

External study policy for Adult Social Care

Camden is committed to supporting the professional development of all its staff. Whilst there is a strong internal learning and professional development offer and many opportunities to learn in the work, we recognise that there are times when access to external development opportunities are required to complement this learning or gain appropriate professional qualifications.

1. What does this policy cover?

This policy has been designed to provide a framework for all requests by ASC staff to access external development opportunities – whether internally/externally funded or not. The policy makes every effort to create a transparent process, to ensure that access to opportunities is fair, and that support provided is as consistent as possible.

Whilst all requests will be considered, priority will be weighted towards qualifications and learning desirable to the organisation and will need to take account of the financial resources available.

This framework does not cover apprenticeships. If you wish to further explore apprenticeship opportunities please contact Sheila.kerins@camden.gov.uk in the Organisational Development team. Further information about [Learning in Camden](#) in general is outlined on Essentials.

Oversight of this policy is held by the ASC Workforce Development Group (WDG).

2. Funding

The following funding streams are currently available to staff in Adult Social Care to support requests to access external learning opportunities:

- Professionally registered workforce
- Continuous professional development for all roles

Further information on these funding streams is provided below. The focus of funding available does reflect the organisation's responsibility to its professionally registered workforce. Your manager may be aware of additional local or external funding opportunities you could apply for.

The funding lead within ASC is responsible for

- The communication and administration of application windows: these are important in ensuring the processes is equitable and transparent
- Considering current ASC WDG priorities in the decision making process
- Reporting quarterly to the ASC WDG on spend and impact

Funding leads may wish to establish a regular window (for example, 2 or 3 times a year) to communicate this process and invite applications for opportunities that meet identified priorities or development needs that are outside the internal offer.

The manager making the decision regarding your application will need to establish whether appropriate funding is available to support a request, before agreeing to the request.

In some cases it may only be possible to part fund a request, in these instances the learner would be expected to self-fund the balance. Where it is not possible to provide funding at all,

a learner may wish to proceed by self-funding the learning and taking advantage of other agreed benefits such as the support described in section 3.3.

If you leave the employ of Camden during a course you may be asked to refund part or all of the subsidised course costs.

2.1. Professionally registered workforce

Camden has a responsibility to support the CPD of its professionally registered workforce. We do this by providing a comprehensive in-house learning offer, by creating opportunities to learn in the work and reflect on experiences, and by allocating a small annual fund to access external professional courses and learning events including conferences.

The following named individuals lead on the various funding streams and are responsible for authorising payments from annually agreed funds ('funding leads').

- Social Workers professional post qualifying qualifications (including Practice Education and ASYE) and CPD short courses - Stella.Smith@camden.gov.uk and Sally.Nieman@camden.gov.uk - fund administered by L&D
- Occupational Therapists professional CPD - Naomi.Giles@camden.gov.uk - fund administered by L&D
- Best Interest Assessors - Tony.Anyaegbu@camden.gov.uk - fund administered locally
- Approved Mental Health Practitioners - David.Hamilton@camden.gov.uk - fund administered by L&D

2.2. Continuous professional development for all roles

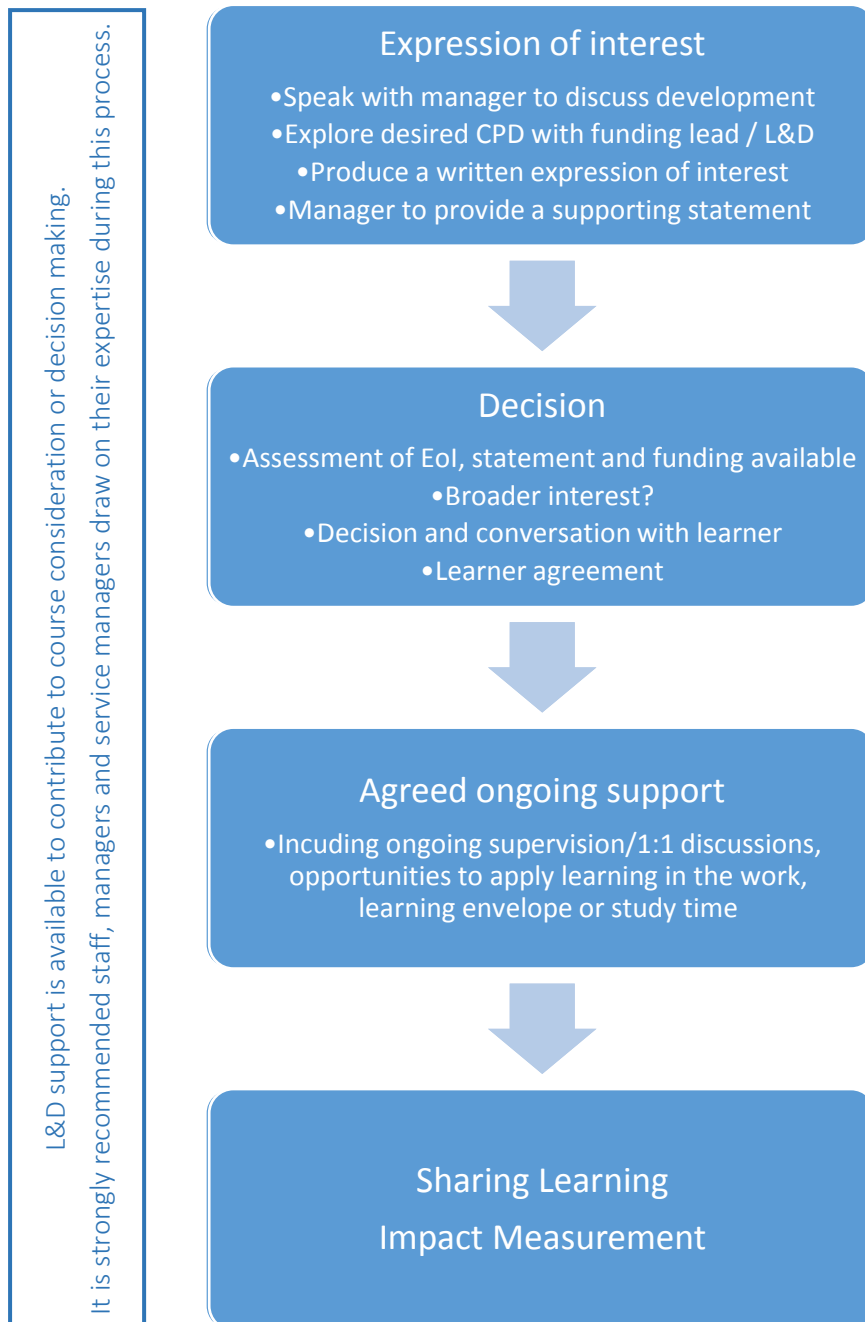
We recognise that the whole of our workforce are professionals, whether registered or not, and as such provide both targeted and universal in-house learning offers to complement their learning in the work.

We understand that access to external learning opportunities can occasionally further enhance working practices and endeavour to do our best to support these where funds allow. It is likely the funds will need to come directly from your service budget; on some occasions OD and L&D may be able to assist.

Please contact the following individuals to discuss requests. Requests for funds will be considered on a case by case basis.

- Your Service Manager / Head of Service
- Jackie.Kennedy@camden.gov.uk OD and L&D Supporting People Lead

3. Process



3.1. Expression of interest

Professional and personal development conversations should routinely be taking place in supervision/1:1s with your manager. Your manager will help guide you in exploring the internal opportunities available to you, and resources accessible online and through professional networks. You might also wish to speak with colleagues in L&D. They may be able to signpost you on to further information or suggest other opportunities for you to consider. Often learning needs can be met through these routes.

If in addition to the internal provision and your own self-directed learning you wish to access an external development opportunity, you will be expected to provide a written expression of interest.

This request will need to include:

- The development opportunity you wish to access, the time commitment, the learning provider and any associated costs
- How you think it will support your professional development
- How you anticipate managing the learning demands with your day to day workload
- Whether there are any circumstances you feel should be taken into account

Your manager will need to provide a statement either supporting or not the request, giving reasons for doing so. If your manager does not support the application we would encourage you to still apply to ensure transparency in process. If your manager is supportive it will be expected they look to understand whether there is broader interest in the development opportunity - possibly across the service - and if so to encourage others to submit Eols too.

The individual named as funding lead for each of the funding streams detailed in section 2 is responsible for application windows for their funding streams, and equity of process. They will also be able to provide further information on where there are specific internal application processes for certain qualifications for example the Practice Educator course, Best Interest Assessor qualification, and AMHP training.

3.2. Assessing statements and decision making

It is expected that the service manager in collaboration with the funding lead would make a decision on whether to grant the request based on the Eol and supporting statement. If circumstances are such that this is not possible, or where Eols are from a service manager level or above, it is expected that another manager with suitable oversight responsibilities will make the decision.

Where these are significant requests, for example university courses, it is expected this decision is made following consultation with relevant others e.g. a managers meeting, PSWE, or such like. L&D support is available to contribute to course consideration and/or decision making. It is strongly recommended staff, managers and service managers draw on their expertise.

Decisions are to be communicated to prospective learners in writing, followed by a conversation at their next supervision/1:1. If the Eol is successful a 'Learner Agreement' is to be completed and signed by the learner, manager and funder and a copy kept by the manager.

3.3. Support

It is reasonable for learners to expect the following support from the organisation:

- Ongoing discussions in supervision/1:1s regarding the nature of what is being learnt, how the student is applying it in their practice, and the possibility of being allocated tasks or experiences which may be helpful to embed learning.
- Camden has no specific policy regarding study leave allocation. Managers are expected to make this decision locally based on service needs. However, in order for learners to gain the greatest advantage from external study it strongly encouraged wherever it can be supported.

- a. A guideline amount of one day a month to a maximum of 5 days a year would be usual for an external course taking place over a number of sessions, in addition to attendance of the course days.
- b. Where a learning opportunity is a short course/session it would be expected that an envelope of time before and after be allowed to enable the learner to prepare and reflect.

3.4. Sharing learning

We are keen to embed learning into both individual practice and within the wider organisation. As Camden is investing in your professional development it is reasonable to expect that we may call upon you to share the skills and/or knowledge you have gained.

Depending on the nature of the development you might:

- Deliver learning opportunities to others, your manager or L&D would provide support for you to do so.
- Contribute to particular pieces of work. This involvement would be agreed with your manager so that it can be aligned with your workload.

It is usual that this is discussed in the early stages and recorded in your Learner Agreement.

3.5. Impact of learning

The application of learnt skills and knowledge takes place over time and through experience. It is important that we actively reflect to allow ourselves to consciously consider the impact of what we have learnt on our practice, and on the work of the organisation. We would expect that at minimum you:

- Have a reflective conversation in a supervision/1:1 session to explore how the learning you undertook impacted on your practice.
- If the learning is significant or takes place over a long period of time, you should agree in the learning agreement how you will measure impact, and how you might use what you have learnt in practice, for example, sharing learning with colleagues or your team.
- You contribute to any impact assessment the organisation may undertake relevant to your learning.

Document last reviewed: March 2021

Adult Social Care – Expression of Interest**Details**

Name of learner	
Team	
Team manager	
Service manager or Head of service	
Funding requested	
Learning provider / university	
Title of learning and session date/s and times	
Study leave requested if any	
<p>Expression of Interest (Eoi)</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you think this learning will support your professional development • How you might embed the learning into both your individual practice and share it with others in the organisation • How you anticipate managing the learning demands with your day to day workload • Whether there are any circumstances you feel should be taken into account 	
Manager statement	

Adult Social Care - Learning Agreement

This learning agreement clarifies the expectations and responsibilities of all involved in supporting and funding the agreed external learning.

Details

Name of learner	
Team	
Team manager	
Service manager or Head of service that authorised your Eol	
Funder/L&D contact (where applicable)	
Learning provider / university	
Title of learning and session date/s and times	
Agreed study leave	
Any additional agreed conditions or arrangements	

Learner's responsibilities

- Attend all learning sessions
- Commit to completing the learning and where applicable submit assignments within agreed time scales
- Inform the line manager and L&D lead if you are unable to submit work on time and/or if you have any concerns regarding the learning programme
- Engage in reflective conversations and impact assessments
- Share your learning with others

Line manager's responsibilities

- Ensure the learner is released from work to attend all the learning sessions as detailed in the learners expression of interest

- Release the learner to take agreed study leave during the course; study leave will be planned and agreed with appropriate notice
- Engage in regular supervision discussions with the learner, providing support, identifying opportunities and addressing any concerns should any arise
- Make arrangements for agreed funding to be paid as required

The following people have read and agreed to the terms and conditions of this Learning Agreement

Signed by Learner Date.....

Signed by Line Manager..... Date

Signed by Funder/L&D contact..... Date