



Time Off for Training Policy

Version: 3

Date: 01/02/2025

thesovereigntrust.uk

The Sovereign Trust is a Multi Academy Trust registered in England No. 09666511. Registered Office: Manor Academy, Sale M33 5JX



Document Control

Title	Time off for Training Policy
Supersedes	2.0
Owner	Lisa-Marie Flynn
Circulation/Distribution	All Staff
Review Period	Annually

Version History

Next Review Date		01/02/2026		
Version	Date	Amendments	Author	Status
0.1 to 0.4	Oct 2021 to Oct 2022	Initial Draft – Reviewed by the HR Team & the Trust Board. Consultation Process – Draft shared with the working group consisting of Senior Leaders, HR, and the Trade Unions.	Lisa-Marie McGrath	Consulted & Reviewed, and implemented agreed points
1.0	01/12/2022	Final Draft – Approved by the CEO and The Trust Board	Lisa-Marie McGrath	Approved
2.0	01/02/2024	N/A	Lisa-Marie Flynn	Approved
3.0	01/02/2025	N/A	Lisa-Marie Flynn	Approved

Time Off for Training Policy

1. ABOUT THIS POLICY

- 1.1 We are committed to developing the skills of our employees and recognise that training can benefit our staff and us. Staff should receive training appropriate to their role, subject to business needs, and operational and budgetary considerations.
- 1.2 Eligible employees also have a statutory right to request time off work for study or training. This policy aims to provide a framework within which we can consider those requests.
- 1.3 No one who requests time off under this policy will be subjected to any detriment or lose any career opportunities as a result.

2. WHO IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

- 2.1 This policy applies to employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, or self-employed contractors.
- 2.2 The following are not covered:
 - employees of compulsory school age;
 - employees aged 16 to 17 who do not have at least two A-levels (or equivalent) and who are required by the Education Act 2008 to undertake a minimum level of education or accredited training; and
 - employees aged 18 who are still completing a course started under paragraph 2.2 above

Further information about training for young employees is available from the HR department.

3. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY

- 3.1 Our board of directors (the board) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. However, day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review has been delegated to the Trust's HR Manager.
- 3.2 Line Managers/SLT have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy, and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 3.3 Line Managers/SLT are responsible for identifying and monitoring staff training and development needs on an ongoing basis. Therefore, employees who wish to undertake any training relevant to their role should first raise the matter with their line manager.

4. WHEN CAN STAFF REQUEST TIME OFF TO TRAIN?

4.1 To be eligible to make a formal request under this policy, you must:

- be an employee;
- have worked for us continuously for 26 weeks at the date your request is made;
- have made no previous formal requests under this policy in the last 12 months.

4.2 We will ignore the fact that a request was made less than 12 months ago in the following circumstances:

- if we agreed to the earlier request but the training was cancelled, or you were unable to start it because of unforeseen circumstances that were not your fault; or
- if you withdrew the earlier request because it was not valid.

5. WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING IS COVERED?

5.1 Any type of study or training can be requested under this policy. It does not matter how or where it takes place. For example, it could be:

- training provided in the workplace;
- a one-day training course provided by an external training provider;
- a part-time college course;
- an online training module (e-learning);
- a distance learning course.

5.2 The study or training does not need to lead to a formal qualification. The only limitation is that it must be for the purpose of:

- improving your effectiveness at work; and
- improving the performance of our business.

6. MAKING A FORMAL TIME OFF TO TRAIN REQUEST

6.1 To make a formal request under this policy, you should submit it in writing to your Line Manager. Please include the following information:

- a statement that the request is made under this policy;

- the date of the request;
- the subject matter of the study or training;
- where and when it would take place;
- who would provide or supervise it;
- what qualification (if any) it would lead to;
- how do you think the study or training would improve your effectiveness at work;
- how do you think the study or training would improve the performance of the business; and
- if you have made any previous application under this policy, the date of that application, and how it was made (for example, whether it was by email or letter and to whom you sent it to).

6.2 If we agree to your request without the need for a meeting, we will tell you in writing and include the information in paragraph 8.1.

6.3 We will treat your request as withdrawn if:

- you tell us you are withdrawing the request;
- you fail to attend two meetings under paragraph 7 or paragraph 10 without reasonable cause;
or
- you unreasonably refuse to provide the information we need to consider your request.

In those cases, your Line Manager/SLT will write to confirm that your request has been treated as withdrawn. You will not normally be able to make another formal request for 12 months from the date of your original request (see paragraph 4).

7. MEETING

7.1 Your Line Manager/SLT will arrange to hold a meeting with you at a mutually convenient time and place, usually within 28 days of receiving your formal request (unless paragraph 7.2 applies or we have agreed to a longer time limit in writing under paragraph 11). A member of the HR Department may also attend the meeting.

7.2 If the person who would ordinarily hold the meeting is on annual leave or sick leave at the time of your request, the meeting will be held within 28 days of their return or within 8 weeks of your request, whichever is sooner. If necessary, you should contact the HR department, who will appoint someone else to hold the meeting.

- 7.3 The meeting will discuss your request and, if appropriate, explore any alternatives.
- 7.4 You may bring a colleague to the meeting as a companion if you wish. Your companion may speak during the meeting and confer privately with you but should not answer questions on your behalf.
- 7.5 If your chosen companion is unable to attend at the time set for the meeting, you should contact your Line Manager, and we will try to rearrange the meeting. If the meeting cannot be rearranged within seven days of the original date, we may suggest that you bring a different companion or come alone.
- 7.6 We will tell you our decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting unless we have agreed on a longer time limit in writing (see paragraph 11).

8. IF WE AGREE TO YOUR REQUEST

- 8.1 Where we agree to all or part of your request, we will give you a written and dated notice containing the following information:
- which part of your request is agreed;
 - if any part is not agreed, the information in paragraph 9.1;
 - the subject of the agreed study or training;
 - where and when it will take place;
 - who will provide or supervise it;
 - what qualification (if any) it will lead to;
 - any changes to your working hours in order to accommodate the agreed study or training;
 - whether you will be paid for carrying out the study or training;
 - how any tuition fees or other direct costs of the agreed study or training will be met.
- 8.2 In some cases, we may suggest changes to your request. For example, we may suggest a different course of study or training or an alternative time or place. These may be discussed at the meeting or may require discussion afterward. The written notice of our decision will set out any changes you have agreed to. We will ask you to sign and return a copy of the notice to show your agreement.
- 8.3 We do not have to pay you while you are taking time off for study or training requested under this policy unless this is necessary to comply with minimum wage legislation. However, we may agree to pay you for some or all of the time off in some cases.

- 8.4 We do not have to pay the costs of study or training requested under this policy (including any associated costs such as travel expenses). However, we may agree to meet some or all of those costs in some cases.

9. IF WE REJECT ALL OR PART OF YOUR REQUEST

- 9.1 Where we reject all or part of your request, we will give you a written and dated notice containing the following information:

- which part of your request is rejected;
- if any part is agreed, the relevant information in paragraph 8.1 above;
- which of the grounds for rejection set out below applies and why; and
- the appeal procedure.

- 9.2 We may reject your request for any of the following reasons:

- that the proposed study or training would not in our view improve your effectiveness at work and the performance of the business;
- the burden of additional costs;
- detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand;
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- inability to recruit additional staff;
- detrimental impact on quality;
- detrimental impact on performance;
- insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work;
- planned structural changes; or
- any other reasons that the Government sets out in future regulations.

10. APPEAL

- 10.1 You may appeal if we reject all or part of your request. Your appeal must:

- be in writing and dated;

- set out the grounds on which you are appealing; and
- be sent to the HR Department more than 14 days after you receive the written notice of our decision.

10.2 We may decide to uphold your appeal in full without a meeting. However, in all other cases, the HR Department will arrange for an appeal meeting to take place within 14 days of receiving your appeal unless we have agreed on a longer time limit in writing (see paragraph 11). The meeting will be held at a convenient time for all those attending, and you may bring a colleague as a companion.

10.3 The appeal meeting will be held by an Appeal Panel selected from our Senior Management Team. In addition, your Line Manager/SLT and a member of the HR Department may also be present.

10.4 We will tell you the outcome of the appeal in writing within 14 days of the meeting unless we have agreed to a longer time limit in writing (see paragraph 11). That decision will be final, and you will not be able to make another formal request until 12 months after the date of your original request.

10.5 If we uphold your appeal, we will give you the information set out in paragraph 8.1 above.

10.6 If we reject your appeal, we will explain our reasons in writing.

11. IF WE NEED MORE TIME

11.1 There may be exceptional occasions when it is impossible to adhere to this policy's time limits. For example, we may need to delay holding a meeting or notifying you of the decision. Therefore, we will ask for your agreement to extend the time limit and confirm any agreement reached in writing. In many cases, this will be in your interests as it will enable the appropriate person to consider your request properly.

12. CHANGES TO AGREED STUDY OR TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

12.1 You must tell us in writing immediately if:

- you do not start the agreed study or training for any reason (for example, if it is cancelled);
- you do not complete the agreed study or training; or
- you undertake (or wish to undertake) a different course of study or training.

12.2 You should also tell us immediately if you become aware of any changes to the agreed study or training, including changes to the timing or content of the course.