

Section 24: BIMM Institute Academic Staff Appointment & Continuing Professional Development Policy

Policy Overview

BIMM's Learning and Teaching Strategy states that BIMM will ensure that everyone involved in learning and teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed. The purpose of this policy, and the staff development programme at BIMM is to ensure that all members of the team are able to deliver the curriculum at the highest level and to support the college mission and strategic aims. BIMM is committed to supporting all staff in their continued personal, professional and vocational development and to promoting the sharing of good practice and development of support networks within the Colleges in line with the standards established by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) UK Professional Standards Framework. BIMM recruits teaching staff with the understanding that they are practicing industry professionals and values their continued career development.

The Policy

Academic staff development at BIMM is based on the following principles:

- Equality in the treatment of all staff, regardless of job function, age, gender, ethnicity or disability;
- Efficiency, to ensure that all resources are used to the benefit of our students and the organisation as whole ;
- Transparency in procedures relating to appointment and promotion;
- Flexible working hours so staff maintain their industry profile.

The primary objectives of Staff Development are as follows:

- Reflect the priorities identified in the BIMM Strategic Plan;
- Enable staff members to perform their current roles with greater levels of satisfaction and efficiency;
- Equip staff members for new and changing roles;
- Promote reflective practice for all staff;
- Prepare staff, as far as possible, for career progression;
- Promote team building and sharing of good practice;
- Foster of a culture of high expectations which will lead to students reaching their full potential;
- Ensure the foremost quality of teaching and learning experience for our students.

Implementation

Responsibility for implementing these objectives is held by the Executive Principals, supported by the College Principals and by individual line managers throughout the Colleges. The Executive Principals may also draw on the expertise of BIMM's Human Resource (HR) Administrators and/or professional HR consultants where required. Records are maintained using BIMM's online HR system 'People'. BIMM's annual staff development cycle delivers staff development based on the priorities and goals identified in the Staff Development Plan. The annual cycle starts with setting targets for each member of staff, which are then reviewed and then appraised. The Executive Principals produce annual Staff Development Plans based on the needs of staff and College teams identified through the annual appraisal system.

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process in any organisation needs to be seen to be fair and transparent. BIMM is an equal opportunities employer and does not discriminate on grounds of race, sex, marriage, disability, sexual orientation or religion or belief. BIMM takes the process of recruiting new staff very seriously and this process starts with drawing up a job description (describing the main purpose, tasks and scope of the job) and a person specification (describing the person best suited to the role).

The College will then advertise in one or more of the following ways to attract potential candidates:

- advertise in local/national newspapers;
- post the vacancy internally;
- advertise in local/national specialist or professional journals;
- via private employment agencies;
- via the internet;
- by introduction through existing members of staff.

The format for applications for all posts is by letter and these will be shortlisted by the relevant senior managers or their nominee. Successful candidates will be invited for an interview with the relevant management team, who may invite others with expertise in the particular area to be part of the interview panel. Any offer made to a candidate will normally be subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references.

Interviews may include a presentation with a theme relevant to the post or in the case of recruitment of teaching staff, a teaching session or presentation observed by members of the panel.

Induction

Once recruited, all new members of staff will be given details of their induction programme on their first day (or as soon as practical). A well-planned induction programme is designed to help a new employee settle down quickly into the job by becoming familiar with the people, the surroundings, the job, and the College. All new employees will spend time during their induction with the HR Administrator who will cover key personnel, payroll and employment matters such as holidays, sickness absence, benefits etc. They will also spend time with their Line Manager/Head of Department who will cover Health & Safety issues with them, as well as detailed discussion of their role and responsibilities.

The induction programme is designed to assist the new employee during the first few weeks in their new role rather than just their first few days. Each new employee is also assigned a 'Mentor' to whom they can go with any queries. They will be also inducted into the Probation Review Procedures (see 'Probation Review Policy' in the Staff Handbook). New tutors will also be observed teaching in their first year and provided support and training as required (see 'Teaching Observation Policy' in the Learning and Teaching Strategy).

Appraisals

The purpose of the Appraisal programme is to:

- Ensure that individual staff members are able to fully understand their roles and to improve their job performance and satisfaction;
- To enable line managers to use and develop the skills of their staff as effectively as possible;
- To identify what the staff member's development needs are and feed these into the next Staff Development Plan;
- To enable all staff to make their full contribution to the achievement of the BIMM's strategic goals.

Objectives of Appraisal Programme

The appraisal process is designed to give the individual staff member and their line manager the opportunity to reflect jointly on his/her performance in their current post over the past year. In this way any staff development needs, which would enhance performance and/or job satisfaction, are identified, as are any organisational features, which adversely affect that performance. Any incremental pay increases may also be awarded in respect of the achievement of appraisal outcomes.

Timing of Appraisal

Appraisal takes place once a year towards the end of the academic year, with the opportunity for interim appraisals on a 3 month or 6 month basis if the nature of the work to be undertaken and/or the wishes of the appraiser/appraisee require it. The primary outcome from appraisal should be a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the appraisee's performance in relation to current and expected needs of BIMM. The appraisal will result in a clear action plan, which sets out the specific objectives and training and development opportunities, which need to be pursued. The action plan will set out the role of the appraiser in supporting and monitoring that the action plan is being acted upon.

Appraisal Training

Each member of staff will be given guidance as to how the appraisal system works. The different aspects of the appraisal system will be explored including target setting, review and action plans, and any support BIMM can give will be outlined. This will include discussion of staff development needs. Appraisers will be trained how to assess staff development and to set meaningful targets in line with BIMM's strategic goals. There will an emphasis on areas of achievement and how to develop these strengths further. Areas of improvement will be identified and explored in the action plan. The

appraisers will be trained how to write an action plan that has achievable, measurable and realistic targets.

College Training Days

The purpose of training days is to facilitate team building, and to address particular themes for training that have emerged from the Staff Development Plan and through annual monitoring. Training days will be scheduled at the beginning and middle of each academic year and it is expected that where possible, tutors and established staff will make themselves available to attend training.

Opportunities for research and consultancy

BIMM is committed to supporting all staff in their continued personal, professional and vocational development. BIMM recruits teaching staff with the understanding that they are practicing industry/academic professionals and values their continued career and academic development.

In line with BIMM's strategic aim '[t]o place excellence in teaching and learning, and student achievement and progression at the heart of all that we do', staff are encouraged through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to gain academic qualifications at post-graduate level. Furthermore, BIMM expects all tutors with a significant amount of teaching to undertake the PG-Cert in Learning and Teaching. Further development of staff to gain Masters and Doctoral qualifications is valued and actively supported.

Staff are also encouraged to take on roles such as being external examiners, members of validation and approval panels, and other educational consultancy. Likewise, staff may also engage in research, either as part of the PG-Cert, or outside of that programme as long as appropriate ethical and professional standards are met. Any research projects involving BIMM students and/or staff should be put forward for ethical approval through the Research and Enterprise Committee (REC). As an alternative provider of higher and further education, BIMM is not research funded but we do offer support for research through a small budget to buy staff time for approved research projects. Such projects should also be submitted for approval to the REC.

Arrangements for CPD or consultancy are negotiated on an individual basis between staff and their line managers, and final approval for CPD and any financial support lies with the Executive Principal.