Identifying your Development Needs

Introduction

This factsheet focuses on how to identify development needs and identify solutions as part of the Professional Review & Development (PRD) Procedure.

How do I identify my development needs?

Development needs can arise for a number of reasons. They could be areas that will help you in your current role, to help you develop personally, or to help you in your career.

Development needs relating to your current role may arise from:

- **Key Tasks and Responsibilities** – do you have all the knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively achieve these? Would any further development help?

- **Targets / Objectives** which arise from the school or department improvement plan – do you need any additional knowledge, skills, or abilities to help you achieve these?

- **GTCS Standard** – do you feel you need additional development in order to demonstrate any of the requirements of the Standard relevant to your role?

Depending on your personal circumstances and aspirations, development needs could relate to career development or other personal development needs, such as:

- **Career Development** – where you are fully experienced in your role and wish to develop further in your career, your PRD discussion may also include any development needs you may have to help with this.

- **Personal Development** – these are any other development needs, which are not relevant to your role, but would assist you on a personal level. These may relate to targets / objectives, mentioned earlier.

You should note, however, that development needs relating to your current role and the needs of your department or school will always take priority. Career and personal development needs may not be supported, if there are other needs within your school which have a direct impact on the results the establishment will achieve.

Development Options

There are a number of ways in which you can extend your knowledge or develop new skills within your workplace. It’s not always about going on a course.
o **Job-Shadowing** – often the simplest way to develop is to observe someone else doing what you need to develop in – learn from them;

o **Collegiate Working** – sharing and developing ideas with a range of colleagues is one of the most powerful ways of learning, particularly when directly related to learning and teaching;

o **Coaching** – is there someone else within your school or cluster that could give you advice or help you in the particular area you are looking for? If so, they could coach you;

o **Planned Reading** – are there any books, journals or articles that cover what you are looking for? Remember, Navigate and the Internet are sources of information too. Glow and appropriate websites such as Education Scotland’s, provide a wealth of information / resources to help;

o **E-Learning** – there are a number of e-learning packages available on a variety of topics. These are where you work your way through training on your computer – either at work or at home;

o **Self-Study Packs** – similar to e-learning, these are packages that you can work through at your own pace, although these are hard-copy books or packages.

If the above don’t suit, or don’t meet what you are looking for, then there may be options open to you that you would do out with your normal working location, such as:

o **Training events** – Within your school, CPD sessions may be organised on the basis of a collective need. In addition, Education & Skills Service may also offer courses that suit your needs. If there is nothing delivered within North Ayrshire, there may be courses offered by external providers. Corporate courses are delivered by Human Resources – details of which are available on Navigate. There may also be courses offered by partner organisations which may suit – contact the Learning & Organisational Development Team (HR & OD) who may be able to source these. Note, though, that these may have a cost attached to them and you would need to check with your school’s CPD Co-ordinator whether these can be supported;

o **Further / Higher Education** – if a qualification is what you need, then you may want to check what is available. If you are considering Further / Higher Education, make sure you know what can be supported – the Post-Entry Training Scheme guidance covers this. There may also be additional guidance on this within your Service.

Further guidance on options available is in the Employee Development policy and full PRD Procedure, available on Navigate.
How do I decide what is the best option for me?

The best option can depend on a lot of things. How much time do you have available? What is it you want to develop in? Are there any cost implications? What’s your preferred way to learn? What is the best way to learn a particular topic?

How do you decide? The best way to decide is to discuss this with your line manager.

Talk through the various issues, such as those mentioned above, to decide on the best way forward for you and your establishment – this is the purpose of the PRD Procedure. Education & Skills Service and Learning & Organisational Development Team (HR & OD) can also provide guidance and support.

Remember, it may not be possible to have financial support for areas you are considering - you have to be reasonable in terms of what can be supported. Your manager may not be able to authorise financial support for your development, if you are looking for an external course or further / higher education, as they have to cover the costs for the school to enable your release in addition to the availability of appropriate cover staff. So, if this is the case, consider what other options you have.

Where agreement can’t be reached

If, following the PRD discussion, you and your line manager can’t reach an agreement on a particular development need, or the solution to this, you should add comments within the Action to be taken column of Section 6 of the PRD form to show that you disagree and why this is the case.

This would be escalated to the next level of management within the Service for a decision. A copy of the completed PRD Form would be passed to this manager. The information from both you and your line manager would then be considered, by this next level of management, and they will update the “Action to be taken” section of the PRD form with their decision and the reasons for this. It is good practice for this manager to explain their decision to both you and your line manager, although this is at their discretion.

This next level of management is the final stage within the PRD Procedure.