

# Nexus ICA Staff Development Policy

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## 1. Development

1.1 Growth and development of the individual is a core value at Nexus and is understood to be a constant process. The strong mentoring ethic and the determination to function as a team within a community means staff are constantly learning from one another. The flat management structure allows an easy flow of conversation and discussion. As a result issues surface quickly and are addressed formally through group training or informally on a one-to-one basis.

1.2 Example: It was identified that staff found leading Discovery Group discussions challenging both in terms of how to engage with the material and in terms of how to manage group discussions. A weekly timetabled slot was established for staff to receive guidance on how to address the following week's material. Each session starts with feedback on how the previous discussion went which then guides the coaching for the following week's discussion.

1.3 Example: Time and stress management – a member of staff was struggling with their work load and the ability to prioritise work. After a discussion with their line manager they were equipped with techniques for prioritisation, the knowledge that management are there as a point of support and escalation, and helped to refine their mindset when interacting with a busy schedule. Their situation was monitored on a regular basis via quick conversations with their line manager. Now it takes a quick conversation at busy times to make sure things are under control. As a result they are now taking on larger and more complex administrative challenges.

## 2. Appraisals

2.1 The strong vision of senior management and the highly vocational nature of all staff roles mean that people are motivated, focused and striving towards high standards in all they do. Appraisals are conducted annually to ask specific job-satisfaction-related questions to ensure staff are still growing and developing in their role, that they are confident in their ability to execute the job, and to provide a checkpoint to verify their fulfilment in their role. Appraisals are minuted and action points confirmed via e-mail afterwards. These action points are then reviewed at the next appraisal if not before.

## 3. Recruitment

3.1 Nexus ICA understands the importance of team and community. This must be modelled by staff in order to teach students this important life skill. A key characteristic that we look for in a candidate during the recruitment process is someone with a desire to build relationally with leadership and staff as well as someone who brings skills and abilities to the team. Many candidates are known to or have a relationship with Nexus ICA before they apply for a post. In order to ensure fairness and consistency in the recruitment process there is a standard application form into which the job specification is inserted. This ensures consistency of information gathered for short-listing interview candidates. The interview panel is normally made up of three or four people including the following: trustee, co-director, HR manager and possibly department tutor/Head of Musical Studies (depending on the role advertised). The diversity of the panel ensures objectivity and a wide range of sight during the decision-making process.

Historically, references have been taken up informally, but post-BSI inspection, when references are followed up verbally notes will be made on a standard template which is filed with the candidate's personnel record. New members of staff have to work a probationary period at the end of which an appraisal will take place and their position is then formally confirmed or the period extended.

## 4. Training Opportunities

4.1 Appropriately trained staff are key to our success. Due to the nature of modern popular music there is a strong emphasis on current experience. All teaching staff are encouraged to seek out professional opportunities on a regular basis. The Development Time scheme facilitates staff making the most of these opportunities should they arise during the normal timetable.

4.2 Where a specific training requirement is identified and it cannot be provided in-house then appropriate courses will be considered. Likewise, if a member of staff identifies a requirement and a course to address it, management will assess the suitability of the opportunity based on roles and responsibilities of staff, timing (does it work within the timetable) and perceived benefit.

4.3 Nexus ICA also recognises that qualifications help to maintain a standard of professionalism in all roles and so specific budgetary provision is made for the purpose of ensuring that all staff have appropriate qualifications to underpin their experience and the skill required in their role.

4.4 Staff training days are organised two or three times a year. These are days out of the timetable which are set aside for staff to receive input from the directors with regards to vision and direction, to examine areas of development and change, or to review the journey over a given period. Factors that may influence these sessions include feedback from students, parents or trustees as well as needs identified by management. These days help to bring unity to staff and increase the level of consistency presented to students.

4.5 As a collaborative partner of the University of West London there are a variety of development opportunities that occur throughout the year including the annual collaborative partner conference as well as various one-day training events. Nexus ICA staff are encouraged to attend any of these that are relevant to their course and the work they undertake. Notification of any such event will come to the course leader who will determine the most appropriate staff to attend the event.

## 5. Staff Qualifications

5.1 Staff with a module leadership role should have completed or be near to completion of degree-level study or higher.

5.2 For staff not fulfilling a module leadership role but with a significant teaching delivery role it is the aim of Nexus ICA to ensure those staff have opportunity to undertake higher education training to degree level within an appropriate timeframe and according to budgetary and teaching commitment considerations

## 6. Teaching Qualifications

6.1 All staff with a teaching responsibility within Nexus ICA will be required to undertake a level 7 higher education teaching qualification: "An introduction to teaching in higher education". Completion of this qualification also affords staff associate membership of the Higher Education Academy