

# THE ORCHARD PROJECT



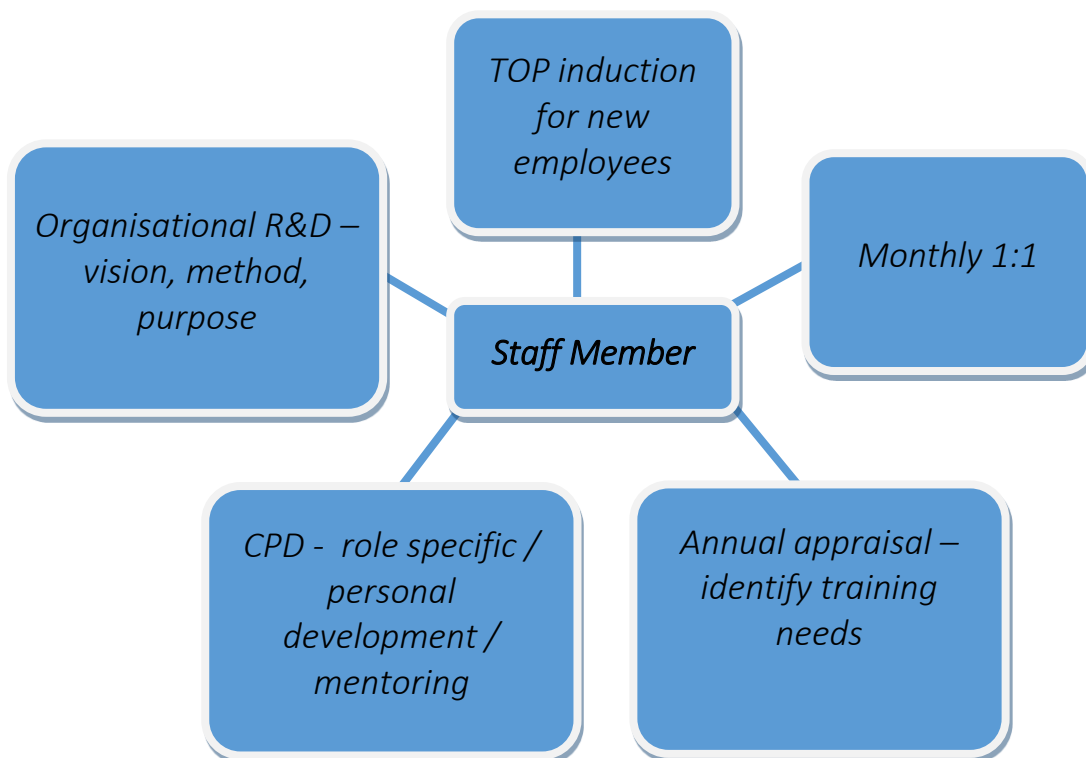
## **Staff Induction, Training and CPD Policy**

## About us

The Orchard Project is a small but national charity, established in 2009, dedicated to creating a skilled community of orchardists to plant, care for and harvest fruit trees, connecting urban communities and increasing access to fruit. We work with people from all walks of life, with a specific focus on people living in poorer, inner city areas. We have already made a big impact in London and are being seen as the urban orchard experts. Each year we are engaging approximately 5,000 people in orchard related activities. In 2017 we started offering accredited training in partnership with Crossfields Institute.

## Introduction

This document outlines our approach to staff CPD and training and has been based around good practice recommended by and accepted by the regulators. The image provides a high level summary illustration of the approach we take to training with further details provided below.



## **New Staff**

All new staff receive an induction session so as to ensure that each new member of staff receives appropriate guidance and training in relation to:

- TOP's vision, values, purpose and method;
- understanding their own role in the context of the organisation, including equality and diversity;
- policies and procedures relating to the role;
- sector developments and an overview of relevant regulators and their requirements and expectations
- an overview of relevant legislation
- key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities

Formal training needs for staff are identified as part of TOP's staff professional development review (annual appraisal) (which is also used to monitor performance and evaluate the effectiveness and consistency of individual's work). For example, training may be required for areas that include subject specific knowledge, data protection, equality updates, regulatory and market developments, assessment methods, and unit design writing or delivery methods. In some cases TOP may ask external consultants to facilitate such training.

In line with the TOP's vision and values, all staff are actively encouraged to flag up individual/group training/standardisation needs with their line manager in order to ensure that TOP continues to develop and deliver high-quality provision and provide a first class service.

## **General Staff Training**

In addition to the induction training and individual training, all staff will attend regular training on relevant legislation (eg equality and diversity issues) or policy and procedure changes. The training session will be designed and facilitated by Head of Operations & Programmes, with the assistance of the Project Managers.

## **Staff Reviews**

The performance of each member of staff will be reviewed via annual appraisal process. Appraisals occur annually and all TOP staff will receive their first review after their probationary period. Training needs are identified and training plans put in place alongside setting objectives for the year. If appropriate, staff must also renew their Declaration of Interest Form as part of their annual appraisal.

All TOP staff will receive one-to-one meetings with their line managers on a regular basis to review their progress.

TOP is committed to incorporating specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing its Equality Opportunities and Diversity Policy into job descriptions and work objectives, for all staff.

# Continuous Professional Development Strategy, Policy and Procedure

## Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Strategy

The TOP strategy is intended to support and help create a motivated, engaged workforce who will perform to high standards. The sustainability of TOP relies on the presence, productivity, accountability, competence and ability to reflect, learn and think before acting. As such, TOP is committed to developing the skills of its employees and recognises that undertaking Continuing Professional Development, training and qualifications can benefit both an organisation, its employees and its beneficiaries. TOP aims to promote and facilitate high quality development and staff welfare that encourages reflective and reflexive practice in order to sustain and increase performance, individual and organisational success and better outcomes for beneficiaries.

The CPD priorities are:

- to enhance and develop staff's knowledge, skills and ability in the areas of administration, leadership, management, finance, quality assurance, qualification development, education and research as relevant to the requirements of their posts;
- to facilitate a professional context within which staff can grow and flourish, facilitating that they can truly serve their individual and collective purpose;
- to develop a culture of work-based learning, practice sharing and action research;
- to keep staff up to date on current legislation, particularly around areas such as Equality and Diversity;
- to assure and enhance the quality of qualification development, quality assurance, teaching, learning and research as well as the services supporting them; and
- to encourage a culture of life-long learning and reflective practice.

This Strategy is underpinned by key activities including:

- mandatory CPD;
- the induction process for new staff members;
- role-specific CPD;
- personal development; and
- organisational development and research relating to vision, method and purpose.

## **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Policy and Procedure**

### *Purpose*

To support staff and enable them develop in their roles in order to best meet the objects of the Charity which are to:

- (1) to encourage for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and expansion of orchards and the preservation of their genetic biodiversity, landscape and heritage value;
- (2) to advance the education of the public in healthy eating; and
- (3) to advance the education of the public in horticulture and in particular but not exclusively orchard management skills

TOP recognises that its staff are the key to achieving its vision and strategic plan and is committed to supporting staff in their personal and professional development. TOP is committed to building on and developing its culture to maintain job satisfaction and further improve the positive experience of working within the organisation. TOP aims to attract, retain and develop high-quality and creative staff. TOP is committed to lifelong learning and staff are encouraged to see development as continuing and lifelong. TOP will therefore ensure that CPD activity is managed, implemented and monitored to achieve this purpose.

- Employees who wish to undertake any form of training relevant to their role should raise the matter informally with their line managers in the first instance through their Induction or Annual Appraisal or other appropriate mechanisms.
- All employees must undertake a minimum of 30 hours (pro rata) of CPD and training appropriate to their current role(s) within TOP, subject to TOP's and budgetary considerations.
- All members of staff have the responsibility to identify appropriate CPD and keep their own personal record of all CPD activities that they have undertaken, including reflections on the CPD activities.
- Every effort should be made to undertake a range of CPD types including general personal and/or professional development; research related development; technical /role specific development.
- Managers are responsible for supporting their employees through induction and then to help identify training and CPD opportunities and needs on an on-going basis through the Performance, Development and Review Processes.
- This CPD Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and is entirely non-contractual. It may be amended, withdrawn, suspended or departed from at TOP's discretion.

### *Who is covered?*

This policy and procedure applies to TOP's employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

Some employees aged 18 or under are subject to special laws on education and training, and may not be covered by this policy and procedure, depending on their age and qualifications; please contact the HR advisor for further information about training for young employees.

### *Responsibility*

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the effectiveness of this policy and procedure and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. Day-to-day responsibility has been delegated to line managers and any questions about the content or application of this policy and procedure should be addressed to them.

All managers have a responsibility to lead by example and to promote our aims and objectives, including mission, vision, values and method with regard to CPD, training and undertaking appropriate qualifications.

## Continuing Professional Development

The emphasis of all CPD activities is on raising understanding, levels of competence and professionalism through TOP's Quality Standards. It is the intention to improve the practice of both staff teams and individuals by developing a "learning community" in which a supportive and collaborative culture extends the capacity for continuous self-improvement. TOP recognises that the most effective CPD is that where colleagues can learn from one another through feedback, reflection, self-evaluation, coaching and mentoring.

CPD can take many forms including:

- attendance at a course or conference
- training using in-house expertise
- training using an external consultant, adviser, teacher adviser, or other relevant expert
- training using external expertise for demonstration, or master classes
- visits to other organisations to observe or participate in good practice
- secondments, sabbaticals, study leave, exchanges or other placements including visits abroad
- opportunities to participate in qualification based and validated work
- research opportunities
- distance learning
- practical experiences such as presenting an educational paper, contributing to a training programme both at the Institute or other, being involved in a local, national or international network, working party or partnerships
- job enrichment activities such as taking a temporary post of higher responsibility, job sharing, rotation or shadowing
- producing documentation or resources for the use by other staff, for example assessment materials, qualification development training resources or training videos
- coaching, mentoring or acting as a critical friend
- being part of an interview panel either within TOP
- facilitating training by acting as the leader between presentations

### Attendance at Trainings

All staff are expected to attend the trainings that they are identified as being required to attend / invited to.

If a member of staff is unable to attend mandatory or statutory trainings then they must inform their line manager in writing in a timely manner so that costs can be saved and alternative plans can be made.

## **Funding to obtain training or qualifications**

TOP is committed, wherever possible and within budgetary constraints, to providing support necessary for staff to undertake qualifications or training programmes, however this support can take the form of time off, financial support, mentoring, work place assistance etc. An employee has no entitlement to this support and if an alternative source of funding is available, then the employee must try to obtain this funding in the first instance.

Where support or funding is agreed and provided, the employee may be required to sign a formal training agreement which confirms that, following completion of the training, if they leave the Institute within the length of time of that training, they will be required to pay a proportion of the fees. (For example if the training is 18 months' duration, they may be required to return a proportion of the fees if they leave within 18 months of the completion of the training). This amount will be agreed between the employee and line manager before commencement of the training.

## **Review and Evaluation of training, CPD and qualifications**

TOP will ensure that appropriate quality assurance monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure that the Institute provides access to provision of a consistently high quality. The Chief Executive will produce an annual report for the Board of Trustees of this review and evaluation and the effectiveness and impact of the training, CPD activities and qualifications undertaken by the employees.

## **Abuse of this Policy and Procedure**

Abuse of this policy and procedure may constitute gross misconduct and disciplinary action may be taken against employees under the TOP's Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure

## **Amendment and Review of this Policy**

This policy will be subject to bi-annual review, revision, updating or replacement by the Chief Executive. This is to ensure that TOP reflects the changing needs of the business and to comply with legislation. Any alterations will be communicated to staff.

## **Review Arrangements**

The Orchard Project will review the policy and associated procedures bi-annually as part of our self-assessment arrangements. It will be revised as necessary in response to feedback from our learners, affiliates and regulators.

Policy Last Reviewed: August 2021

Next revision date: August 2023

Reviewed by: Education Skills and Training Manager, Jo Homan