

Doc Number: 8-18		Lead: DF– Training Manager	Last Full Review: Dec 2025
Tick one of the below for review/changes made : Full review and changes made ☒ (add changes summary to table below) Full review, no changes made ☐ Changes made but no full review ☐ (add changes summary to table below)		Reviewer / Editor: Dom Fry Changes Approved By: Eve Clennell Reviewed and edited in-line with the Beacon? ☒ Yes ☐ No	

Learning, Development and Training Policy

Document Change Details

Date	Summary of Changes Made
Jan 2024	All P&Ps revert to version 01 as approval process & version control moved to Sharepoint. Version number no longer shown on the document
14/08/2025	Major revision – replacing existing 8.18 and parts of 18.a and 18.b
Dec 2025	Minor changes to terminology in preparation for introduction of Southdown Skills
March 2026	Updated to include new competence and conduct in social housing policy review

1. PURPOSE

At Southdown, we believe learning is central to both personal growth and organisational success. This policy outlines our approach to learning, development and training, and how we support our employees and volunteers to grow in confidence and capability.

2. DEFINITIONS

- **Digital learning** – Online learning completed via computer, tablet or mobile device.
- **Face-to-face training** – Training delivered live by a trainer, either in person or remotely (e.g. Zoom, Teams or webinars).
- **Practice Development Support** – Targeted input from a Practice Development Trainer in learning disability services to strengthen support for a client or group of clients. May include observation and feedback.
- **Reflective Practice** – Consciously exploring experiences to gain insight and improve practice. Can be self-led or supported 1:1 or in a group.
- **Virtual learning** – live learning event delivered over Teams
- **1:1 Support** – Coaching-style support from a Practice Development Trainer to build confidence, knowledge, and practice.

3. OUR VALUES AND COMMITMENT

Learning and development help us to bring our value “Brilliant with People” to life and realise the beams of Southdown Beacon. This enables us to:

- Grow skills and improve performance
- Understand our roles more deeply
- Navigate change effectively
- Increase motivation and job satisfaction
- Align with Southdown Beacon, our values and good practice
- Provide person-centred, psychologically informed, strengths-based support to clients and tenants
- Improve services and contribute to organisational development
- Build connection, cohesion and shared purpose
- Strengthen recruitment, retention, and succession planning
- Deepen understanding of our wider work

We are especially committed to:

- Equipping colleagues with the knowledge, values and skills to do their current roles well — and grow into future ones
- Reflecting best practice in our sector; including being psychologically informed
- Encouraging a growth mindset, curiosity and reflection
- Supporting, and expecting, colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning and development
- Making learning accessible, inclusive and relevant to each role and working pattern
- Meeting legal, regulatory and contractual requirements through essential (mandatory) training
- Making wise use of resources, including free, low-cost and shared opportunities
- Promoting lifelong learning.

We proudly work to the Investors in People standard, as a reflection of this commitment.

This policy applies to all Southdown employees and volunteers.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Key Responsibilities
All Employees	• Take responsibility for your own learning and development. • Stay up to date in your role. • Complete mandatory training on time. • Reflect on your work experience, seek feedback, and adapt your behaviour and practice accordingly. • Attend training on time, prepared and ready to join in. • Tell the Learning & Development (L & D) Team if you have any additional needs that may require adjustments to enable you to participate in learning activities.
Line Managers	• Foster a positive learning culture. • Identify and meet your team's learning needs, including through supervision, coaching, and feedback. • Inform your manager of unmet learning needs in your team. • Give staff time and support to learn, including to complete mandatory training. • Monitor and encourage mandatory training completion. • Help staff prepare for and apply learning. • Support staff to build digital skills for eLearning, if necessary. • Help staff communicate additional needs to the Learning and Development Team where required.
Operational Performance Group (OPG) and (for requirements arising from contracts) Contracts Team	• Promote a learning culture, encouraging reflection, curiosity and sharing of good practice, knowledge and lessons learned. • Work with the Learning and Development Team to plan and evaluate learning solutions. • Support line managers to identify and meet learning needs. • Tell the Learning and Development Team about unmet learning needs and new/changing workforce development needs arising from legislation, regulation, contracts, or changes in good practice or services/clients. • Highlight risks and recommend action. • Monitor mandatory training compliance and act on gaps. • Assure C-Suite that the learning and development offer is cost-effective and meets needs and that staff are engaged in learning.
Learning & Development Team	• Provide expert advice and support. • Partner with managers/teams to identify and meet learning needs (within priorities/resources). • Create learning and development plans – including induction and refresher programmes – in collaboration with Manager Operations/Heads of Service (and equivalent.). • Design and deliver learning activities, interventions and resources – including digital learning. • Provide qualification and apprenticeship programmes. • Access and disseminate information about free/low-cost training. • Provide access to engaging, relevant resources. • Manage Learning and Development budget effectively.
People Team	• Maintain HR Information and Learning Management Systems. • Allocate correct training, track completion, and keep records (including additional needs) updated and GDPR compliant. • Provide managers, C-Suite and The Board with data on training completion/compliance, including for contracts and external regulation.

	• Coordinate our sustainment of Investors in People.
Business Development Team	• Include realistic, resourced, workforce development elements in bids. • Co-design new/extended workforce offers for bids with the Learning and Development and People Teams when needed.
C-Suite	• Ensure Southdown's learning and development offer meets Southdown's business strategy needs and is properly resourced.
People and Pay Committee	• Be assured that training compliance standards are met, or action is being taken to address non-compliance.

4. OUR APPROACH

4.1 Psychological Safety

People learn best when they feel safe. We aim to create a supportive environment where everyone feels they belong, can ask questions, try things out, challenge ideas and learn from mistakes—without fear of blame or judgement.

4.2 Learning at Work

Most learning happens on the job—through experience, reflection, and connection with others. Formal training supports this on-going, non-formal learning, but it's our day-to-day work that drives real development.

4.3 The Role of Managers

Managers are central to learning. We expect them to:

- create learning-friendly workplaces.
- support learning from everyday experiences (reflection) and incidents.
- role model curiosity, reflection and development.
- offer guidance when something goes wrong by explaining why and providing a clear example of good practice.
- provide learning through supervision, coaching and feedback.
- help staff apply what they've learned.

4.4 Blended Learning

We use a mix of learning methods to suit different topics, needs, people and services, including:

- Digital learning
- Face-to-face and virtual training and tutorials (in person and remote)
- 1:1 support and coaching
- Reflective practice
- Practice development support
- Development Programmes
- Other learning resources (reading; websites etc)
- Access to external training, qualifications and apprenticeships.

This flexible approach ensures learning is meaningful and cost-effective. Digital learning helps us cover many mandatory topics efficiently, freeing up trainer and colleagues' time for deeper, values-and skills based face-to-face learning. It also enables colleagues to learn at a time and place of their choosing. At the same time, we recognise that many of the skills required for complex, emotional, relational work (our operational services) cannot be learnt solely via digital learning. A blended approach helps support accessibility and prevents over-reliance on

eLearning, which can be challenging for some colleagues, including those who are neurodivergent.

4.5 Working Together

The Learning and Development Team works closely with Managers, colleagues in the People Team and the Organisational Performance Group to identify needs and shape our offer. Members of the Learning and Development Team may contribute to organisational groups (e.g. safeguarding). We also value and include people with lived experience in designing and delivering learning activities where relevant, and colleagues with specific expertise.

4.6 Qualifications and Apprenticeships

We are keen to support colleague's acquisition of new skills and knowledge, accreditation of existing skills/knowledge, and career development. To this end we provide opportunities to undertake qualifications (including apprenticeships). See procedure for more details.

If we fund a qualification, a Training Agreement may be required (see Procedure). This does not apply to apprenticeships as an apprenticeship agreement will be in place.

4.7 Regulatory Qualification Requirements for Social Housing

Southdown is required to comply with the national [Competence and Conduct \(C&C\) Standard](#), introduced through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act and directed by the Secretary of State to the Regulator of Social Housing. This standard sets mandatory qualification requirements for individuals involved in the management and oversight of Housing Management Services.

Who the requirements apply to

Under the C&C Standard, Southdown must ensure that:

- **Senior Housing Executives** hold, or are working towards, a Level 5 qualification or foundation degree in housing management.
- **Senior Housing Managers** hold, or are working towards, an Ofqualregulated Level 4 qualification in housing management.

Southdown's responsibilities

To meet the C&C Standard, Southdown will:

- Identify all roles that are in scope of the qualification requirements.
- Identify suitable training providers to deliver training.
- Support relevant colleagues to enrol on and complete the required qualification(s) within the regulatory timeframes (the 24month transition period).
- Monitor and record progress, ensuring individuals are either qualified or actively working towards the required standard.
- Provide information, guidance and access to funded learning options where appropriate.
- Identify opportunities for continual professional development.

4.8 A Learning Culture

At Southdown, we are always learning—as individuals and as an organisation. We regularly evaluate our learning activities, listen to feedback, and make changes that support continuous improvement.

