



Symphony Learning  
TRUST

---

# Professional Development Policy 2017 - 2021

---

Adopted by Symphony Learning Trust on	January 2017
Next Review Due – Every Four Years	January 2021



## Principles, Values and Entitlements

---

1. Symphony Learning Trust (SLT) schools are “learning communities” where everyone is involved in a continuous process of improvement and enrichment. The schools are committed to fostering a positive climate for continuous learning amongst their communities. Professional Development is the means by which schools are able to motivate and develop their community and this is integral to the school improvement plans. It does so at a variety of levels – individual, team, whole school and through wider networks with an emphasis on collaborative learning.
2. Symphony Learning Trust schools engage with the principles of Life Long Learning, aimed at ensuring development opportunities are available to all employees.
3. Symphony Learning Trust supports the philosophy “*effective staff should take ownership and give a high priority to professional development*”. SLT advocates that a coherent and progressive opportunity to develop professionally and personally both improves standards and raises morale through personal and professional fulfilment and assists recruitment and retention. Professional Development will be coordinated by a nominated member of staff in each of its schools. The nominated person/Coordinator will either be a member of the Senior Leadership Team in each school or provide the Senior Leadership Team with recommendations to be included in the school improvement plan and budget.
4. The cycle for Professional Development starts with identified needs e.g. Performance Management Reviews. Development needs will feed into School Improvement Plans and link to Financial Budget plans. Trust-wide needs should be considered from both a joint training opportunity and a financial saving perspective.
5. All staff will have an entitlement to equality of access to high-quality induction and continuing support and development which addresses their needs and aspirations.
6. The central features of the Professional Development policy will comprise:
  - Sharing good practice through collaboration with other schools both within the SLT and beyond;
  - Developing good practice through joint research opportunities (JPD);
  - effective auditing and identification of need and aspiration;
  - ensuring appropriate match of provision to the individual;
  - reliable and explicit evaluation of the impact of provision;
  - effective dissemination of good and successful practice to ensure that such practice is embedded and reinforced.
7. SLT schools will use a range of types of provision and providers adopting “Best Value” principles in determining these.
8. SLT schools will allow staff to develop skills and competencies progressively allowing them to build on and reinforce skills and expertise, particularly across the key areas identified in the appropriate Standards Frameworks.
9. SLT schools will support training opportunities, where appropriate, that award professional recognition including accreditation.



## Identifying Needs

---

1. Individual schools will have a nominated person or professional development coordinator who will be responsible for liaising with the Senior Leadership Team and Governors. This person will receive training and support as appropriate in order to fulfil the role effectively.
2. Individual schools will identify their own school's needs and those of the school community. Such needs will be identified largely through existing mechanisms such as:
  - Performance Management;
  - School Improvement Plans;
  - school, local and national priorities;
  - other internal and external monitoring and feedback evidence;
  - evidence from individual reflection and self-evaluation processes;
  - informal and formal discussions with individuals and teams;
  - Talent management
  - succession planning

The outcomes of the needs analysis will be a Professional Development Plan which forms part of the School Improvement Plan. Individuals will be encouraged to produce individual training plans as part of the Performance Management process.

3. Schools will be responsible for reporting to the governing body the main priorities in terms of training and development, the provision, impact and the likely budgetary implications of addressing these needs. Professional development issues will also be addressed at other governing body meetings and be included as part of the Head Teacher's report to Governors.
4. Any needs analysis undertaken will be implemented with the full cooperation of staff and will be used solely for learning and development purposes. It will not be used in relation to other issues such as job evaluation, redundancy, pay, performance appraisal or disciplinary procedures.
5. Performance Management outcomes should be used to determine suitable training or development opportunities to be accessed. Where appropriate, this can be delegated to others such as the reviewee's line manager for recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team. Other requests for accessing opportunities should be addressed the Senior Leadership Team.

## Talent Management

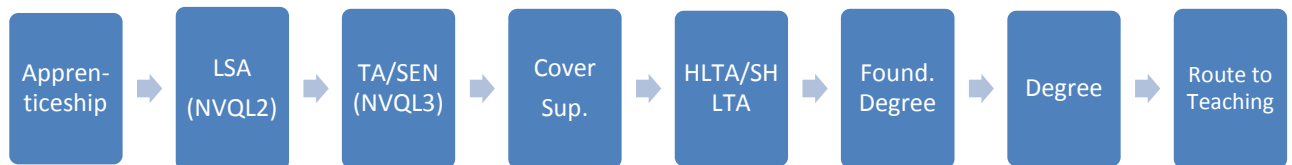
---

1. It is important for the Trust to identify potential talent and develop its staff. Head Teachers should receive training and support to grow and recruit their teams at every level. Early identification of talent is crucial to enable potential talent to be fast tracked.
2. Delivering the professional continuum for provides a pathway for development:

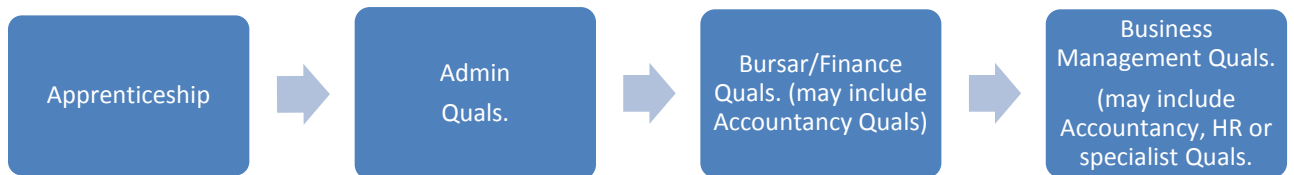
Teaching route:



Classroom Support Staff route:



Administration/Bursar/Business Manager



3. Joined up recruitment, movement of staff and succession planning across the Trust can provide opportunities to broaden staff development and provide consistency in achieving the aims and vision of the Trust.

1. Individual schools shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate opportunities are available for all groups of the school community including Governors, parents/carers and trainees.
2. Individual schools will be responsible for ensuring that:
  - a. provision is of sufficient quality;
  - b. provision is organised efficiently, e.g. bookings, venues, facilities and resources;
  - c. provision is available at convenient times and that where possible, e.g. basic skills training, this will be available within working time. The school's nominated person/professional development Coordinator will discuss with the Head Teacher and governing body requests for changes to work patterns to enable training and development opportunities to be accessed with requests considered on an individual basis and in accordance with school policies;
  - d. current opportunities, including an ethos of lifelong learning, is communicated to relevant staff and that it is made clear that they are actively encouraged to fully participate in learning procedures;
3. The Senior Leadership Team will identify the effective use of school closure/training days liaising with others as appropriate and delegating responsibility for coordinating events if necessary.
4. In ensuring that provision meets "Best Value" principles, the school will adopt the principles for effective Professional Development, ie. they will:
  - meet identified individual, school or national development priorities;
  - be relevant and inspiring;
  - communicate clearly the purposes, methods, the objectives and expectations;
  - be based on good practice;
  - help raise standards of pupils' achievements;
  - respect cultural diversity;
  - be provided by those with the necessary experience, expertise and skills;
  - be planned systematically and follow the agreed programme except when dealing with emerging issues;
  - be based, where appropriate, on relevant standards;
  - be based on current research and inspection evidence and have a valid, theoretical underpinning;
  - make effective use of resources, particularly ICT;
  - be provided in accommodation which is fit for purpose with appropriate equipment;
  - provide value for money;
  - provide effective monitoring and evaluation systems including seeking out and acting on user feedback to inform the quality of provision.
5. Schools will support a wide portfolio of induction and development approaches identified according to "Best Value" principles and which reflect the learning effectiveness of the participants. These include:

- in-school training using the expertise available within the school (e.g. collaborative teaching, planning and assessment, work with a teacher learning community, classroom observation, existing expertise, peer evaluation, collaborative enquiry and problem-solving, modelling);
- coaching and mentoring and engaging in a learning conversation;
- job enrichment/enlargement e.g. a higher level of responsibility; front lining, working in someone else's job, job sharing, acting roles, job rotation, shadowing, leading meetings;
- producing documentation or resources (eg. curriculum development, teaching materials, assessment package, IT resources);
- accessing an external consultant/adviser or relevant expert if required;
- collecting and collating pupil feedback, data and outcomes;
- attendance at a lecture, course or conference;
- school visits to observe or participate in good and successful practice;
- secondments, exchanges and placements (e.g. within a regional or national organisation, an exchange or placement, with another teacher, school, higher education, industry, international exchange, involvement with governing body);
- postgraduate professional development and other qualifications from higher educational institutions and other forms of professional recognition and qualifications such as NVQs, Higher Level Teaching Assistants, Foundation Degrees, Masters Level qualifications;
- research opportunities;
- distance learning (e.g. relevant resources such as educational journals and publications, online qualifications and training, YouTube);
- practical experience (e.g. national test or exam marking experience, opportunities to present a paper, contribute to a training programme, coordinating or supporting a learning forum or network, involvement in local and national networks, involvement with a subject or specialist association);
- external partnerships (e.g. with a colleague, group, subject, phase, activity or school-based; team meetings and activities such as a joint planning, observation or standardisation, special project working group).

6. All those engaged with learning and development will be encouraged to:

- reflect on their development using appropriate mechanisms such as Performance Management systems
- seek professional recognition, if appropriate, for the work undertaken.



## Evaluating Impact and Disseminating Good and Successful Practice

---

1. Schools will be responsible for devising a system that allows impact to be measured. It will identify clearly what methods are used, how, who is involved and when. This shall be communicated to all staff.
2. Following professional or other development, the participant will discuss with their line manager or nominated professional development person whether there are opportunities to disseminate to other staff if appropriate. Relevant feedback about the provision and the ideas should be provided. Where it is agreed that there would be benefit from a wider circulation or follow up, the Senior Leadership Team or a nominated person will be responsible for organising how that will be disseminated, eg. circulating relevant resources, a session at staff or subject meeting, introducing a teaching or learning strategy, inclusion on the school website.
3. The Senior Leadership Team will review annually whether any aspects of professional development provision, eg. service level agreements or subscriptions do not represent value for money.
4. Schools will devise success criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development undertaken against "value for money". These success criteria may include:
  - participant evaluation and feedback;
  - sustainable student outcomes including attainment, engagement and enthusiasm;
  - sustainable staff skills, knowledge and understanding;
  - sustainable staff confidence and motivation;
  - organisational change and climate;
  - recruitment and retention;
  - career progression and promotability;
  - shorter and longer-term benefits.
5. Schools will report to their Local governing body and the Trustees at least annually on the benefits of the opportunities undertaken and future needs.