



Ixion Group Policy & Procedure

Learning & Development



Policy Statement

The Ixion Group (Ixion) is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in our approach to learning and development for all our employees regardless of any protected characteristic (race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment). Learning and development opportunities will be made available to all staff irrespective of hours worked and roles undertaken.

Ixion has shown its commitment to developing staff to improve the performance of our business by providing learning opportunities, facilities secondment opportunities, mentoring 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.

Learning and development will be clearly defined within Ixion's Business Plan, assisting the Company to meet its objectives. All staff will be encouraged to play an active part in identifying their own learning needs and ensuring all learning is effectively applied in their day-to-day work.

This policy outlines the range of learning and development activities, learning resources and individual support that is available to all staff within the Company.

Ixion is also committed to supporting subcontractors and partners that deliver services on our behalf, with their own learning and development, to ensure the best possible service to our customers at all times.

Communication

Learning and Development policies support the learning environment of our staff and customers who have access to this Policy.

Associated Policies

This Policy and associated procedures should be read in conjunction with the Performance Management & Capability policy.

Process / Purpose

The key elements of our policy is to improve business effectiveness and performance by encouraging employees to develop their knowledge and skills to achieve personal development and achieve business goals.

Ixion uses a plan, do and review approach:

PLAN: Develop strategies to improve performance



We will ensure that job-related learning and development needs are identified and regularly reviewed against the Group's core priorities and objectives, as contained within the Business Plan by implementing our Performance Management & Capability policy.

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

DO: Take action to improve performance

As part of the corporate planning and business process, the Ixion Management Board take a lead on group wide training. Once the business objectives and key strategies have been identified for the planning period, a review of the skills set of staff for each division is undertaken and any gaps in learning and development can be identified. A group Training Pathway is developed and updated throughout the year identifying training needs across the business.

Ixion encourages 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. Employees should work with their managers to determine the most appropriate learning and development to meet their needs. Managers will offer support and guidance to assist their staff with this obligation.

Individual Personal Development Plans (PDP) will record job-related learning and development needs agreed between employees and their line managers as part of the performance management process. The PDP will be reviewed regularly throughout the operational year, and will be flexible in responding to changing priorities and business needs.

Ixion will be flexible and open-minded in our approach to meeting learning 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, to determine the impact on individual, team and business performance, and to recommend actions to improve future effectiveness.

Mandatory Learning

Induction Programme

For all new starters joining the Company a standardised induction programme is provided. There are specific induction checklists to be completed with the new employee – Line Manager induction, Operational Induction and HR Induction.



The induction programme is mandatory and a probationary period cannot be not signed off until the induction has been evidenced as complete.

The induction includes compulsory online training modules for:

- Health & Safety (1 & 2)
- Bribery Act
- Data Protection
- Managing Diversity
- Safeguarding
- Inclusive Cohesive & Safe Workplaces
- PREVENT
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- There is also 1-2-1 IT Training and IT security Training with the IT department and 1-2-1 training for specific systems access.
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Refresher Programme

Our mandatory learning programme provides an annual refresher programme for staff in key subjects. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Health & Safety (1 & 2)
- Bribery Act
- Data Protection
- Managing Diversity
- Safeguarding
- Inclusive Cohesive & Safe Workplaces
- PREVENT
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Continued Professional Development

CPD activity will be agreed with each member of staff as part of their Personal Development Plan review. There are different types of CPD activity that staff may participate in:

- work-based learning e.g. in-house training courses, reflective practice, team meetings where sharing good practice takes place
- professional activity - mentoring, professional body involvement, practice education
- formal/educational - academic courses, conferences, research projects
- self-directed - reading, internet research
- other - voluntary work, secondment, shadowing



Staff should maintain a CPD record throughout the year to record all CPD activity undertaken. This record can be used during reviews to evidence activity completed and contribute to the annual appraisal.

Formal Learning

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

Learning may be through attendance on structured internal or external courses. In all cases there must be sound evidence to show that any course will directly contribute towards achievement of objectives/performance improvement. The desired outcomes should be clearly defined along with how the learning will be applied in the workplace.

Employees should discuss their requirements with their line manager or Head of Service HR.

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

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

For further education/professional qualifications Ixion will also support the employee with:

- 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 cost for one exam sitting. If re-sits are required this will be at the individuals own cost.

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 £500. 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.

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 employer's contribution towards total course fees
Up to 6 months following completion of the course	75% of the employer's contribution towards total course fees
Between 6 and 12 months following completion of	50% of the employer's contribution

the course	towards total course fees
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**The period of study begins on the date the course commences.*

Authorisation process: A Training Request form must be completed showing the full details of the course/activity, how it links to objectives/performance improvement and the outcomes to be achieved. The request should be approved by the line manager and forwarded to the HR Manager for final sign-off.

Conferences & Seminars

Improved knowledge and understanding of a particular issue 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 through team meetings.

Authorisation process: Authorisation should be sought from line managers and Divisional Directors to ensure activity is coordinated across the Division.

Learning from Others

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. This learning may be achieved through informal and formal mentoring and/or shadowing, presentations at team meetings, formal reports of experience, peer-to-peer coaching etc.

Opportunities for secondment to other teams and external partner organisations will be supported where appropriate.

Secondment authorisation process: Staff should discuss this request with their line manager in conjunction with Divisional Directors and Head of Service HR. If staff are aware of someone employed by a partner organisation who is interested in undertaking a secondment within Ixion they should raise this with their Divisional Directors and advise the Head of Service HR of any arrangements being discussed. .

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 for review and approval.

Responsibilities

While all staff within Ixion have a responsibility to uphold the commitments in this policy, specific responsibilities are as follows:

- Chief Executive – responsible for ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to ensure that learning and development activities are undertaken effectively.
- Group Finance & Corporate Services Director – responsible for ensuring Ixion and its staff adhere to the Learning & Development Policy, and a Group Training & Development Plan is produced each year.
- Head of Service HR – responsible for supporting all line managers to implement this policy, providing guidance to them in meeting their obligations to develop staff, ensuring CPD activity is approved in line with this policy, and for organising group-wide training as requested.
- Line managers – responsible for ensuring staff learning and development needs are systematically identified, relevant learning and development opportunities are organised and reviewed in line with this policy, that staff effectively implement learning from CPD activity.
- Employees - responsible for their own personal development, identifying areas to increase their knowledge and skills and increase their knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for them to achieve job-related individual, team and Company objectives.

Monitoring & Review

The Head of Service HR will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by reviewing learning and development activity undertaken against that identified within PDPs completed through the appraisal process; monitoring expenditure on external and internal CPD activity; and undertaking periodic review of Ixion's adherence to the Investors in People standard. The Head of Service HR will report to the Board on the performance of the policy with recommendations for improvement as appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Group Finance & Corporate Services Director to ensure that it continues to meet current business requirements.