Learning and Development Policy

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Author:	Head of People and Culture
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Responsible Committee:	College Management Team (CMT)
Approved by & date:	College Management Team (CMT) – 23 October 2026
External reference points:	Equality Act 2010; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; Office for Students (OfS) Condition of Registration B2; Advance HE Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (PSF 2023); UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024)
Linked policies:	PC 5.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; PC 5.8 Personal Development Plan; External Learning and Development Request Form
Audience:	Staff

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

UK College of Business and Computing (UKCBC) is committed to creating a culture of continuous learning and professional development that supports the delivery of the College Strategy 2030, strengthens organisational capability, and enables employees to maximise their contribution to learner success and the College performance.

The College recognises that effective induction, continuous learning, and development are critical to achieving its strategic objectives. Learning opportunities will be provided fairly and without discrimination, in line with the College Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

This policy establishes a strategic and systematic approach to learning and development, ensuring that investment in people aligns with the College long term priorities, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), regulatory obligations, and operational requirements.

The policy adopts a three tier Learning and Development Framework:

1. College Level Learning and Development
2. Department Level Learning and Development
3. Individual Learning and Development

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Align learning and development with Strategy 2030
- Support achievement of the College KPIs
- Develop workforce capability for high quality teaching, learning, and services
- Ensure compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements
- Strengthen leadership, management, and succession planning
- Support employee engagement, career progression, and retention
- Promote lifelong learning and self development
- Provide equal access to learning opportunities
- Establish a transparent governance and budget framework

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Permanent employees
- Fixed term employees
- Part time employees
- Visiting lecturers and Zero Hours staff

It applies across all stages of the employment lifecycle, including induction and ongoing development.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Learning and development: activities that build the knowledge, skills and capability of staff, including induction, training, qualifications and continuing professional development.

Three tier framework: the College's approach to learning and development at College level, department level and individual level (section 7).

Learning Needs Analysis: the process for identifying the learning and development needs of the College, departments and individuals (section 9).

Continuing professional development (CPD): ongoing learning that keeps staff skills and professional knowledge up to date.

5. Strategic Context

The College Strategy 2030 is built on four pillars:

5.1 Our Approach to Education

Delivering applied, authentic learning with strong academic and professional outcomes.

5.2 Our People

Building capability through recruitment, development, and leadership.

5.3 Our Learning Community

Creating an inclusive environment that supports belonging and achievement.

5.4 Our Operational Excellence

Ensuring governance, financial sustainability, and continuous improvement.

All learning and development activities must contribute to these pillars.

6. Principles of Learning and Development

The College will:

- Promote continuous and lifelong learning
- Link learning plans to strategic objectives
- Encourage learning through experience, mentoring, coaching, and collaboration
- Provide paid time (where appropriate) for learning

- Ensure equality of access to development opportunities
- Provide health and safety related training
- Support both formal and informal learning
- Encourage employees to take responsibility for self development
- Ensure learning is properly evaluated and cost effective

7. Three Tier Learning and Development Framework

7.1 Tier One: College Level Learning and Development

Supports strategic priorities, compliance, and organisational capability.

Examples:

- Mandatory training
- Leadership and management development
- Health and safety
- Quality assurance and regulatory training

KPI Measures:

- Training completion rates
- Compliance outcomes
- Audit results
- Staff engagement

7.2 Tier Two: Department Level Learning and Development

Focused on departmental capability and operational performance.

Each department must produce an annual Learning and Development Plan aligned with:

- Department objectives
- Service delivery requirements
- Strategic KPIs
- Workforce planning

Examples:

- Curriculum development
- Systems training
- Student support improvements
- Digital transformation

Plan Requirements:

- Based on appraisal outcomes and team needs
- Reviewed regularly and kept confidential where appropriate
- Informed by:
    - Feedback and exit interviews
    - Skills gap analysis
    - Future work demands

KPI Measures:

- Department performance targets
- Student satisfaction
- Retention and progression
- Service efficiency

7.3 Tier Three: Individual Learning and Development

Focuses on employee performance and career progression.

Every employee will have a Personal Development Plan (PDP) agreed through:

- Induction and probation
- Performance reviews
- Annual appraisal
- One to one meetings
- Career discussions

Examples:

- Professional qualifications
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities
- Coaching and mentoring
- Conferences and workshops

Development objectives must align with:

- Role requirements
- Department goals
- The College priorities

8. External Learning and Development Requests

Where an identified learning need cannot be met through internal learning provision, employees may request approval to attend an externally provided learning and development activity, including professional qualifications, conferences, seminars, workshops, accredited training programmes or other Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.

Requests must be submitted using the College's External Learning and Development Request Form (appendix 1) and approved before any registration, booking or financial commitment is made. Requests should be submitted sufficiently in advance to allow appropriate consideration, financial approval and operational planning.

External learning requests will normally arise from an agreed Personal Development Plan, appraisal, departmental Learning and Development Plan, workforce planning activity or an identified organisational capability requirement. Approval will be based upon a balanced assessment of:

- alignment with the College Strategy 2030, departmental objectives, workforce planning priorities, regulatory requirements and the employee's agreed development objectives;
- availability of funding within the Strategic, Departmental or Individual Learning and Development Budget, ensuring expenditure represents value for money and supports measurable organisational outcomes;

- the operational impact of releasing the employee, including service delivery, teaching commitments, business continuity, staffing levels and workload management; and
- the anticipated organisational benefit, including improved capability, enhanced teaching or professional practice, compliance, leadership development, operational effectiveness, student outcomes, innovation and knowledge transfer.

Employees must provide sufficient supporting information to enable an informed decision, including details of the provider, course content, learning objectives, dates, duration, delivery method, full cost breakdown, expected learning outcomes and a business justification demonstrating the anticipated organisational benefit.

Line managers will review requests against departmental priorities, operational requirements, available budgets and workforce capability needs before making a recommendation. Depending on the cost and delegated authority, approval may also require endorsement by the Head of Department, the People and Culture Department or the Executive Leadership Team. Approval is not automatic and will be determined following consideration of strategic priorities, available resources and the expected return on investment.

Employees whose external learning has been funded by the College will normally be expected to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning, update their Personal Development Plan where appropriate, and share relevant knowledge and good practice with colleagues through presentations, workshops, coaching, mentoring or other suitable knowledge sharing activities to maximise organisational benefit from the investment. For the completion of the pre- and post evaluation form, refer to the Personal Development Plan.

9. Learning Needs Analysis

Department Heads will undertake an annual Learning Needs Analysis as part of the departmental planning cycle to ensure that learning and development activities are strategically planned and aligned with the College's priorities, workforce capability requirements, and operational objectives. The Learning Needs Analysis will inform the development of each Departmental Learning and Development Plan and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains responsive to changing organisational and departmental needs.

Learning needs will be identified through three complementary levels of analysis:

- **Organisational Analysis**, which considers the College Strategy 2030, organisational Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), regulatory and statutory requirements, risk assessments, workforce planning priorities, organisational performance, and other strategic priorities.
- **Departmental Analysis**, which considers departmental objectives and plans, service performance, skills gap analyses, audit findings, quality assurance outcomes, workforce requirements, operational priorities, and areas requiring continuous improvement.
- **Individual Analysis**, which considers information gathered through induction, probation, appraisals, performance reviews, one to one meetings, career aspirations, competency frameworks, professional development objectives, and identified performance or capability gaps.

Department Heads should use the outcomes of the Learning Needs Analysis to identify current and future capability requirements, prioritise learning and development activities, allocate available resources effectively, and ensure that departmental learning plans support both departmental objectives and the wider strategic priorities of the College.

10. Planning and Delivery

Managers will:

- Plan learning activities linked to strategic and departmental objectives
- Define clear learning objectives for each activity
- Develop project based learning plans where required

Employees and managers will jointly agree development plans through the appraisal process.

11. Governance and Responsibilities

Board of Governors

- Provide strategic oversight
- Monitor workforce capability risks
- Ensure alignment with Strategy 2030

Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

- Approve priorities and budgets
- Monitor organisational capability

Head of People and Culture

- Maintain the policy
- Lead learning needs analysis
- Monitor effectiveness
- Produce annual reports

People and Culture Department

- Provide guidance and expertise
- Ensure cost effectiveness
- Support course design and delivery

Department Heads and Managers

- Develop departmental plans
- Identify capability gaps
- Support and coach employees
- Approve learning requests

Employees

- Take responsibility for their development
- Participate in learning activities
- Share knowledge with colleagues

12. Budget Allocation Framework

A three tier funding structure applies:

Strategic Budget

- Institution wide initiatives
- Leadership development

- Compliance requirements

Departmental Budget
- Based on workforce size and priorities
- Supports departmental plans

Individual Budget
- Professional development and CPD

All expenditure must demonstrate:
- Value for money
- Strategic alignment
- Measurable impact

The People and Culture department manage budgets for external training, qualifications, and conferences.

13. Performance Management Alignment

Learning and development is integrated into performance management through:
- Objective setting
- Mid year and annual reviews
- Career planning

Managers must ensure alignment with:
- Individual performance goals
- Departmental KPIs
- The College priorities

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

Effectiveness will be measured through:
- Training completion rates
- Employee feedback
- Performance improvements
- KPI achievement
- Student outcomes
- Audit and compliance results
- Retention and progression data

Learning objectives will be evaluated before and after activities.

An annual Learning and Development Report will be presented to ELT and the Board summarising:
- Investment
- Participation
- Outcomes
- Return on investment
- Strategic impact

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if required due to:

- Legislative changes
- Regulatory requirements
- Strategic updates

Appendix 1 – External Learning and Development Request Form

Employee Details

Employee Name:	
Job Title:	
Department:	
Line Manager:	
Date of Request:	

Learning Opportunity

Course/Programme Title:	
Provider:	
Dates/Duration:	
Location/Delivery Method:	
Total Cost (fees/travel/accommodation/other):	

Business Justification

1. How does this align with departmental and organisational objectives?
2. What knowledge/skills will be gained?
3. What organisational benefits are anticipated?
4. How will learning be shared with colleagues?
5. Operational arrangements during absence:

Budget and Approval	Name	Signature	Date
Budget available?			
Manager recommendation			
Head of Department approval			
People and Culture review			
Final approval by the applicable Executive Director			

Version History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes	Approved by
1.0	July 2026	Head of People and Culture	Previously approved version.	College Management Team (CMT) – July 2026
1.1	23 October 2026	Head of People and Culture	Updated following organisational restructure: role titles, internal consistency corrections, cross references, front sheet and footer updated for approval. Definitions section added and sections renumbered in line with GA 3.1 (26 October 2026). External reference points added to the front sheet (26 October 2026).	College Management Team (CMT)