

Title	Training and Development Policy
Cross References	Internal:  Performance Management Policy  Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy  Staff Induction and Training Procedure  Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  SEND Policy  Online Safety Policy  QA and Improvement Policy
Date	October 2026

1. Rationale

Apricot Online Ltd is committed to creating a positive culture of continuous learning and professional development. The knowledge, skills and confidence of our staff have a direct impact on the quality, safety and consistency of the education and support provided to students.

Training and professional development are therefore planned to meet organisational priorities, statutory and safeguarding requirements, curriculum and quality needs, and the development needs of individual staff. Apricot aims to provide appropriate opportunities for staff to strengthen current practice, respond to change and develop professionally.

2. Principles

Apricot's approach to continuing professional development (CPD) is based on the following principles:

- professional development should improve practice and contribute to positive outcomes for students;
- staff should have access to relevant development opportunities appropriate to their role and responsibilities;
- mandatory training will be identified and completed within required timescales;
- CPD should reflect the needs of Apricot as an online alternative provision provider;
- individual development needs should be considered through appraisal, quality assurance, professional dialogue and changes in role;
- staff should be encouraged to share expertise and effective practice with colleagues;
- training should be proportionate, purposeful and evaluated for its impact rather than undertaken simply as a compliance exercise; and
- development opportunities should support equality of opportunity, career progression and succession planning where appropriate.

3. Aims

This policy aims to:

- maintain a suitably trained and competent workforce;
- ensure staff remain up to date with relevant statutory, safeguarding and organisational requirements;
- support high-quality teaching, leadership, safeguarding and operational practice;
- respond effectively to curriculum, technological, regulatory and organisational change;
- identify and address development needs arising from quality assurance and performance management;
- support subject knowledge, SEND and adaptive teaching, online pedagogy and effective use of Apricot systems;
- encourage professional reflection, collaboration and the sharing of effective practice; and
- support staff who wish to develop their responsibilities, leadership skills or career pathways.

4. Induction

All new staff complete Apricot's induction programme before and during the early stages of their role. The detailed onboarding process is set out in the Staff Induction and Training Procedure

Induction includes the information and training necessary for staff to understand Apricot's ethos, safeguarding arrangements, professional expectations, systems and role-specific responsibilities. Staff who are promoted internally or move to a substantially different role will receive appropriate additional induction and support.

5. Mandatory and Statutory Training

Apricot will identify training that staff must complete because of legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, contractual responsibilities or organisational risk.

Depending on role, mandatory training may include:

- child protection and safeguarding, including annual updates and relevant Keeping Children Safe in Education requirements;
- Prevent awareness;
- online safety and emerging digital risks;
- data protection and information security;
- safer working practices and professional boundaries;
- health and safety requirements relevant to the role;
- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- SEND awareness and reasonable adjustments;
- role-specific compliance or awarding-body requirements; and
- other training identified through changes in legislation, statutory guidance or Apricot's risk assessment.
- Completion of mandatory training will be monitored. Staff are responsible for completing required training within the timescale communicated to them and for seeking clarification where they do not understand a requirement.

6. Identifying Development Needs

Training and development needs may be identified through:

- organisational priorities and improvement planning;
- changes to legislation, statutory guidance, curriculum or qualification requirements;
- performance management and appraisal;
- quality assurance, including lesson observation or review of lesson recordings where relevant;
- student progress, engagement or safeguarding themes;
- feedback from commissioners, students, parents/carers or colleagues;
- Department Head or line-management discussion;
- changes in role or responsibility;
- individual requests for professional development; and
- identified skills gaps, emerging technology or changes to Apricot systems.
- A development need may lead to individual coaching or training, a team or departmental activity, whole-organisation CPD, external training or another appropriate form of professional learning.

7. Areas of Professional Development

Apricot's CPD programme may include:

- subject knowledge and curriculum development;
- teaching, learning and assessment in an online environment;
- adaptive teaching, SEND and accessibility;
- supporting students with medical, emotional or attendance-related barriers;
- safeguarding, Prevent and online safety;
- behaviour, engagement and professional relationships;
- use of Apricot's learning, communication and management systems;
- assessment, qualifications and awarding-body requirements;
- leadership and management development;
- quality assurance and improvement;
- data protection, information security and operational compliance; and
- other role-specific knowledge and skills.

8. Forms of Professional Development

Professional development may take a range of forms. Apricot recognises that effective CPD is not limited to formal external courses.

Activities may include:

- internal training sessions and workshops;
- external courses, webinars or conferences;
- coaching and mentoring;
- peer observation or review of practice;
- departmental collaboration and curriculum development;
- professional reading and research;
- shadowing or supported practice;
- awarding-body or examination-board training;
- professional qualifications where agreed; and
- sharing learning or expertise with colleagues.

9. Individual and Career Development

Staff are encouraged to discuss professional interests, areas for development and future aspirations through appraisal and professional dialogue. Where appropriate and practicable, Apricot may support opportunities that develop leadership capacity, specialist expertise or readiness for increased responsibility.

Approval of funded or time-intensive development will take account of relevance to the role, organisational need, available resources, likely impact and operational requirements.

10. Responsibilities

10.1 Directors and Operations Director

- set organisational expectations for training and professional development;
- ensure mandatory and priority training is identified and appropriately resourced;
- consider development needs arising from organisational improvement, safeguarding and compliance;
- support a culture in which staff learning and professional reflection are valued; and
- monitor the overall effectiveness of training arrangements.

10.2 Department Heads and Relevant Leads

- identify subject, team and role-specific development needs;
- support staff to apply learning to practice;
- share effective practice and appropriate resources;
- raise recurring development needs identified through quality assurance or professional dialogue; and
- contribute to the evaluation of CPD impact.

10.3 All Staff

- complete mandatory training within required timescales;
- take reasonable responsibility for maintaining knowledge and skills relevant to their role;
- engage constructively with appraisal, feedback and agreed development activity;
- apply relevant learning to their professional practice;
- share useful learning with colleagues where appropriate; and
- raise training needs or areas where further support would improve their practice.

11. Evaluating the Impact of Training

Apricot will evaluate professional development proportionately according to the nature and significance of the activity. Evaluation should focus on whether training has improved knowledge, confidence, practice, consistency, compliance or outcomes for students.

Evidence of impact may include:

- participant feedback and professional reflection;
 - discussion during appraisal, supervision or line management;
 - changes observed through quality assurance;
 - improvements in curriculum or operational practice;
 - student progress, engagement or experience where a meaningful link can be established;
 - reduction in recurring errors or identified risks;
 - successful implementation of new systems, guidance or processes; and
 - sharing and application of learning across a department or the wider organisation.
- Not every CPD activity requires a formal written evaluation. The method used should be proportionate to the cost, scale, purpose and risk associated with the training.

12. Recording Training

Apricot will maintain appropriate records of mandatory and significant professional development.

Individual staff may also be expected to retain certificates or evidence of completion where relevant.

Training records may be used to demonstrate compliance, support appraisal and quality assurance, identify renewal dates and inform future development planning.

13. Equality of Opportunity

Apricot aims to provide fair access to professional development and will consider reasonable adjustments where required. Decisions about training opportunities will be based on role, organisational priorities, development needs, resources and the likely benefit of the activity.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where changes to statutory guidance, organisational structure or Apricot's training requirements make this necessary

Authorised by: Jodie Phillips, Operations Director

Date: October 2026

Review Date: October 2027