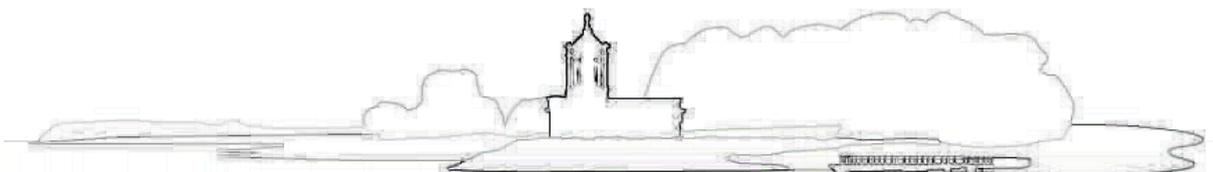


Rutland County Council

Professional Development Policy

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Guardian	HR
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Summary of document

Rutland County Council encourages employees to obtain qualifications that are relevant to both their current posts and career progression. This policy applies to all employees of the Council regardless of whether they are full time, part time or on a fixed term contract.

Rutland County Council accepts that professional training will be required to maximise the potential of its most valuable resource - its employees, who are crucial to the future development and success of the organisation's services. This will be further supplemented through the development of our Apprenticeship Scheme and delivery of the Workforce Development Strategy.

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Appendices

- 1 Request for professional training qualification
- 2 Training agreement

1 Conditions for Study Leave and Financial Assistance

- 1.1 **‘Definition’** - the term professional development reflects a wide variety of specialist training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help individuals improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.
- 1.2 The normal reimbursement of course fees available for all employees who attend a further / higher education course, which is authorised by their Directorate, will be 100% subject to available budget. The conditions that follow apply to any financial or other assistance given to employees of the Council.
- 1.3 Criteria for the approval of financial assistance towards a professional qualification include:
- Priority 1 – Continuation of a previously approved professional training programme
 - Priority 2 - To meet an essential requirement within the Person Specification
 - Priority 3 - To meet a ‘desirable’ requirement within the Person Specification
 - Priority 4 - The course of study is relevant to the employee's current post or career development and has been authorised by the employee's manager and Head of Service.
- 1.4 In all cases, the request for Professional Training Qualification will need to be completed.

The process will require employees to:

- Discuss their request with their line manager; complete the Request for Professional training form (Appendix 1) and obtain approval by the Head of Service (or equivalent Senior Manager) prior to submission
 - HR will send the employee a Professional Training Agreement – the course/programme should not be confirmed or booked until the agreement is signed.
- 1.5 Rutland County Council will pay the full cost of the course including examination fees.
- 1.6 The employee will have assistance withdrawn and will be required to reimburse all financial assistance received in the following instances:
- Failure to attend the course or to sit examinations without satisfactory reason.
 - Failure to show satisfactory progress.
 - Discontinuing the course without satisfactory reason.
 - Failure to achieve the required standards of work in their job.

- 1.7 Employees are required to remain within the employment of the Council for a minimum period of two years after qualification (taken as the certified date on the 'certificate'). If an employee voluntarily leaves for any reason (excluding voluntary redundancy) within this period, he or she will be required to reimburse the Council on a basis proportionate to completed months of post qualification service. Heads of Service maintain responsibility for ensuring this process is applied.
- 1.8 Progress will be monitored by the appropriate line manager throughout the course.
- 1.9 Rutland County Council reserve the right to contact the provider for updates on progress/attendance/
- 1.10 Employees will require to evidence confirmation of successful completion by showing a copy of the professional training certificate and a copy will be retained for their personnel file.
- 1.11 Employees may be required to produce a presentation, report or project linked to the course during their period of study. This would be agreed with the employee's Head of Service at the beginning of the course. At the end of the study period all employees will be asked to evaluate the course.

2 Expenses

2.1 Expenses deemed appropriate for Professional Training are as follows:-

- E-learning materials/Books
- Where possible employees should fully explore the use of materials already purchased by others or any library facilities at colleges/universities. If the required learning materials/books are unavailable employees can seek authorisation for approval to purchase.

Full reimbursement will be made in relation to all authorised books and equipment. Receipts must be provided to claim. The Council will retain ownership of any books purchased through this scheme. These must be returned to the service area for the benefit of other staff.

- Travel/Accommodation: Employees will be reimbursed the cost of excess travel they incur as a result of attending an approved course, i.e. where the distance is greater than that normally travelled to work. This reimbursement will be based on existing mileage rates as provided by the Council at the time. V.A.T. receipts must be attached to any claim that shows the purchase of sufficient fuel for the mileage claimed.

- 2.2 All expenses claims should be claimed through the usual expense claim procedure.
- 2.3 Falsification of any expense claim will be considered gross misconduct. Formal disciplinary action will be taken against an employee who makes false claims; this may result in dismissal.
- 2.4 Subsistence claims are in accordance with the Council's policy on Travel and Expenses and all receipts must be provided. Claims must only cover actual expenditure incurred.

3 Other Related Conditions

- 3.1 Study Leave: Employees will be allowed half a day study leave per course/programme and paid authorised leave to sit any examination. Study leave is not an automatic privilege and any application for this leave must be approved by the relevant manager.
- 3.2 Resits and Repeat Years: Where an employee fails an examination the Council will consider providing
- (a) funding for one retake
 - (b) study leave for one retake

Based on the following criteria:

- demonstration of consistent and regular attention/focus on the study – ie. genuine desire to successfully complete the course
- any personal or mitigating circumstances that may have hindered the employee's ability to attend/focus on the course .

The Council will not fund more than one resit.

The employee will be required to refund the full cost of the course if:

- (a) they fail the first resit
- (b) make no attempt to resit
- (c) they fail a further resit

- 3.3 Public Holidays: Where employees are required to attend college on a public holiday they will be entitled to time off in lieu, subject to **prior** agreement with the Head of Service. This will be at plain time and on the following basis: up to half a normal day = half a day off work; over half a working day = 1 day off work.
- 3.4 Pay full salary during staff attendances at classes held during normal working hours.

4. Examination courses not related to professional qualifications

- 4.1 Day release facilities and financial assistance with expenses for evening classes will not be granted, except on an individual basis where an officer requires the qualification as a condition of entry to a course of study for an approved professional examination or the qualification or course of study if a requirement of the Council.

5. Repayments

- 5.1 Where repayment in full or part is required, the officer will be duly notified by Human Resources of the amount to be reclaimed by the Council. Repayment of the total amount to be refunded shall be made in accordance with the following scale:-

Total Amount	Repayment Period <i>(from date of leaving)</i>
Up to £500	3 months
£501 to £1,500	6 months
£1,501 to £2,500	9 months
£2,501 upwards	12 months

In cases where the repayment period would, cause hardship to the employee, the period may be varied.

- 5.2 For the purposes of this paragraph, financial assistance means study costs/ expenditure incurred in the two years preceding the certification of the qualification. This shall not include salary paid in respect of time spent at approved courses of study nor travel expenses reasonably incurred.

A large print version of this document is available on request



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