

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to outline the framework within which the training and development of staff operates and the roles and responsibilities for providing training.

1.1.1 The policy shall apply to all SCRA staff. It relates to one of SCRA's key goals as set out in the Corporate Plan:

“maintain and develop the performance of our staff”.

1.1.2 Training and development shall be based on several key principles:

- the key strength of SCRA lies in its staff. The priority given to developing the individual within the job is premium.
- training and development is based on needs and does not reflect a list of wants. It will be closely correlated with SCRA's goals and objectives and will be capable of being evaluated against these.
- training and development will be flexible, reflecting organisational change.
- training and development will reflect current models of good practice.

1.2 Nature and Scope

1.2.1 Relevance

Training and development is a continuous process whereby individuals are provided with the relevant knowledge and skills which will:

- develop them within their job role
- contribute towards meeting organisational objectives.

The training and development policy will form part of the manual of human resources policies and procedures.

1.2.2 Training Opportunities

SCRA will promote and endorse a wide range of training opportunities including short course attendance, regular briefings, effective supervision, coaching and post-entry qualifications where appropriate.

1.2.3 Essential/Non-Essential Training

From time to time SCRA will require individuals to attend set courses/training days as part of professional and/or organisational development. Regions, authority teams and individual teams are likely to have their own priorities. The following list is likely to guide the setting of these:

- Induction
- Skills training
- Continual professional development
- Management training
- Personal development
- Corporate policies and initiatives
- Statutory requirements
- Organisational change
- Re-training

- Where staff are required to undertake mandatory training, SCRA will pay additional associated carers costs over and above those incurred in the normal working day i.e. 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m..
- Reporter Managers have discretion to award additional associated carers costs over and above those incurred in the normal working day for non-mandatory training where geographical or other factors are relevant for staff.
- Mandatory training is training and development which is required to effectively carry out the essential components of the job and which is directed by management. This would include training within the Corporate Training Plan.

1.3 Responsibility for the Policy

1.3.1 Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources will co-ordinate the implementation of the policy and distribution of the budget in accordance with assessed needs and report to the Core Management Group and the Board annually on the effectiveness of the policy's operation.

1.3.2 Training & Development Function

The training and development function within SCRA will have a corporate responsibility for directing the training strategy and for producing an annual corporate training plan.

1.3.3 Human Resources Team

The Human Resources Team will provide internal consultancy on a wide range of issues. This will include:

- providing a range of in-house courses where appropriate.
- contracting external expertise in order to deliver specific training needs.
- carrying out training needs analysis by consulting managers and staff on an ongoing basis.
- assisting staff by advising them on a wide range of training issues.
- providing advice to individuals on development opportunities, post-entry qualifications and professional courses.

1.3.4 Line Managers

Ownership of the policy at an operational level rests with line managers who have the responsibility for developing the skills and abilities of staff on key corporate and regional objectives. This will be achieved through:

- Inducting new staff.
- Providing regular management and briefings.
- Keeping staff up-to-date with changes and new techniques.
- Carrying out workplace training.
- Selecting staff to attend training courses and conducting pre and post course evaluation.
- Drawing up personal development plans as part of a performance management process.

1.3.5 All staff have an important part to play in training and in particular to:

- discuss with management the training they require
- take part in various training activities
- share information, skills and knowledge with colleagues

1.4 Resources

Within budgetary and other resource implications, SCRA will attempt to fulfil the training demands outlined in the policy.

Corporate and devolved regional budgets will be reviewed annually.

1.5 Implementation and Review

An annual report shall be submitted to the Corporate Management Group and the Board in order to help review the effectiveness of training provided.

1.6 Equal Opportunities

The policy will be implemented in accordance with SCRA's Equal Opportunities Policy.

1.7 Further Information

Any queries regarding the operation of the policy shall be forwarded to the Training Manager in the first instance or alternatively the Director of Human Resources.

2. Post-Entry Qualifications

2.1 Approved Courses

For assistance to be received, a course must:

- Be relevant to the work of the post-holder.
- Be the recognised, necessary qualification for that area of work or
- The qualification will improve the employee's job performance or will equip him/her to perform anticipated future duties.

If necessary advice can be obtained from the Training Manager.

2.2 Steps Towards Approval (Employee)

- Find out more about the course, seeking advice if necessary.
- Check that you meet the course entry requirements.
- Arrange to discuss the course with your immediate line manager.

2.3 Steps Towards Approval (Manager)

- Check the relevance of the course and whether it will improve the employee's future performance or equip him/her to perform future duties.
- Investigate attendance arrangements in order to anticipate any cover issues.
- Ensure sufficient funds are available within current budgets.
- If the application has your support forward it to the appropriate manager for authorisation (see Appendix A).
- Make provision for your monitoring and review of the employee's performance in his/her studies.

2.4 Fees and Allowances

Up to full reimbursement of fees and release to study is allowed where the course is approved by the relevant manager.

2.4.1 Travel Costs

Travel expenses incurred as a result of attendance on an approved course will be reimbursed at the appropriate rates under the terms and conditions outlined in SCRA's Allowances Policy. Reimbursement may also be claimed for approved journeys that are required as part of the course including residential weekends, visits etc. Confirmation of such journeys will be required.

2.4.2 Subsistence Allowances

Subsistence Allowances may be claimed in accordance with SCRA's policy on 'Allowances'.

2.5 Attendance, Leave and Absence

Attendance at a course on full pay is equivalent to attendance at work, regardless of the hours spent at college. Employees must notify both the college and their line manager when absent from studies due to sickness. Notification and/or certification should be made in accordance with SCRA's absence procedures. All employees shall be granted leave with pay to sit approved examinations or to present project/assessed work.

One day's revision leave is allowed for each examination paper to be taken, up to a maximum of three days per annum for each professional qualification. This should be taken prior to examination.

For a second or subsequent attempt at the same stage of the particular qualification the reimbursement of course fees and release to study is subject to individual circumstances at the discretion of the manager who authorised the original request. The students attendance record, the progress they have made during the course and a recommendation from the course Tutor may be required by the relevant manager.

SCRA may, upon request by the student, issue the student with a letter authorising the college/educational establishment to invoice SCRA direct in respect to payment of course fees. Full reimbursement will be met for course registration, examination fees and student membership fees (of a relevant body if this is required as a condition of entry to the examination).

2.6 Expenses and Allowances

Textbooks which are a mandatory requirement of the course may be claimed. Evidence may be required of the mandatory requirement. Reimbursement of 100% cost of textbooks up to a maximum of £50 each year will be made where the textbooks are listed on an approved book list and are essential to the particular course (this sum includes the mandatory purchase). Receipts must be provided of the items purchased before reimbursement of text book purchase(s). Books remain the property of the student after purchase. Requests for purchase of other associated course materials will be considered where these are essential for the course.

Authorisation is required from the relevant budget holding manager before payment is made.

2.7 Conditions of Assistance

Where training expenses are approved to enable staff to acquire a recognised qualification it is a condition of the assistance that employees will be required to sign an undertaking (Appendix B) to repay up to 100% assistance if they:

- Leave the service.
- Without good reason fail to sit on examination within a reasonable period or fail to show satisfactory progress on a course, or discontinue the course.

The amount of repayment is as follows:

- During the period of study: 100%
- Up to 1 year's continuous service with SCRA since completing the qualification/stage of the qualification : 100%
- More than 1 year and up to 18 months continuous service with SCRA since completing the qualification/stage of the qualification: 80%

- More than 18 months and up to 2 years continuous service with SCRA since completing the qualification/stage of the qualification: 25%

3. Professional Subscriptions

3.1 Introduction

SCRA recognises that particular postholders are required to hold membership of professional bodies as an essential requirement of their post.

Where this is the case, SCRA will make appropriate payments in order to maintain membership.

3.2 Eligibility for Payment

3.2.1 The payment of professional subscriptions shall be met by SCRA on an annual basis for those employees required to hold membership of a professional body or equivalent benchmark qualification as an essential requirement of the post . (Appendix C lists the relevant posts).

NB Employees who currently have professional subscriptions paid by SCRA, will continue to do so in 1997/98 on a personal protection basis.

For 1998/99 for Law Society subscriptions only a further payment will be made at the lowest Law Society rate (£40 approximately) on behalf of staff who previously had payments made by Regional Councils.

3.3 Principles of Operation

The policy ensures several important principles are maintained:

3.3.1 The consistency and equality of practice across the service.

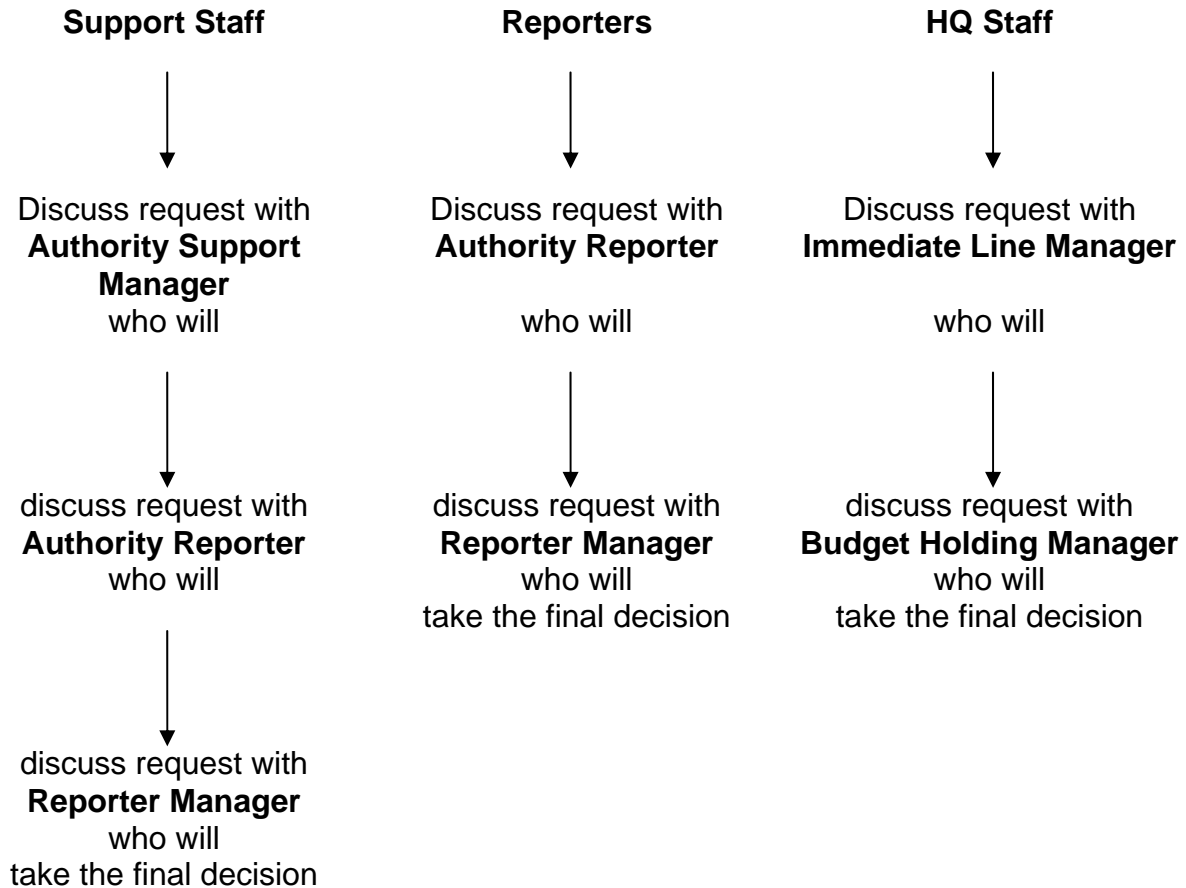
3.3.2 The interests of operational effectiveness across the service.

4. Responsibility

The policy shall be monitored by the Director of Human Resources. Any doubt in respect to eligibility for payment shall be referred to the Director of Human Resources.

Manager's Lines of Approval for Post-Entry Qualifications

Steps Towards Approval as Defined in 2.3 of the Policy



* In the case of HQ Staff there will be some occasions where the Line Manager will also be the Budget Holding Manager.

**EXTERNAL EDUCATION
 COURSE BOOKING FORM**

APPENDIX B

Name:

Post Held:

Why is this external education course required?

How will it help you perform existing or future duties?

Does it link with your personal development plan as discussed at your Supervision / Appraisal meetings?

Name of Course:

Provider of Course:

Estimated start date:

Place of study:

Method of Study:
 (e.g. day release, evening class, distance learning)

Time involved:

Duration of course:

		Cost
Course registration fees (over the duration of course)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
Examination fees (over the duration of course)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
Study/examination time required		
Cost Projections for future years:		
Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)

Declaration by Employee

I agree to abide by the conditions of SCRA's Training & Development Policy. I understand that I will be liable to refund 100% of the financial assistance received in the event of the following:

- Failure to complete a course satisfactorily because of irregular attendance or failure to complete course work
- Withdrawal from the course without reasonable cause, or
- Leaving SCRA employment prior to completing the course or leaving SCRA employment with less than one year's continuous service since completing the qualification/stage of the qualification.

In the event of my leaving SCRA employment before the end of the two year period following completion of the course, I understand that I will be liable to refund a proportion of the financial assistance as detailed in SCRA's Training & Development Policy.

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____

I confirm that I support attendance on this further education course for the following reasons:

Signature of Line Manager: : _____ Date: _____

Authorised by Learning
& Development Manager: _____ Date: _____

Once completed please pass to the Learning & Development Manager.

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APPENDIX C

UNCLASSIFIED

Relevant posts as defined in Para. 3.2.1.(i) of the Policy:

POST TITLE	PROFESSIONAL BODY
Director of Human Resources	IPD (Institute of Personnel & Development)
Finance Manager	CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants)
IS Manager	BCS (British Computer Society)

Newly appointed Reporters who are practicing solicitors only in their first year of employment with SCRA. This meets the legal requirement to Reporters undertaking court work (Conduct of Proceedings before the Sheriff) (Scotland) Regulations 1997. The cost of a Law Society Practising Certificate will be paid for such individuals.

Those who are being sponsored by SCRA to undertake a professional qualification. If membership of a professional body is contingent to enrolment SCRA will pay subscriptions throughout the duration of study.