

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad
Maynooth University



Maynooth University

People Development Guide for Staff

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Relevant Information	2
Contact Details	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Key Services of People Development.....	4
3. Applying to Attend a Course	9
4. Funding and Cancellation Fees	11
5. Department/Team Supports.....	11
6. Course Evaluation	11
7. Further Information.....	12

Relevant Information

[Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028](#)
[Maynooth University Equality & Diversity Policy](#)
[Human Resources Website](#)
[Learning and Development Supports for Staff](#)
[People Development Policy](#)
[Course Directory](#)
[Education Support Policy and Form](#)
[Study and Exam Leave Policy and Form](#)
[Fee Remission Policy and Form](#)
[New Employee Supports](#)
[Onboarding New Employees](#)
[Employee Wellbeing](#)

Contact Details

People Development, Human Resources

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the People Development unit in Human Resources (HR) is to provide a suite of development initiatives for staff that meet the objectives set out in the University Strategy. This 'How to Guide' highlights the services offered by People Development and how staff can engage with these services.

People Development in HR are responsible for,

- Developing and implementing learning and development activities in response to recommendations and actions from departmental and university-wide review processes, including the Strategic Plan and the Institutional Review.
- Reflecting University and wider, national strategies in our internal learning/development activities.
- Contributing to the achievement of the University's vision, purpose, values and strategic goals.
- Delivering a Career Planning and Development Framework.
- Working co-operatively with all relevant departments and committees, involved in delivering development internally to staff.
- Creating and promoting opportunities for staff to engage in lifelong learning relevant to their roles and career aspirations and the changing needs of the University.
- Enhancing service excellence by developing and implementing programmes to support all categories of staff in adopting innovative methods to carry out their work and support their stakeholders.
- Supporting the onboarding and retention of staff.
- Supporting competency development in key areas relevant to the staff member's role.
- Providing a blended learning approach to supports offered, such as, new and challenging experiences, exposure through networks, sharing, mentoring, coaching and structured training programmes.
- Fostering leadership and management skills by offering leadership development programmes for current and emerging leaders.
- Supporting career progression for staff.
- Keeping up to date on new innovative ways of delivering development supports.
- Identifying future skills requirements and delivering solutions for these.
- Ensuring that there is an appropriate and meaningful return on investment by monitoring and evaluating development initiatives undertaken to measure individual and organisational benefits.
- Calculating learning and development KPIs whenever possible and deciding on improvements.
- Providing policy advice on professional development and implementing procedures in accordance with policy.
- Maintaining budgets and resources for People Development and oversight of expenditure on development across the University.
- Playing a critical role in educational and professional development in the third-level sector.

The Equality & Diversity policy aims to ensure staff have equal access to learning and development opportunities appropriate for their professional development regardless of any of the nine equality grounds. The University will endeavour to ensure that services provided are inclusive and accommodate the diversity of staff.

2. Key Services of People Development

There are many different types of learning and development activities that support and contribute to an individual's ongoing professional development. These include.

- *hands-on* experience, which allows staff discover and refine their job-related skills, make decisions, address challenges and interact with influential people such as managers and mentors through secondments and being involved in projects,
- *learning from others* through mentoring, coaching and interaction with peers and
- *formal instruction* in the shape of classroom and online learning.

Current services of the People Development Unit are,

- Training Needs Analysis
- Onboarding of new staff (local induction is carried out within the department/unit)
- Supporting and advising on the Developmental Review Framework
- Soft skills programmes
- Wellbeing supports including the Employee Assistance Programme and supporting seminars
- Leadership and Management Development programmes
- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Career Development
- IT Skills training (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Planner)
- Retirement Planning
- 'How to' guides
- Policy Development
- Facilitation
- Department specific courses
- E-learning programmes
- Education Support - financial support for courses leading to professional and/or academic qualification.
- Paid study and exam leave
- Networks
- Communities of Practice
- Service Excellence and Innovation Awards for staff
- Evaluation of offerings

An opportunity to suggest new development initiatives is possible by contacting people Development or completing a form on [suggested course ideas](#).

The main development resources currently available to staff through People Development are listed below. There are a range of other HR policies that support the development of staff across the University. Further information on each resource is available on the People Development section of the HR website.

2.1 Onboarding for New Staff

The University's new staff onboarding takes place in three stages; supporting the staff member before they start in the role; supporting them within the first month and supporting them within the first year. Newly recruited staff are signposted to online information to welcome them to the University and help them understand the University culture and structure. The supports include online information, checklists for different categories of staff, presentations on relevant topics, local induction guides and

information on moving to Ireland. Guides are also available for those responsible for onboarding new colleagues within their area.

New staff are invited to attend an online information session which takes place monthly, to answer questions they may have and to signpost the resources available to them as they settle into the University and their role.

An Orientation programme takes place bi-annually for all new staff and this is supplemented by networking information seminars on topics such as Pensions, Developmental Review, and Statutory Leave and an online orientation.

For further information on onboarding new staff please view [New Employees | Maynooth University](#).

2.2 Professional Development Programmes

A range of tailored learning programmes are available over three schedules throughout the year, Semester 1 (October to December), Semester 2 (January to May) and Summer (June to September). The programmes offered are based on needs identified through the development needs analysis processes outlined above. The programmes are soft skills courses, information seminars on topics specific to working in Maynooth University, leadership courses, workshops on Microsoft tools such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Planner. A Certificate of Completion is available upon request for each course.

To supplement the learning from the courses there are Guides available on the People Development webpage.

Department Specific Courses - All programmes offered by People Development can be tailored to meet the needs of a department or a team and run specifically for them. If a course is required by a particular department, it can run at a time that works for the department. This allows flexibility for specific courses to be run when required in departments. This may be an option if there are six to twelve people in a department who wish to avail of a particular course People Development offers. The Department would then cover the cost of the course. Any activity that is required on a team or department basis, can be discussed directly with People Development.

External providers of courses are requested that activities meet agreed University development needs, have clearly defined outcomes and are designed to cater for a range of learning styles. The Course Directory outlines the content, learning outcomes, date and time of each course available through People Development and other departments across the University. People Development co-ordinate the Directory.

Training on cybersecurity awareness, data management, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and the Health and Safety topics are organised by IT Services, the Data Protection Office and Health and Safety Office.

For further information on professional development courses available please view [Staff Courses | Maynooth University](#).

2.3 Wellbeing Supports

The University is committed to maintaining and enhancing a healthy and supportive working environment and to implementing the *National Healthy Campus Framework* with a formal signing of the Healthy Campus Charter in 2023. The Maynooth University Strategic Plan highlights the importance of engagement, belonging and community.

To support this strategy People Development has in place practices which aim to support ongoing self-care and wellbeing including information seminars and an Employee Assistance Programme for staff.

Wellbeing supports,

- Seminars (online and on campus)
- Employee Assistance Programme – with counselling supports
- Wellbeing Hub which includes an information library and e-learning courses
- Guidance and signposting of wellbeing supports
- See Change Mental Health Pledge
- Working with Healthy Campus

For further information on wellbeing supports please view [Staff Wellbeing | Maynooth University](#).

2.4 Leadership and Management Development

Leadership starts with the individual and involves leading yourself, others as well as delivering goals. A leader works within the team/department to create a positive working climate to deliver results in line with the University' strategic goals & vision, provides clear direction for others, setting appropriate standards and addresses under performance.

The leadership and management support offered by People Development are a toolkit to enable staff achieve their leadership goals in their current role and aspire to future leadership roles.

Supports include, four leadership programmes, three sectoral programmes and leadership modules.

- Newly Appointed Leaders Programme
- Foundations of Leadership and Management
- People Management and Support
- LEAD Senior Leadership programme
- Collaborate (sectoral programme)
- Aurora Women in leadership programme in partnership with EDI (sectoral programme)
- Preparing for Academic Advancement in partnership with EDI (sectoral programme)

For further information on Leadership and Management support please view [Leadership and Heads of Department Supports | Maynooth University](#).

2.5 Mentoring

Mentoring, coaching, giving and receiving feedback are essential skills for managers and Heads to have as part of their people management responsibilities.

Mentoring can play a crucial role in organisational development, talent management, and in fostering a culture of continuous learning. It aims to enhance the experience and engagement of staff.

Mentoring, through reflection on the part of the Mentee and guidance and support from the Mentor, allows for a mutual beneficial learning exchange to occur, based on knowledge gained through experience. The focus of mentoring in this situation may include:

- Analysis of strengths, challenges and areas of development.
- Support as a career development tool, to nurture and develop staff through sharing knowledge and information.
- Honing teambuilding and interpersonal skills.
- Developing collegial networks which are intra- and inter-disciplinary.

Mentoring is available to all staff through schemes offered each year targeting different categories of staff and pairing mentees with mentors from outside their department.

For further information on being part of the mentoring schemes run annually, please view [Mentoring Supports | Maynooth University](#).

2.6 Coaching

A coach supports and guides individuals or groups in areas of personal or professional development. They help coachees identify their goals, overcome obstacles, and make progress towards achieving desired outcomes. Coaches provide a structured and supportive environment for their coachees to explore their potential, gain clarity, and act towards positive change. Through effective communication, active listening, and powerful questioning techniques, coaches facilitate self-discovery and growth. Their role includes helping coachees set realistic and meaningful goals, develop action plans, and hold them accountable for their progress. [Coaches often work with individuals seeking personal development, career advancement, improved relationships, lifestyle changes, or enhanced well-being.](#)

Coaching is offered as part of the Senior Leadership Programmes (LEAD and Newly Appointed Leaders) to support learning from the programmes. A panel of external Coaches are available for these programmes.

An Internal Coaching Panel provides qualified Coaches within the University, who are available to coach all staff. The Coaching panel has been established via Expression of Interest (EOI). All Coaches on the internal panel are staff of the University and hold a recognised coaching accreditation with a minimum of 40-hours evidence of coaching practice post-qualification. Coaches on the internal panel are required to engage in ongoing supervision and form part of a coaching accredited body as chosen by the University.

For further information on coaching, please view [Coaching | Maynooth University](#).

2.7 Career Development

Career development is part of all activities provided by People Development. However, there are specific supports available for staff who wish to advance in their career through applying for new roles or for promotion within the University.

Careers Connect tool allows staff to review their C.V., provides feedback on ways of enhancing your C.V. and provide templates for cover letters and C.V.'s. It also provides access to psychometric assessments including Careers Interest Inventory, Learning Styles Indicators and Values Based Indicators of Motivation.

Research Career Supports

There are a range of learning initiatives through experiential learning, social learning and formal education opportunities to support Research Assistants, Post-Doctoral Researchers, Senior Post-Doctoral Researchers, Research Fellows and Senior Research Fellows in their role.

- Advancing your Research Career: Strategies for Research Leadership - An e-learning course is available on this topic. To access the course email: research.development@mu.ie
- Recommended courses to support your communication and management skills throughout your career. These are recommended according to level; however, people will have different levels of experience and should select what is suitable to where they are in their development journey.
- The Researcher Mentoring Scheme is rolled out annually over a six-to-twelve-month period (depending on the duration of the mentee's contract).
- A Learning Hub is available to staff with access to recorded online courses and live webinars.
- Online and live wellbeing supports are available throughout the year, as well as an Employee Assistance Programme - Inspire.

For further information on career development, please view [Career Development | Maynooth University](#) and [Research Careers | Maynooth University](#).

2.8 IT Skills

The University uses Microsoft 365 and the applications that are part of MS 365.

People Development have a number of [guides](#) and courses on the HR website to help staff navigate different features on the MS apps and courses on MS Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint, Planner and Word, for different competency levels.

There are a number of resources available through the IT Services website to support the different MS apps available [O365 Features and Updates | Maynooth University](#).

2.9 Education Support, Fee Remission, Study and Examination Leave

The University supports staff who wish to pursue further education by providing payment of relevant fees. There is an application process in place and the Education Support Committee discuss and decide on applications that meet the requirements laid out in the Education Support Policy.

Fee Remission is available to staff who were permanent and full-time members of staff before the 30th of September 1992, their spouses and children. It provides funding for the completion of qualifications.

Study and examination leave is available to staff who wish to undertake an approved course of study. This policy applies to staff who wish to pursue a part-time course of study from level 6 to level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and wish to request study and/or examination leave for that course. The course does not need to be an approved course under the Education Support Policy, it may be broadly relevant to the staff member's role which requires study leave as set out in this policy. The application for such leave is made to the Head of Department/Manager and if approved the leave is then recorded on the Employee Self Service, in advance of taking the leave.

For further information on Education Support, Fee Remission, Study and Exam Leave, please view [Education Support and Study & Examination Leave | Maynooth University](#).

2.10 E-learning and Online Courses

E-learning content and recorded courses are available through the following channels.

The DCM Learning Hub offers recorded online courses on soft skills and wellbeing topics. They also provide free live online courses as part of our membership with them. Their [Learning Hub Brochure](#) details the courses available.

There are other e-learning courses such as,

- Recruitment Skills Refresher
- Orientation for New Staff
- Inspire Hub - wellbeing courses and resources

DCM also provide live online courses throughout the year most of which are free of charge to staff as they are covered by our membership with them.

For further information on online courses, please view [E-learning Supports and Guides | Maynooth University](#).

2.11 Networking and Communities of Practice

People Development host a series of networking events throughout the year.

- MU Technical Officers Networking organised by the Technical Training Network

- Newly Appointed Heads Networking
- Aurora Alumni Networking
- New Staff Networking
- Mentor and Mentee Networking

Communities of Practice (CoP) at MU can provide a forum for peer led leadership development through collaboration, resource sharing and development of innovative practices across the University. Currently there are CoP for those who have completed the Foundations of Leadership and Management, People Management and Support and LEAD.

For further information on Communities of Practice , please view [Leadership and Heads of Department Supports | Maynooth University](#).

2.12 Retirement Planning

Supporting staff during career transitions such as retirement is a key support offered by HR. In preparation for this phase, the following supports are available.

- Mid-Career Planning for Retirement course, suitable for staff who are mid-career (age bracket c40 – 55 years).
- Planning for Retirement course, suitable for staff who are 18 months to 3 years away from their retirement date. Retiree's spouse/partner may also attend.
- Your Retirement course, suitable for staff within a year of retirement, aims to promote an integrated approach to retirement planning with a focus on preparing for the change which retirement brings to your life. The course looks at the social planning side to retirement.
- Pension Information seminars run throughout the year for the different pension schemes staff are part of.
- Pension queries are dealt with by the Pensions Officer pensions.office@mu.ie

Following retirement retirees are invited to join the Maynooth University Retired Staff Association (RSA). Further information is available on the [RSA webpage](#).

3. Applying to Attend a Course

A course outline for each course offered by People Development is available on the [Course Directory](#). It includes a course description, course objectives, location, times, and booking information. Activities organised by People Development will take place during normal working hours on the North or South Campus or online. Typically, full day courses take place between 09.30 – 16.30. In general, the scheduling of courses is based on running as many relevant courses as possible within budget and that can be supported by People Development throughout the year.

As departments and different categories of staff will have different periods when they are particularly busy, it is difficult to find a time to run a course, that meets everyone's needs. To balance this, we run courses during and outside of semester, over the 12 months of the calendar year and run courses with high demand multiple times.

It is recommended that the course a staff member requests to attend, is related to their current role, has been identified by the staff member and their Head of Department or nominee as a skills gap/competency requirement or as a skill/competency that will be required in the near future, as part of their Developmental Review or probation conversations. This will allow us to prioritise those who require the course and ensure the learning outcomes are put into practice on the job.

Please note that the staff members manager/Head of Department needs to be aware of any planned absence from the area, please discuss attendance with the Head of Department or their nominee *in advance* of booking onto any course. Please also ensure workload is considered before booking a place on a course. Participants are required to ensure their current workload is not impacted, if attending a course. Staff participate in the full knowledge and understanding that the course is likely to require a time commitment away from work.

Applications should be made through the [Employee Self Service \(ESS\)](#) under the Learning & Development tab (pencil icon). A MU username and password is required to log in. Further information on using the online booking system is available in the [ESS L&D User Guide](#).

1. Log in to your [Employee Self Service](#) portal
2. Click the **Learning & Development** tab on the left-hand side
3. Type the course code or course name into the **Keywords** search field and click **Search**.
e.g. Project Management
4. In the **Book a Course** window, select the course and date you wish to attend by clicking on the 3 dots menu and then on the **Request to Attend Course** option.
5. Complete your **Request Details** - Reason to attend (Employee Request)

You only need to complete the Comments area if you have and any specific requirements (access or where there will be catering, dietary requirements). This will be accommodated where possible.

If the course is on ESS but is not currently scheduled, you can add your name to the waitlist for when the course runs again. **To add you name to a waitlist** click on waitlist option for course and complete step 5 above.

6. Click **Submit**

You will receive an email associated with your personnel profile, to confirm your request to attend the course has been received and a confirmation email when you have been approved on the course by People Development.

If you receive notification that you have been wait-listed after requesting a specific date, this will be due to a large number of requests for this date. You will be prioritised for the next available date; or possibly offered a cancellation on the date you initially requested.

We offer a light lunch on our full day **classroom** courses which consists of sandwiches, wraps, tea /coffee. We endeavour to accommodate allergies including coeliac, shellfish/nut allergies and vegan/vegetarian staff. However, we rely on the capacity of providers in this regard. Participants are encouraged to make their own arrangements where this better meets their requirements.

Your name, and Department will be shared with external course facilitators. Please note that information added to the chat for an online course on MS Teams is associated with your name and is available after the course by those registered for the course.

A Certificate of Completion for each course we run is available to those who completed the course, by request.

4. Funding and Cancellation Fees

The budget for People Development is managed within HR. The cost of the majority of seminars and courses is covered by this budget and there is no charge to the individual/department for courses offered by People Development. However, a cancellation fee may apply in certain instances, to ensure value for money is achieved and that places are filled on each course.

Please note that each place on a course represents a cost to the University.

If a staff member is unable to attend an activity, they should let People Development know at least 3 working days beforehand by cancelling the place online through the Employee Self-Service (ESS) so that efforts can be made to fill the place.

If a staff member needs to cancel within 3 working days, they will need to contact People Development directly by email people.development@mu.ie, as a cancellation fee may apply. If sufficient notice is not given (more than 3 working days), €150 may be charged to the staff members department to reimburse the cost of their non-attendance. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration. The Head of Department will be notified, and the cancellation fee will be taken from the Department budget (within a month).

All University departments have independent budgets, and these can be used to support specific and specialised learning and development requests within the department upon consultation and authorisation from the Head of Department or their nominee.

5. Department/Team Supports

All courses offered by People Development can be tailored to meet the needs of a Department or a Team.

If a course is required by a particular department, it can run at a time that works for the department. This will allow for flexibility for specific courses to be run when required in departments. This may be an option if there are 6 -12 people in a department who wish to avail of a particular course People Development offers. The Department would then cover the cost.

Any activity that is required on a team or department basis, can be discussed directly with us. Please contact People Development to discuss this option further.

6. Course Evaluation

Courses are evaluated on a number of levels through evaluation forms, consultation with individuals and regular feedback from managers/Heads of Department.

The feedback will be used to continuously revise and improve the courses and ensure they meet the needs of those attending and are constantly evolving.

When the course is completed, the staff member should complete an online evaluation form, a QR code is provided by the facilitator on the course. This code and/or a link to the evaluation form will also be emailed to participants after the course. It is important to complete this feedback form to ensure we are meeting the needs of staff.

If there is a matter you would prefer to talk to us about, please email people.development@mu.ie to arrange a call or call us on ext. 4570 to discuss.

7. Further Information

New Employee Information

[Starting in Maynooth University](#)

[Before You Start](#)

[Getting Started](#)

[Induction Checklists](#)

[Occasional Staff Induction Checklist](#)

Staff Wellbeing

[Wellbeing Supports](#)

[Wellbeing Seminars](#)

[Wellbeing e-learning courses](#)

Leadership & Management

[Leadership & Management Supports](#)

[Heads of Department Supports](#)

[Mentoring](#)

Useful Information for all staff

[Course Directory](#)

[People Development Guides and Useful Resources](#)

[E-learning](#)

[Supports for Researchers](#)

[Career Development Supports](#)