



ASHTON PIONEER HOMES

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1.0 POLICY

Ashton Pioneer Homes is committed to excellence in people development in order to maintain and enhance its position. We aim to create a culture throughout where individuals and managers take responsibility for learning and development in partnership.

Ashton Pioneer Homes recognises the need to develop its people so that they are fully equipped to deliver the business objectives, both now and in the future.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To ensure that A.P.H. has people with the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet its business objectives in both the short and longer term. To allow our people to achieve their potential and their career aspirations both within Ashton Pioneer Homes and the wider community.

3.0 AIMS

- To provide effective introduction for all new appointees and people moving jobs.
- To equip people with skills and knowledge required to carry out their duties.
- To ensure that learning and development needs are identified as part of the business planning process and reviewed regularly.
- To ensure the appropriate skills are in place to deliver the business strategy.
- To provide leadership and management skills to managers within A.P.H.
- To balance the needs of individuals and the Association.
- To encourage the use of different methodologies in relation to the provision of learning and development activities.
- To ensure quality of access to all development opportunities.
- To ensure the effective delivery of mandatory training, eg, Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, Data Protection.
- To ensure our continuous improvement in relation to the service provided to our customers and stakeholders.

This approach is designed to ensure that the Company's needs are met as the full potential of each employee is realised to the benefit of the business.

4.0 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IDENTIFICATION

Learning and Development needs will be identified at three levels:

- ◆ Organisation
- ◆ Team
- ◆ Individual

4.1 Organisational Level

These needs may arise as a result of:

- ∅ Core Strategies;
- ∅ Business Objectives
- ∅ Changes in legislation;
- ∅ New Information Systems;
- ∅ Introduction of different working practices;
- ∅ Implementation of new policies and procedures.

Where possible these needs should be included in the business plans and appropriate monies included in the budgets.

4.2 Team Level

These needs should be identified by Directors, Managers and Team Leaders when they are considering their operational and team plans. Costs must be prioritised and included in budget proposals.

4.3 Individual Level

The Association's appraisal system and the formal 1:1 meetings held between staff and their line manager will be the main means by which these needs are identified. Considerations will be:

- ∅ The skills and knowledge the individuals will need to achieve their targets;
- ∅ The skills and knowledge individuals already have;
- ∅ The gap between what people already have and what they need for the future.

This analysis will be undertaken in relation to the Business Plan document which is prepared in consultation with staff and Board. This is distributed to everyone annually.

This outlines the Key Company objectives and provides a basis for the identification of team and individual targets and contributions to achieving those objectives.

It is individual's ability or otherwise in achieving these that will identify the key gaps to be addressed by learning and development activities.

5.0 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

A.P.H. recognises that people learn at different rates and in different ways. Many have preferences for certain forms of learning, many of which do not depend upon attending formal training events.

A.P.H. will investigate a variety of learning methodologies including:

- Ø Self Study
- Ø Job Shadowing/Swaps
- Ø On the job training and development
- Ø Seminars/Conferences
- Ø In House Training
- Ø Coaching (by internal competent person/manager or external specialist)
- Ø Secondment
- Ø Academic/Professional Qualifications (see Approved Qualification Policies and Procedures)

In offering these options, we shall consider internal expertise and external trainers, educational establishments etc, and costs associated with the activity.

Each case will be considered on its merits and approval will only be granted where costs can be accommodated within existing budgets and service delivery constraints.

6.0 AGREEING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

To ensure that learning and development activities are effective, and resources are utilised efficiently, it is important that clear objectives are set in advance for each activity. These must link to improving the Company's performance against its Key Objectives. There must therefore, be a clear improvement in the individual's ability to deliver that objective.

Line Managers will agree in advance with employees....

- Ø How individuals will put into practice what they have learned.
- Ø The specific, measurable results that will come from the activity.
- Ø How the business will benefit.

Ø A timescale for this benefit to become apparent.

These objectives will be agreed as part of a pre-training briefing, held between the individual and their line manager. A pre-training briefing form will be completed by both parties, confirming the discussion.

7.0 ASHTON PIONEER HOMES LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A Corporate Training Plan will be produced annually to consolidate all the individual training proposals arising from the annual appraisals. In addition, it will also contain any Team or Organisational wide requirements.

This plan will link the separate proposals to the business requirements, describe what is to be delivered, its specific outcomes, how it will be delivered and the specific costs.

This plan will be made available to everyone and will be accessible on Public Folders.

Delivery of the learning and development plan will be monitored by the Management Team on a quarterly basis.

8.0 MEASURING THE EFFECT OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

If learning and development activities are to be successful in plugging identified gaps in current knowledge and skills, then the effectiveness of all activities must be measured against this aim.

On completion of each learning and development activity, staff will be asked to complete a post-activity form to evaluate the particular developmental activity, to help define future learning requirements.

This post-activity form will identify how staff intend to put what they have learned into practice. It will also identify whether the anticipated results were actually realised and what the business benefits will actually be.

The form will also be used to encourage honest criticism where activities have failed to live up to expectations. The feedback will be used to improve delivery or make changes.

Cost-effectiveness of training is an important element. The costs of individual training events will be regularly monitored in terms of their impact on the business. In time, future training programmes and types of delivery will be those deemed to be most cost-effective.

A record of training for each employee will be maintained on their Personnel file.

9.0 APPROVED QUALIFICATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

This Learning and Development Policy should be read in conjunction with the Approved Qualification Policy and Procedures (update August 2003: reviewed June 2006 - no change).