

## **Staff Development Strategy 2009**

### **Introduction**

Aberystwyth University recognises the importance and value of the development and training of staff and the development of academic practice in enabling the University to fulfil its mission and achieve its strategic objectives. It is committed to the support and promotion of relevant development and training for all categories of staff. This strategy highlights key development priorities for AU staff over the next three years and provides a framework for discussions and decisions on the most effective use of existing resources for staff development across AU.

### **2. Purpose of the Strategy**

2.1 AU's Staff Development Strategy is designed to:

- a. Support the University's Strategic Plan and all other institutional strategies and policies – and particularly the Human Resource Strategy, Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Research Strategy, the Widening Access Strategy, the ICT strategy, the Marketing Strategy and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and Equality Scheme via a range of staff development and training approaches.
- b. Enhance the operational effectiveness of the University, its departments and staff.
- c. Provide a framework for identifying, and addressing the development needs of the University, academic, central services and administrative departments together with the needs of all categories of staff.

2.2 The Staff Development Strategy will be subject to annual reviews in relation to its currency, emerging priorities and also the evaluation of its implementation.

### **3. Objectives of the Staff Development Strategy**

3.1 This Strategy has four main objectives:

- a. To provide a framework for appropriate development opportunities that are designed to improve the knowledge, skills and performance of staff, assist their personal development, and enhance the effectiveness of individuals, teams and the University in the pursuit of excellence in all of its activities and strategies.
- b. To facilitate the process of change.
- c. To promote a developmental and enhancement ethos.
- d. To embed staff development activity into the university's procedures.
- e. To assist in the prioritising of areas of provision so that resources are deployed to most effect.

3.2. The strategy aims to achieve the above objectives by supporting a pragmatically planned development process, which is flexible in operation, clearly linked to institutional and departmental priorities, provides value for money, and takes account of local circumstances, emerging priorities and resource constraints

### **4. Principles of Staff Development**

AU's Staff Development Policy affirms the University's commitment to:

- the development of staff to enable them to become more effective in their work
- providing development opportunities for all categories of staff
- The review and evaluation of staff development needs and provision

## 5. Roles and Responsibility for Staff Development

Responsibility for staff development occurs at three levels:

### 5.1. *Institutional – linked to AU’s strategic and operational requirements and legal Compliance*

The University will:

- a. Provide central resources and a central structure to support staff development and training and the development of academic practice.
- b. Require Academic, Central Services and Administrative Departments to provide plans for departmentally organised staff development and training as part of the Academic and Financial Planning Process.
- c. Establish a Staff Development Review Scheme<sup>1</sup> which will, among other things, facilitate an assessment of the training and development needs of individuals and enable Departments and the University to establish priorities for development and training activities.
- d. Consult with staff on development needs through the Staff Development User Group and other forums.
- e. Monitor and review University expenditure on staff development activity.
- f. Establish performance indicators against which centrally provided Staff development services, Academic, Central Services and Administrative Departments can be measured.
- g. Provide training and development to support legislative requirements.

### 5.2. *Departmental*

Heads of Academic, Central Services and Administrative Departments have an important role in relation to Staff Development. They are required to:

- a. Enable their staff to take advantage of centrally and externally provided training and development opportunities and manage the release of staff to participate in approved development activities.
- b. Design and implement an appropriate Departmental Staff Development Policy and Annual Operating Plan within the constraints of available resource.
- c. Ensure that new members of staff receive a thorough induction into their working environment which is appropriate to their role and seniority, either through a centrally organised or locally tailored Induction Programme.
- d. Identify staff development needs for individual members of staff and the Department as a whole using the university's appraisal/staff development review scheme to inform the Staff Development Annual Operating Plan.
- e. Encourage performance improvement by providing formal and informal feedback on performance and by using such techniques as coaching and mentoring.
- f. Establish objectives for staff development to aid the evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of staff development activities in their area of responsibility

### 5.3. *Individual members of staff*

All staff have a responsibility to develop their skills and knowledge in order to enhance their performance in their current role and prepare them for future roles. Staff should also recognise the importance of the contribution they can make to the development of their peers.

Staff are expected to:

- a. Take responsibility for planning their career.
- b. Identify their training and development needs through constructive use of appraisal and staff development review and consultation with their line managers.
- c. Seek opportunities to improve skills and knowledge required in their current position.
- d. Take advantage of development opportunities provided by relevant professional bodies.

## **6. Accountability**

- 6.1 The Chair of the Staff Development Committee (a sub-committee of Staffing Committee) is accountable for developing and reviewing the Staff Development Strategy, for establishing priorities for delivery and for overseeing the quality, efficiency and equitable delivery of staff development for all staff within AU.
- 6.2 Staff development activities are directed by the Staff Development Committee and reported to the Staffing Committee. The Staff Development Committee also liaises with other AU committees as appropriate.
- 6.3 The Co-ordinator of the Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice, reporting to Director of Human Resources and working closely with the Chair of the Staff Development Committee, is responsible for the organisation and co-ordination of an annual programme of staff development and training activity in accordance with the Staff Development Strategy and an annual Operating Plan approved by the Staff Development Committee.
- 6.4 The Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice will consider the staff development needs arising from the appraisal/performance review and keep records of staff development activity.
- 6.5 Heads of Academic, Administrative and Central Services Departments will be asked to report on departmental staff development activity in an annual audit of staff development and training. They will also be required to set out their plans for staff development activity in their annual planning statement.

## **7. Coverage / Access / Equity**

- 7.1 The Staff Development Strategy and centrally and departmentally organised staff development programmes should address the work and career-related training and development needs of staff in all categories and in all aspects of their role.
- 7.2 Decisions about the prioritization of staff development activities will be taken in the context of AU's strategic objectives and priorities, its operational needs and its obligations in respect of Equality, Health and Safety and other government legislation.
- 7.3 Staff engaged in the organisation and designing of staff training and development activities should ensure that these activities are as accessible as possible to all staff who are eligible to attend. Careful consideration should be given to time, location, duration, level and approach to ensure that training and development activities are as effective as possible and that no groups of staff are implicitly excluded from accessing or benefiting from training and development events for which they are eligible.

- 7.4 Records of staff development activities provided by the Centre will be stored and monitored for equality of opportunity.

## **8. Institutional priorities for the medium to long term**

The priorities listed below emerged from the consultation with various groups of staff during the review of AU's Staff Development provision which took place in 2006/2007. Further discussion will be needed to refine these priorities and, in particular, to determine the time and expenditure to be devoted to each area in the next three years, and also the responsibility for provision (i.e. what is to be delivered centrally through the CDSAP, what is to be outsourced, what is to be delivered by departments). Much will depend on the level of available institutional resources. The priorities listed below will also be refined as a result of the Staff Development review process and in light of Departmental audits of staff development needs

### 8.1 Induction

The provision of appropriate induction for new staff and for staff taking on new roles

- 8.2 A process by which Departments conduct and annual review of the staff development needs of all staff will be developed.

### 8.3 Leadership and management development for academic and professional staff.

The provision of appropriate training, development and support for those newly appointed to a management and leadership role, to enable them to manage the human, financial and physical resources for which they are responsible effectively and efficiently. To provide the leadership that will assist the university to realise its operational goals and strategic objectives.

### 8.4 *The Development of Academic Practice*

- a. The provision of an HEA accredited PGCTHE programme of training, support and development for staff new to teaching.
- b. The provision of a programme of Continuing Profession Development for all academic staff to meet the requirements of the new UK national framework for professional standards in teaching and supporting learning (HEA).
- c. The development of training and support for Postgraduate Teaching Assistants.
- d. Support for the Roundtable for Directors of Learning and Teaching.
- e. The development of teaching capacity through the medium of Welsh and addressing pedagogic issues linked to this area of provision.
- f. The provision of generic skills development for postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers to meet the requirements of RCUK.
- g. Development of research management, leadership and grant-winning skills for academic staff.

### 8.5 *Skills enhancement and training*

Specific training for various groups of non-academic staff - e.g. administrative, secretarial, clerical and technical staff - especially in relation to any development issues which may arise as a result of the HERA exercise and the migration of employees to the new pay and grading structure following the local implementation of the National Framework Agreement for the Modernisation of Pay Structures.

### 8.6 *Training in issues relating to legal compliance*

Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, etc.

8.7 *Training in matters relating to AU policies and procedures*

## **9. Funding and Resourcing of Staff Development Activity**

9.1 The University will set an annual core budget for the CDSAP through the annual planning process, and in light of an annual operating plan submitted to the Registrar by the CDSAP Co-ordinator in consultation with the Chair of the Staff Development Committee.

9.2 The CDSAP will seek external sources of funding to support staff development activities, and, where appropriate, will seek to generate income by marketing its provision to external clients.

9.3 Departments will allocate a budget for Departmental Staff Development Activities as appropriate and in order to enable them to meet the objectives and targets of their Departmental Staff Development Strategy.

## **10. Monitoring and Evaluation of Staff Development Activity**

The Staff Development Committee will ensure that the quality of staff development and training programmes and activities is monitored and evaluated by one or more of the following measures:

- a. Specific aims and learning outcomes are agreed for all staff development activities and are made transparent.
- b. The providers of training and development activities obtain systematic feedback (via evaluation sheets) to ensure that those activities are as effective as they can be.
- c. Participants are given the opportunity to reflect on their learning through the use of tests, activities and questions during and/or after the training or development sessions.
- d. Assessment of the impact of training or development on the effective working of the department or University.
- e. Cost benefit analysis of training and development activity.

## **11. Monitoring and Review of the Staff Development Strategy**

11.1 The Staff Development Committee will report annually to the Staffing Committee on the implementation of the Strategy.

11.2 The Strategy will be reviewed at least triennially, taking account of changes in the University's priorities and/or external circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> AU will clearly need to design a staff development review process to replace the appraisal system which is in abeyance to enable individual members of staff, departments and the university to identify and prioritise training and development needs.

Updates: Last – May 2009, Next – May 2011  
On-line location: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/english/Policies.htm>  
Contact: Graham Lewis, Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice.  
[gjl@aber.ac.uk](mailto:gjl@aber.ac.uk)  
Responsible Committee: Staff Development Committee

### **Associated documents:**

Aberystwyth University Staff Development Policy 2009

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/english/Policies.htm>

Aberystwyth University Staff Development Annual Operating Plan 2009-2010

Aberystwyth University Learning and Teaching Strategy

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/english/learningandteaching.htm>

AU Strategic Plan

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/strategic/>

AU Research Strategy, the Widening Access Strategy, the ICT strategy

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/strategic/>

Marketing Strategy and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/equalopp/>

AU Equality Scheme

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/equalopp/>

AU Human Resources Strategy

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/equalopp/>

Departmental Staff Development Policies and Annual Operating Plans