

EVALUATION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Staff development is an important part of assisting performance improvement at organisational, faculty/central department, unit and individual levels. It is therefore important that the transfer of learning into the workplace is assessed through a process of review and evaluation so that its success or otherwise can be established and so that we can demonstrate the contribution learning makes towards overall organisational success.
- 1.2 Evaluation is the process of finding out how the development or training process has affected the individual, team and the organisation.
- 1.3 The benefits of evaluating training and development are to:
 - Promote business efficiency by linking efforts to train and develop staff to operational priorities, goals and targets.
 - Identify cost effective and valuable training events or programmes, leading to better focused learning and development.
 - Ensure the transfer of learning into the workplace.
 - Use and reinforce techniques learned to help improve quality and customer service within the organisation.
 - Help define future development objectives.

2. Stages of Evaluation

- 2.1 There are four key stages at which training and development should be evaluated:

Reaction: At this stage evaluation provides information on the attitudes and opinions of participants to the learning they have undertaken typically via evaluation forms or comment sheets. It provides useful information to allow assist with modifying the curriculum/training programme. *What did the participant think about the development activity?*

Learning attained: Evaluation at this stage looks at the extent to which learning objectives have been achieved. Evaluation of learning can take place during the activity using interactive sessions, tests and practical application and after the activity by

re-testing knowledge and skills and comparing them with pre-training results, observing the learner's new knowledge and skills in context. *Did the participant learn what was intended? Were the learning objectives met?*

Performance: Evaluation at this stage looks at the impact of a learning experience on individual/team performance at work. Key to this level of evaluation is the need to have agreed clear learning objectives prior to the learning experience so that when evaluation takes place there are measures to use. *Did the learning transfer to the job? How has the development activity improved individual performance, for example specialist knowledge or professional approach?*

Organisational Impact: At this level evaluation assesses the impact of learning on organisational effectiveness, and whether or not it is cost effective in organisational terms. *How has this development activity affected the organisation, faculty, central department or unit in terms of improved performance – for example, better results, enhanced quality or standards, financial stability, fewer complaints, increased morale, professional image?*

3. Responsibility for evaluation

- 3.1 Responsibility for evaluation of staff development rests at the following levels:

Individual: The University's Staff Development Application Form and Record (Appendix 1) requires individuals to identify their objectives linked to strategic development and training priorities and job role for the requested development activity.

A discussion between the individual and their manager after the development activity has taken place should enable an assessment of whether the learning objectives were met. Ongoing discussions between the manager and individual will allow for an assessment of whether the individual has been able to transfer the learning to the job after a reasonable timescale.

Manager: The manager is responsible for ensuring that staff have identified learning objectives for any development activity they plan to undertake and to agree on the methods to be used to evaluate learning (additional guidance for managers is set out in Appendix 2). The manager should have a discussion with the member of staff after the development activity has taken place to discuss the learning and to identify ways in which the application of the learning to the job can be assessed. The

manager should ensure that training undertaken during the year is reviewed and evaluated as part of the annual Professional Development Review (PDR).

Faculties/Central Departments: The Staff Development Plan template requires Faculties and Central Departments to annually set out their planned staff development activities and an explanation of how they will be evaluated. Deans and Directors should assess their entire staff development efforts by reviewing progress against their plan. It is suggested that for local staff development activities that are of significant size or scope the evaluation exercise should involve assessing reaction, learning attained, performance and organisational impact. This level of evaluation will be helpful in evaluating the impact of the development activity on the achievement of business goals and objectives. Evaluation can be conducted in a number of ways e.g. feedback forms completed by participants, focus groups, face-to-face interviews or questionnaire based surveys. Further guidance on how to conduct such an evaluation can be provided by Organisation Development and Training (ODT).

Central Training Providers: All training courses delivered by central training providers are assessed by the University end of course review form. At this level evaluation provides information on the attitudes of a participant to learning but does not measure how much they have actually learned. In addition central training providers will use appropriate tests and exercises to measure the learning of participants during the development or training activity.

Organisation Development and Training (ODT): ODT will carry out follow up evaluation of a sample of centrally delivered courses/programmes 3-6 months after the event to measure how learning has been applied in the workplace. In addition, ODT will carry out organisational impact evaluation exercises on selected training interventions or programmes to assess the impact of learning on organisational effectiveness and whether or not it is cost-effective in organisational terms.

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HEAD OF ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Appendix 1

Staff Development Application Form and Record

Section One – Application Form *(to be completed **before** activity takes place)*

Personal Details		Name	
Job Title		Phone	Email
Department/School		Site/Bldg	
Employee Number (from payslip/PC user name)			
Activity Title and brief description of proposed staff development e.g. training course, development programme, conference, exhibition, seminar etc. including the date, duration and name of the training provider			
Name of Event		Date	Duration
Description			
Why should this staff development be undertaken <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>			
Statutory requirement		Mandatory	
University Staff Development priority		Local Staff Development priority	
Other			
How was this development need identified? <i>(please circle)</i>			
PDR	Induction	Other	
What are the specific objectives or desired outcomes you wish to achieve from this activity and how will you apply the learning?			

Costs *Please set out the known/anticipated costs for the development activity*

	£
Fees/attendance charge/administrative costs	
Travel & subsistence costs	
Total	

For an internally delivered event please set out below any additional requirements to support your participation as this form will also act as the booking form:

Applicant's signature
Request approved/not approved <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> <i>If not approved, reasons for non-approval:</i>
Staff Cover arrangement <i>(if appropriate)</i>
Line Manager's Name Signature
Request endorsed/not endorsed by budget holder <i>(where different to Line manager)</i>
Budget Code:
Budget holder counter-signature <i>(where appropriate)</i>
Name Signature

Staff Development Application Form and Record

Section Two - Post-development Evaluation *(to be completed after the activity has taken place, between 1-3 months after event)*

Personal Details	Name	
Job Title		
Department/School	Site/Bldg	
Contact Details	Phone	Email
Activity	Title of activity as given in Section 1 – Application Form and Record	
Did the activity meet your identified development objectives?	<i>(delete as appropriate)</i> Exceeded/ Fully / Partially / Not at all	
<i>Please give details</i>		
How have you applied what you have learnt? – give specific examples		
What impact/benefit has the development activity had on:		
a.) <i>Your own skills, knowledge and professional capacity</i> b.) <i>The team that you work in</i> c.) <i>The departments objectives</i>		
What additional support or opportunities (if any) do you need from your line manager/others to help you to further implement what you have learned?		
Date of learning review discussion with Line Manager:		

It is best practice to keep a log of this and other reflections in a CPD (continuing professional development) portfolio. For more information about this, go to:
<http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/devandtrain/cpd/>