

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Title	Training and Development Policy
Last Review Date	March 2026
Next Review Date	March 2029
Author	Christina Friedenthal
Approver	Board of Management
Applies to	All CDS employees, contractors and agency staff

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure our staff are knowledgeable, competent and appropriately supported to carry out their roles effectively, now and as the business evolves. Training and development are central to delivering high-quality, safe and compliant services to residents and to meeting CDS's regulatory obligations as a registered provider of social housing.

This policy supports our compliance with the Regulatory of Social Housing's Competence and Conduct Standard by setting out how the organisation ensures that staff and those delivering services on its behalf have the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours appropriate to their roles.

Where possible, we also aim to support employees' longer-term professional development and career progression, particularly where these align with our business goals and needs.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all CDS employees, whether permanent or temporary and whether they work part- or full-time. It does not apply to consultants working on behalf of CDS on an advisory basis.

The policy also applies – proportionately – to agency staff and contractors where they are delivering services or making decisions on our behalf. Whilst such individuals are not employees, we retain accountability for ensuring that services delivered on our behalf meet appropriate standards of competence and conduct.

Board members are subject to separate governance, induction and development arrangements and are, therefore, outside the scope of this policy.

We intend this policy to have flexibility to meet the changing requirements of the business.

3. Identifying and discussing training and development needs

INDUCTION AND PROBATION

All new employees will receive an induction designed to familiarise themselves with the organisation, our values, policies and ways of working, and to enable them to perform their role effectively. Line managers are responsible for identifying role-specific training and development needs during induction and ensuring these are met within reasonable timescales during probation.

APPRAISALS/OBJECTIVE SETTING

All employees who have completed probation will have an annual appraisal with their line manager that will focus on past performance, competence and conduct. They will also meet with their manager to set objectives for the coming

year. These meetings will be used, in part, to identify training and development needs, including any requirements for mandatory training or professional qualifications, as well as career aspirations.

Additionally, all employees will have regular one-to-one meetings with their line manager to review progress toward their objectives and development plans and to address any emerging competence or conduct issues.

Individual employees are responsible for ensuring their knowledge, skills and abilities for carrying out their role are kept up to date and to request training or support if they identify gaps.

4. Training, development and competence requirements

ANNUAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

Each year, a broad training plan will be developed corporately to meet the identified needs of the business, including feedback from appraisals. This supplements any immediate training needs identified during the year.

PERSONAL TRAINING PLANS

Staff who have identified training outside of the annual review and objective setting process that they think will benefit them should speak to their line manager.

GENERAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to providing relevant training and development to ensure staff remain competent in their roles, particularly where work processes change, new systems are introduced or regulatory and legal requirements are updated. Training may be delivered through a range of methods, including in-house sessions, external courses, e-learning and on-the-job learning.

MANDATORY TRAINING

We maintain a programme of mandatory and refresher training aligned to legal, regulatory and operational requirements. Mandatory training requirements will vary by role and may include areas such as health and safety; safeguarding; equity, diversity and inclusion; data protection; conduct and ethical behaviour and landlord or housing management compliance.

Completion of mandatory training is monitored centrally by Corporate Services and non-compliance will be followed-up with managers and individuals, as appropriate.

REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Senior roles that serve a finance function are required to be qualified by and hold and active membership in a UK accounting body such as ACA, ACCA or CIMA of the United Kingdom.

For roles that carry out housing management, tenancy, neighbourhood or landlord responsibilities, we have minimum expectations in relation to professional competence and qualifications, recognising that such roles have a direct impact on residents and regulatory compliance.

Senior housing managers with responsibility for housing management services are required to hold a recognised housing management qualification at Level 4 or above, whilst Senior Housing Executives with responsibility for housing management services are required to hold a recognised housing management qualification at Level 5 or above. In lieu of holding a relevant qualification, senior housing managers/executives are expected to be working toward achieving

this within an agreed timeframe, usually within six months of appointment to complete the qualification within 24 months of appointment.

Descriptions for roles that qualify as Senior Housing Managers and Senior Housing Executives for the purposes of the Competence and Conduct Standard can be found here: as described in Annex A of the Policy Statement on Qualifications Requirements for Social Housing (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68d3f762b6c608ff9421b2a0/Competence_and_conduct_standard_-policy_statement.pdf).

Recognised qualifications may include those awarded by the Chartered Institute of Housing or other accredited professional bodies.

Where a qualification is required for a role, expectations and timescales will be confirmed in writing. Progress will be reviewed through supervision and appraisal and we may provide financial and study support in line with our Learning and Development Offer. Where an employee does not make reasonable progress toward a required qualification, this will be addressed through proportionate performance management or capability processes.

Where professional membership or continuing education is required to maintain mandatory qualifications, CDS will pay for the membership and reasonable continuing education costs.

CDS's LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT OFFER

We aim to offer opportunities through our periodic Learning & Development Offer for longer-term courses for individual staff to earn qualifications in areas that are complimentary to their existing role or that may lead to progression at CDS.

The availability of this offer is dependent on available funding and may be used for mandatory qualifications or discretionary further education that typically takes one or more years to complete, including professional qualifications or degrees in a field related to CDS and the work the staff member is currently doing or wants to move into. Funding for discretionary longer-term programmes may be subject to an application or a competitive process and may include a service commitment to CDS for a specified length following completion of the training.

COACHING, MENTORING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Where possible and appropriate, we encourage coaching and mentoring to support individual development and to share skills and knowledge across the organisation. This may include informal mentoring by more experienced colleagues or, in limited circumstances, the use of external coaches or mentors.

Managers have a responsibility to ensure that the skills and knowledge of more experienced staff members are shared with more junior employees to ensure that learning occurs in a planned and effective way.

Responsibilities

It is our intention to empower our staff to take some ownership of their own development, with support from their line managers and the organisation as a whole.

Individual staff members are responsible for:

- Sharing with their line manager any identified training or development needs
- Attending and completing all required and/or confirmed training
- Engaging with development opportunities
- Noting what training was undertaken each year so it can be recorded on their personnel record

Line managers are responsible for:

- Assessing the learning and development needs for their individual employees and their team as a whole
- Sharing the cost of planned training in their team with their director as part of the budget setting process
- Providing advice, coaching and feedback to support their team and individual development
- Ensuring new employees receive an appropriate induction
- Undertaking an annual appraisal, objective setting and regular one-to-ones with each employee
- Recording and sharing with Corporate Services all training courses attended in the team and progress toward any required qualification
- Identifying and escalating competence or conduct risks where training or support is not effective

Corporate Services are responsible for:

- Facilitating organisation-wide training courses
- Leading on the development of the organisation's annual training plan
- Monitoring compliance with mandatory training requirements
- Providing tools for line managers to provide appropriate inductions to staff
- Managing the Learning and Development Offer programme for staff
- Confidentially storing performance review and training information about staff

5. Agency staff and contractor accountability

We recognise that accountability for competence and conduct rests with CDS, regardless of whether services are delivered by employees, agency staff or contractors. We, therefore, ensure that contracts and service specifications set out clear expectations regarding competence, qualifications, training and standards of behaviour.

Relevant CDS policies, including those relating to conduct, safeguarding and data protection, will be made available to agency staff and contractors as appropriate. Performance and conduct will be monitored through contract management and supervision arrangements, and we will take prompt and proportionate action where concerns are identified, including escalation or termination of contracts where necessary.

6. Resident involvement and accessibility

We are committed to ensuring that tenants have meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise policies that affect service quality and standards.

Residents will be engaged through appropriate resident involvement arrangements when this policy is developed or subject to significant review and resident feedback on service quality and staff conduct will be used to inform training priorities and continuous improvement.

This policy will be made accessible to residents by being published on our website. Our website has the ability to translate, interpret and offer larger text, making it widely accessible.

7. Complaints

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns about the application of this policy informally with their line manager. Where this is not appropriate or does not resolve the issue, complaints will be dealt with through our Grievance Policy.

8. Equality and diversity

Decisions relating to access to training and development will be made fairly and consistently in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the Equality Act (2010). We are committed to removing barriers to learning and development and to making reasonable adjustments where required.

9. Monitoring, assurance and review

The effectiveness of this policy, including compliance with the Competence and Conduct Standard and value for money, will be regularly reviewed by the Corporate Services Director and reported to the board of management as part of the annual Human Resources report.

10. Confidentiality and data protection

When managing an employee's training and development, we process personal data collected in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. Information will be held securely and accessed only for legitimate purposes. Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data may constitute a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure.

11. Legislation and regulation

This policy complies with the regulatory standards for registered providers of social housing in England, including the Competence and Conduct Standard.

This policy supports the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)
- Equality Act 2010 (particularly Section 158)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (HSWA)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

12. Associated policies and procedures

The following procedures are associated with this policy:

- Grievance Process
- Learning & Development Offer
- Performance Appraisal and Evaluation process

This policy is supported by:

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Grievance Policy

Version control

Date	Amendment	Version control
16.5.22	<i>New policy approved by Board</i>	v.1.1
16.9.25	<i>Reviewed by SMT. Additions related to paying for and requiring professional qualifications to be added</i>	v.1.2
9.3.26	<i>Updated to incorporate Competence and Conduct Standard requirements and approved by Board</i>	v.2.1