



## **Ixion Group**

# **Learning and Development Policy**

## INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the range of learning and development activities, learning resources and individual support that is available to staff. It will:

- Outline Ixion Holdings Limited's Learning and Development Policy Statement which is based on the principles of the Investors in People standard;
- Explain how staff can access the variety of activities available and how they should be instigated, agreed and subsequently evaluated.

## OUR COMMITMENT

### **To the best of our ability:**

- We will provide opportunities, facilities and financial support, to ensure that all staff possess the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for them to achieve job related individual, team and Company objectives.
- We will ensure that learning and development is clearly defined within the Business Plan in assisting the Company to meet its objectives and is fully supported by the Board.
- Job related learning and development will be made available to all staff irrespective of hours worked and job undertaken and irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious affiliation, marital status, being pregnant or disability.
- The Learning and Development Policy will be kept under continuous review to ensure it remains relevant to the Company's mission and objectives.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The key elements of our policy relate to the Investors in People Framework, which has 3 core principles. The aim of the Investors Standard is to improve business effectiveness and performance by encouraging employers to develop the skills of their people to achieve business goals.

### **PLAN: Develop strategies to improve performance**

We will ensure that job related learning and development needs are identified and regularly reviewed against Ixion's core priorities and objectives, as contained within the Business Plan.

Learning & Development plans detailing specific job related training needs will be reviewed regularly at individual performance reviews, but will be flexible in responding to changing priorities and business needs.

Appropriate resources have been allocated to ensure that training and development activities are undertaken effectively.

### **DO: Take action to improve performance**

We will encourage the development of a continuous learning culture whereby all staff are committed to their own self-development and continuous improvement, which will maximise their contribution to achieving individual, team and company objectives.

All staff will agree a Personal Development Plan (PDP) with their line manager, which will be regularly reviewed as part of the performance management cycle.

Employees will work with their managers, under the auspices of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to determine the most appropriate course of action. Managers will offer support and guidance to assist their staff with this obligation.

We will be flexible and open-minded in our approach to meeting training and development needs, ensuring that the chosen action is most suitable and effective in terms of achieving the desired results.

### **REVIEW: Evaluate and improve performance**

We will continuously evaluate learning and development activities to assess the benefits derived from this investment and to recommend actions to improve future effectiveness.

Regular evaluation will enable us to consider the benefits derived and allow us to determine the impact on individual, team and business performance.

## **IDENTIFIED LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Personal development plans (PDP's) will be used to record identified individual learning and development needs at Performance Management Reviews (PMR). These can be addressed in the following kinds of ways:

## JOB RELATED STRUCTURED TRAINING COURSES

Training through attendance on structured internal or external courses.

There must be sound evidence to show that sufficient thought has been given to what the need is, how the training course will contribute towards objectives/performance improvement, what the desired outcomes are and how the learning will be applied in the workplace.

Employees will need to discuss their requirements with their line manager or HR Coordinator.

The company will support the employee by:

- Paying for 100% of course fees
- Allowing for time off during normal working hours to attend
- Reimburse for any *additional* travel costs incurred to and from training venue.

### **Authorisation process:**

A training request form must be completed showing these details and forwarded to the HR Coordinator.

Training Agreements will be entered into between the Company and the individual when total course costs exceed £2,000.

## CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

Improved knowledge and understanding of a particular issue that can be gained by attending a conference or seminar.

Whilst generally relatively low in cost it is still extremely important to ensure that there are sound business reasons for attending a conference/seminar. In most cases there is no need for more than one individual to attend the same event. Individuals who attend conferences/seminars are expected to disseminate the information/knowledge gained with colleagues utilising team meetings.

### **Authorisation process:**

A completed training request form should be forwarded to HR Coordinator for approval.

## **LEARNING FROM OTHERS – informal and formal mentoring and or shadowing**

Learning happens as much through transfer of knowledge/experiences around the organisation as it does through imported learning.

A key objective for the Company is to share knowledge, information and 'best-practice' widely. Far better use can be made of the knowledge, skills and ideas employees already possess. Everyone shares responsibility for identifying good practice and taking steps to spread it and to learn from role models and the experience of people within the Company.

Better use can also be made of the many learning opportunities that exist, some of which are so obvious that they go unnoticed.

## **FURTHER EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Staff will be encouraged to pursue further education/professional qualifications where it is considered and agreed that these will assist in fulfilling their job role within the Company.

There must be sound evidence to show that sufficient thought has been given to what the need is, how the training course will contribute towards objectives/performance improvement, what the desired outcomes are and how the learning will be applied in the workplace.

Employees will need to discuss their requirements with their line manager or HR Coordinator.

Where the qualification is clearly relevant and required in the individual's current job role, the company will support the employee by:

- Paying for 100% of course fees
- Allowing for time off during normal working hours to attend
- Reimburse for any *additional* travel costs incurred to and from venue
- A contribution, per academic year, towards the cost of specified textbooks
- Up to 4 days per academic year for exam and revision leave (pro rata entitlement for part-time staff) - All requests for study leave must be made by completing a study leave request form, available on the Intranet, which must be authorised by the individual's line manager.  
Any further study time will be taken as annual leave or un-paid leave.
- The Company will pay for one exam sitting. If re-sits are required this will be at the individuals own cost.

**Authorisation process:**

A training request form must be completed showing these details and forwarded to the HR Coordinator.

Training Agreements will be entered into between the Company and the individual when total course costs exceed £2,000.

**TRAINING AGREEMENTS**

A training agreement will be applicable where an employee is being financially supported by the Company to undertake training where the Company’s contribution to total structured training course fees exceed £2,000.

The training agreement repayment comes into effect in the following circumstances either during the period of study or during specified periods following completion of the course of study:

The actual repayment an Employee will be expected to make is as outlined below.

The period of study begins on the date the course commences.

If the Employee voluntarily resigns from the course/the Company or employment is terminated for reasons other than job redundancy either:	The Employee agrees to repay:
During the period of study	100% of the employers contribution towards total course fees
Up to 6 months following completion of the course	75% of the employers contribution towards total course fees
Between 6 and 12 months following completion of the course	50% of the employers contribution towards total course fees

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS & SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Financial assistance will be given to supporting membership of a relevant professional body and to paying for one annual professional subscription if applicable to an individual's job role.

### **Authorisation process:**

All requests for professional memberships and subscriptions should be referred to the HR Coordinator.

## **SECONDMENTS**

Secondment opportunities to other teams and external partner organisations will be supported where appropriate.

### **Authorisation process:**

If you would like to undertake a secondment (even for a very short-period of time) please discuss with your line manager in conjunction with HR. Furthermore if you are aware of someone employed by a partner organisation who is interested in undertaking a secondment within Ixion Holdings Limited please raise this with the most appropriate