <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/staffdev/>)
- update Welcome and Orientation Programme
- maintain and report on Welcome and Orientation Programme attendance
- provide a range of appropriate Professional Development opportunities for staff (see http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/business_support_staff_development_opportunities)
- provide advice & guidance to line managers and staff to support the implementation of the University's Professional Development Policy.

3.6. The Induction Colleague is expected to:

- provide an initial point of informal contact/support for the appointee¹, to help and support a new member of staff to settle into the job as easily and rapidly as possible (http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?corporate_policies/induction)

¹ new member of staff or new to role