Staff Learning and Development Policy

1. Policy Overview

The main aim of this policy is to provide managers and staff with a framework that supports and encourages their development in line with the delivery of the College's objectives. In this context, staff development applies to full time and part-time staff, temporary and permanent, and consists of anyone or all the following:

- Induction.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Performance-related Development.
- Exit Interviews.

Development activities that have no direct relevance to the individual's role nor the College's core objectives are not within the remit of this policy.

2. Policy Statement

Staff learning and development ("development") refers to the policies, practices, and procedures used to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of staff to improve their confidence, competence, and effectiveness. This policy will play a critical role in building the capability of the College's academic offerings. Staff development approaches are tailored to the nature of the College, i.e., an international education company for multicultural students in line with QQI requirements[1], as follows

- Offer opportunities for and promote the professional development of teaching staff.
- Encourage scholarly activity, as appropriate, to strengthen the link between education, teaching and research.

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[1] Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016), section 4.3

- Encourage activity to strengthen the links between education, teaching, research, and other developments within fields.
- Encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.
- Providers shall ensure that staff are provided with training and support regarding intercultural competence to facilitate appropriate and effective delivery of services to international learners.[2]

The overall College approach to the development of its staff is guided by the following commitments:

- The College is committed to providing staff with development opportunities backed by sufficient budgets for same to ensure that staff can contribute fully to the achievement of their own and the College's development aims.
- The Executive Management Team (EMT) members and department managers ('Line Mangers') are provided with the skills, knowledge, and competencies they need to work in partnership with their staff to support their continuous development.
- All staff – permanent, contract, temporary, and part-time - have equitable access to staff development opportunities, appropriate to their role and aligned to their objectives.
- All internal developmental activities will support the need to heighten awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues. Where relevant, this will be reflected in the design, content, and delivery of each activity.
- The College is subject to several statutory regulations – examples include health and safety, employment law, child protection etc. - and it must ensure that staff are trained to levels appropriate to their roles to comply with such legislative requirements. Participation in certain staff development activities will, therefore, be mandatory.
- All proposed staff development activity must be approved in advance by the Academic Director for academic staff and the CEO for non-academic staff who will approve the activity and the budget, the latter against pre-assigned staff development budgets.

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[2] Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015), section 3.4.3

- Line Managers are expected to encourage all staff to partake in internal and external staff development opportunities relevant to their identified development needs.
- Staff must take responsibility for their development. In addition to undertaking mandatory and relevant training, they are expected to avail of the development opportunities provided to enable them to keep their skills updated, to respond flexibly to changing College learning approaches and needs, and to actively partake in development opportunities as relevant to their role and the learning communities they are encouraged to be members of. This includes but is not limited to development concerning the use of technology in blended learning contexts[3].

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Academic and support staff are those that will benefit most from this policy. While the policy owner is our HR, DPO and People Officer ("People Officer") in the context of ensuring that the College implements the correct policies in the right way both for the College and to satisfy QQI requirements, the critical roles in the implementation of this policy are Line Managers. It is these leaders who will determine the satisfaction levels of staff that in turn, when positive, will improve the satisfaction levels of students. It is important to College senior management that staff are treated well, are valued, and are given every opportunity to improve their working lives while working at the College.

The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that policies are developed and maintained, that they remain fit for purpose, that they remain in compliance with QQI guidelines, that they are updated as per agreed schedules, and that they are being implemented as intended. In the latter context, the Academic Director will inspect a sample of policies each year to check for the correct implementation and bring the findings to AC as part of the annual QA/QQI review and reporting process.

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[3] Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes, section 3.1.3

4. Policy

Identifying Needs

Staff development needs are identified in several ways with responsibilities specific to the respective roles described below.

- Line Managers are expected to discuss staff development needs with each of their staff at least annually as part of the staff performance management process…see UPRO003 UniHaven Performance Management Procedure Rev 1.

- The needs of new staff should be identified within one week of taking up their role subject to the probation clause in their employment contract.

- The needs of staff transferring to a new role within the College should be discussed with them within four weeks of them taking up the new position.

- Needs are identified by departments during the annual College review cycle.

- Needs are identified from Line Manager observations and requests.

- Needs are identified from staff requests from committee/team membership and normal working activities. Needs may be identified throughout the year and the College planning processes will retain flexibility for agreement of additional development needs as they become necessary.

- Staff development needs may emanate from Programme Board reviews.

Person Officer

People Officer

The People Officer is responsible for:

- Effective staff development provision, from clarifying the need, to design and selecting methods, through to the delivery and evaluation of interventions.

- Providing all Line Managers and those involved in the identification and prioritisation of staff development activities with the relevant support.

- Providing an advisory service to Line Managers and staff on external developments within the staff development field.

- Offering guidance on the external provision of staff development interventions.

- Providing the mechanisms to ensure accurate training records are maintained.
- Evaluating staff development activities to assure and enhance their quality.
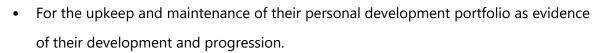
Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that individuals have the opportunity at regular intervals, to discuss their development needs and identifying appropriate development opportunities.
- Giving staff constructive, honest, and timely feedback on their performance in line with UPRO003 UniHaven Performance Management Procedure Rev 1.
- Identifying individual and team development needs that take account of both the college goals and the aspirations of individuals.
- Establishing priorities taking account of individual and College priorities and any change to priorities, and making appropriate provision to meet them within the resources available.
- Where appropriate, approving attendance at relevant staff development activities and making appropriate provision for the release of staff from their duties.
- Briefing and de-briefing their staff who participate in staff development activities, to facilitate effective consolidation of their learning and in some cases dissemination more widely.

Individual Staff Members

Individual staff members are responsible for:

- Reflecting at regular intervals upon their performance in their current roles and future career aspirations and identifying their appropriate development needs.
- Discussing these with their Line Manager during their Performance Review Meetings to establish priorities concerning their personal, team or college objectives.

- For the upkeep and maintenance of their personal development portfolio as evidence of their development and progression.
- Applying newly developed knowledge and skills to their work and careers while taking advantage of available developmental opportunities within the College and as part of external learning communities.
- Where difficulties occur, raising issues with their Line Manager in the first instance.

Exit Interviews

- Exit Interviews aim to double-check that what we have offered staff in their time with us has been delivered and, if not, what needs to be done to address the gaps.

- The People Officer conducts all exit interviews and feeds back salient information to the relevant Line Manager. Any significant or major areas of feedback that indicate a major break down in College policy or procedures will be brought to the attention of both the Academic Director and EMT.

Developmental Opportunities Available at UniHaven

Developmental opportunities are one of the following:

- Induction.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Performance-related Development.

UFORM018 Learning and Development Request Form Rev 1 is used for staff to request a development opportunity or activity…see Appendix.

Induction

Induction includes but is not limited to

- Informational Presentations – background and contextual information about the College, the organisational structure, key roles and so on.
- Cultural and intercultural awareness training given the mix of international students in the classroom.
- Policies and procedures to include the UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual Rev 2, UDOC007 UniHaven Employee Handbook Rev 1, UDOC001 UniHaven Programme Handbook Rev 2, and UPOL031 UniHaven Protected Disclosures Policy Rev 1 including all associated policies, procedures and key documents.
- Mentoring – mentors will be appointed to all new staff to guide them in their early weeks and months in the College and longer where necessary.
- Shadowing/Observations – to help new starters fully understand how teaching, assessment and administration policies and procedures are implemented at the College, a mix of shadowing and peer observations will be scheduled.
- IT – to include logins, usernames, passwords, for Office 365, Zoom, LMS, and the library IT system and how such systems work and integrate generally.
- Facilities/Premises Walkabout – to get new starters fully spatially aware of their surroundings and the facilities available to both them and our students.
- Health, Safety, Welfare and Emergency Procedures – as outlined in our health and safety policy but also those emergency procedures provided to us by our landlord.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD includes formal training programmes and events related to a particular role, completed either internally or externally. Teachers, full time, part-time, temporary or permanent, will be provided with training in teaching, tutoring, and other relevant skills with activities categorised as

- Academic – to include teaching and learning methods, pedagogy improvements, curriculum design, becoming a part of a community of teachers both within and external to the College.
- Technical – to include our learning management system, library systems, IT systems and so on.
- People – to include formal or informal learning about staff and student communications, multicultural teaching and awareness, emotional intelligence, student mental health issues and so on.

<u>Performance Management</u>

- Performance management will not be linked to remuneration but instead relies on the development of staff for job, role, vocational and career development purposes.
- Line Managers conduct formal Performance Review Meetings (PRM) with staff on a 1:1 basis at least annually where staff can both give and get formal feedback on their performance with a future-oriented goal setting and action planning ethos. See UPRO003 UniHaven Performance Management Procedure Rev 1 for the full description of this process.
- Line Managers are expected to provide both praise and recognition of things done well and constructive feedback around areas that need to be addressed on a timely basis. Both types of feedback should not be left until the formal PRM to do. Consequently, formal PRM's should not involve long discussions about past performance unless any lingering or unaddressed issue remains despite previous attempts to address the same and needs a more formal intervention.

5. Procedures and Forms

This policy is supported by UPRO003 UniHaven Staff Performance Management Procedure Rev 1 and associated forms together with UFORM018 Learning and Development Request Form Rev 1 in the Appendix.

UFORM018 Learning and Development Request Form Rev 1

(*only when costs exceed €50*)

Line Manager: _____

Requesting department/section: _____

Staff Member name: _____

Date request was made: _____

Context

Learning and development need:

_____

_____

_____

Business goal and benefit:

_____

_____

_____How does the learning and development requested align with company or College objectives?

_____

_____

_____Desired behavioural/skills improvement:

_____

_____

_____

What data/metric do you wish to improve?

_____

_____

_____

Learning and Development Request

Brief learning and development description:

_____

_____

_____

Learning topic/name: _____

Desired date: _____

Subject matter expert names:

_____

Additional notes:

_____

_____

_____

Learning and Development Sign-Off

Line Manager Sign Off – where line manager has secured signoff from EMT or a senior member of

EMT: _____   Name: _____

Date: _____

Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Chapter 5

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