

Staff Development Fund: Guidance 2023-24

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1 Aim of the fund

The university’s Staff Development Fund (SDF) is managed by the Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) in close partnership with academic partner staff development officers, or those with this responsibility, and with UHI departmental line managers who are responsible for the staff development of their teams. The fund supplements the approved contributions made towards a programme of study by an academic partner or UHI departmental line manager.

The SDF is open to colleagues who are currently teaching and/or supporting higher education students. This focus recognises that academic partners have responsibility for staff development activities for colleagues teaching and supporting further education students. Applications to the fund are considered throughout the academic year. For colleagues in academic partners, applications are endorsed by line managers and then approved by the staff development officer or those with responsibility for staff development. For colleagues in UHI departments, applications are approved directly by line managers. Once approved, applications are then submitted to the Staff Development Review Panel.

Every year the staff development fund contributes to over seventy applications, from across the university, to undertake accredited professional development programmes of study. These include taught education programmes both with the university and with other institutions. Recipients of the

fund have also undertaken undergraduate, postgraduates and PhD studies. Applicants are strongly encouraged to undertake a programme of study available at the University where this is possible. Many recipients of the staff development fund continue their professional development by seeking professional recognition through the university's framework for the recognition of excellent practice in learning and teaching - [ALPINE](#). For more information on other opportunities, including joining the University Mentoring Scheme, undertaking educational scholarship, or writing an LTA blog post see the [Learning and Teaching Academy](#) webpages.

2 Funding provision levels

The funding contributions levels are as follows:

- 40% towards the full cost of fees for a University of the Highlands and Islands programme
- 30% towards an external programme of study
- 50% for external PhD; 75% for internal PhD up to a maximum of £1000
- A maximum funding in any one academic year of £1,000 per applicant
- A maximum funding of two modules or equivalent HN units in any one academic year.

The fund **does not** cover:

- remission of staff time to undertake the accredited programme of study
- non-accredited programmes of study
- mandatory TQFE qualifications
- the cost of the purchase of books, travel and other expenses
- applications for less than £100
- the remainder of the course fees and expenses which are expected to be funded by the relevant academic partner or executive office department or by the applicant
- continuation of funding if employment ceases
- conference attendance funding as this is covered by the [Research Conference Fund](#).

All university staff are entitled to a 20% staff discount on the full fees of programmes of study provided by the University. An example of the award of a funding contribution for an application is provided below.

Example of breakdown of funding contribution	Amount of funding
Cost of the programme of study (two modules per academic year)	£1120
20% discount applied	£896
40% of cost of programme of study funded by Staff Development Fund	£448

Figure 1 Example of breakdown of funding contributions with staff discount applied

3 Completion and authorisation of application forms

Colleagues employed by academic partners are asked to consult with their Staff Development Officer (or those with this responsibility) before completing an application, if they have not already done so, as part of existing academic partner application processes. UHI colleagues are asked to consult with their departmental line manager before completing an application.

Applications will only be accepted when they have been signed and dated by the applicant, the endorser (who is usually a line manager) and the relevant Staff Development Officer (or those with this responsibility) in an academic partner.

4 Privacy notice

The information provided in staff development fund applications will be used by the LTA for the purpose of collection and storage of personal data in relation to the communication of information, monitoring and reporting of the allocation of funding to individuals from the SDF. Please read the [LTA funded initiatives \(LTA Scholarship, Aurora, Staff Development Fund\) privacy notice](#).

5 Application forms

There are four staff development forms which can all be downloaded from the [LTA funding support](#) web pages. Please refer to the table below for guidance on the form to use for your application:

Form	Description
SD1	For colleagues applying for initial funding support for an accredited programme of study
SD1-level 12	For colleagues applying for initial funding support for an SCQF level 12 programme of study, e.g. PhD or EdD
SD2	For colleagues who have already received initial funding support from the staff development fund and are applying for continuation of funding for the same programme of study.
SD3	For colleagues who have completed their programme of study and the funding support has come to an end. The SD3 form requests information on the benefits of the programme of study to professional practice including anticipated next steps and at least one opportunity to share their learning with relevant colleagues.

Figure 2 Staff development form names and descriptions

5.1 SD1 application (new application up to SCQF level 11)

A range of information is required for the completion of the SD1 and SD1-level 12 forms. The first section of the form is completed by the applicant and requires the applicant to reflect on the appropriateness of the programme of study and the potential impact to their professional practice. The final two sections to be completed by the endorser and the staff development officer or those with this responsibility or, in the case of UHI portfolios, the departmental line manager.

5.2 SD1-level 12 application (new application SCQF level 12)

The SD1-level 12 application form requires additional information in relation to the supervisor, the title for the studies, and endorsements by the relevant UHI Subject Network Leader (SNL), Dean of Faculty and Dean of Research for comment, prior to consideration at the Staff Development Review panel. If you are unsure which SNL or Dean of Faculty your application aligns, please contact lta@uhi.ac.uk for further advice.

5.3 SD2 application (continuation of funding)

The SD2 is completed by applicants wishing to continue a programme of study which has been awarded a contribution towards fees by the Staff Development Fund. The completion of the SD2 form requires a brief description of the progress made since the start of the funding support, including the units and modules which have been completed as well as a statement on the benefits gained from undertaking the programme of study. There is also an opportunity to provide details on how the learning from the programme of study has been put into practice. It should be noted that there is no guarantee that that continuation of funding will be approved by the Staff Development Fund Review panel.

5.4 SD3 evaluation form (evaluation of funding)

On completion of a programme of study the applicant is asked to complete an SD3 evaluation form which requests a statement on the benefits of the programme of study to their professional practice and asks them to identify next steps and include at least one opportunity they have identified which will support them to share their learning with relevant colleagues.

Submitted application forms are stored in the university's document management system. In accordance with university retention policy they will be deleted at the end of employment plus six years.

6 Application submission

Applications from academic partners are authorised by the relevant staff development officer (or those with this responsibility), or in the case of UHI staff, the departmental line manager. Authorised applications should be sent to the LTA by email to lta@uhi.ac.uk.

7 Application review

Applications are reviewed by the staff development fund review panel. The panel meets regularly throughout the academic year to review submitted applications. The review panel members are drawn from across the university and have experience of staff development fund applications. The current panel members are:

Panel member	Position
Andy Brown	Head of Corporate Systems Compliance, UHI
Dr Anne Frater	Programme leader, UHI Outer Hebrides
Debbie Wartnaby (Chair)	Organisational Learning & Development Co-ordinator, UHI
Dr Nicola Carey	Head of Nursing, UHI Dept of Nursing and Midwifery
Fiona Gunn	Professional Development Manager, UHI Inverness
Gordon Dickson	Staff Learning and Development Administrator, UHI West Highland
Jane MacIntosh	Curriculum Leader, UHI North Highland
Katy Lees	Head of HR and Organisational Development, UHI Perth
Susannah Wilson	Curriculum Leader, UHI Argyll
Tom Duff	Director of Learning and Teaching, UHI North Highland

Figure 3 Panel member names and positions

The panel will consider several factors including the extent to which the eligibility criteria have been met; the programme of study aligns with the stated professional development aims and the potential enhancement of professional practice. Alignment with the aims of the [Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy](#) (LTES) both through their academic partner or the university will also be considered.

The outcome of the panel will be communicated by email from the LTA to the relevant staff development officer (or those with this responsibility), or in the case of UHI staff, the departmental line manager within two weeks of the panel meeting.

8 Transfer of funds

8.1 Transfer of funding contribution to academic partners

The transfer of funds is managed by the LTA. For applications from colleagues employed by an academic partner, a Purchase Order (PO) is raised by the LTA and an email is sent to the appropriate Staff Development Officer (or those with this responsibility) informing them of the relevant PO number. An automatic email is also generated to the relevant finance team requesting that an invoice is submitted to the University Finance team by emailing accountspayable@uhi.ac.uk using the PO number provided.

8.2 Transfer of funding contribution within UHI

Invoices for programme of study fees, relating to a staff development fund application, are expected to be paid, in full, by colleagues employed directly by UHI. Using the receipt of payment, the portion of fees provided by the Staff Development Fund can be claimed back through the usual staff expenses claim process. The LTA will provide the departmental line manager with the Staff Development Fund budget code to facilitate this process.

Where the applicant is unable to pay the invoice in full, they should liaise with their departmental line manager to explore options for payment. The processing of funding applications will aim to ensure that individual applicants are not out of pocket in relation to their programme or course fees.

An annual deadline of the middle of July is set for invoices to be received by the University Finance team to ensure that funds are transferred within the appropriate financial year.

9 For more information

If you have any general queries about the staff development fund, please email LTA@uhi.ac.uk