Staff Training and Development Policy

Policy Created: February 2026

Last Reviewed:

Next Review: February 2027 (or sooner if significant changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational activities occur)

Reviewed by:

Responsible Officer: CEO

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1. Introduction and Commitment

Pathways Associates CIC is a disabled-led Community Interest Company dedicated to enabling people with learning disabilities, autistic people, and their families to live the lives they choose as equals in their local communities.

We recognise that high-quality, accessible training is essential to deliver safe, inclusive, person-centred, and effective services. Training enables all colleagues, associates, volunteers, and Experts by Experience to perform confidently, grow professionally, and uphold our mission.

This policy brings together the training commitments across our existing policies into one clear framework. It is aligned with current best practice, including:

- Skills for Care guidance for adult social care workforce development
- CQC fundamental standards and staff competence expectations
- Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism Code of Practice
- HSE requirements for health & safety training
- UK GDPR and ICO guidance on data protection training
- Safeguarding adult/child training standards
- Prevent Duty statutory guidance

It reflects our values:

- **Led by lived experience** — Experts by Experience co-design and co-deliver much of our training
- **Partnership** — We learn with and from disabled people, families, and professional partners
- **Inclusion and respect** — All training is accessible, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive
- **Innovation** — We use creative, flexible methods (virtual, in-person, visual, interactive)
- **Integrity** — Training is evidence-based, regularly updated, and linked to real impact

We commit to continuous professional development that builds competence, confidence, wellbeing, and a learning culture.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, associates, contractors, and regular volunteers
- Experts by Experience and self-advocates involved in paid or voluntary delivery roles
- Any person undertaking work on behalf of Pathways Associates CIC

It covers all forms of learning: mandatory training, role-specific training, continuous professional development (CPD), and co-production skill-building.

3. Key Objectives

We aim to ensure that everyone:

- Is competent and confident in their role
- Understands and can apply our core values and policies
- Meets statutory and regulatory training requirements
- Receives accessible, high-quality, up-to-date learning
- Is supported to reflect, grow, and develop their practice
- Contributes to and benefits from co-produced learning
- Maintains personal wellbeing and resilience

4. Core Principles

Our training approach is guided by:

- **Co-production** — Experts by Experience and families co-design, co-deliver, and evaluate key training
- **Accessibility** — Materials in easy-read, large print, BSL, audio, visual, and plain language formats
- **Person-centred and trauma-informed** — Respect individual learning styles, pace, and emotional safety

- **Mandatory and proportionate** — Core requirements for all, plus tailored development
- **Evidence-based and current** — Aligned with national standards and refreshed regularly
- **Inclusive and equitable** — No barriers related to disability, neurodiversity, or protected characteristics
- **Reflective and applied** — Learning linked to practice, supervision, and quality improvement

5. Mandatory Training Requirements

All colleagues, associates, volunteers, and Experts by Experience in delivery roles must complete (and refresh as required):

- **Safeguarding Adults and Children** — Annual refresher; initial 6–8 hours
- **Mental Capacity Act 2005** — Initial and annual refresher
- **Learning Disability and Autism Awareness** — Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training (Tier 1 for all; Tier 2 for those in direct support roles)
- **Health and Safety** — Induction + annual refresher
- **Information Governance & Data Protection (GDPR)** — Annual
- **Prevent Duty** — Initial and annual refresher
- **Infection Control** — Initial and annual (especially for event-based work)
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** — Induction + refresher every 2 years
- **Duty of Candour** — Initial and refresher when relevant
- **Freedom to Speak Up** — Induction + refresher every 2 years
- **Co-production Principles** — Initial and ongoing
- **Trauma-informed Practice** — Initial and refresher

Additional role-specific training may include:

- First Aid
- Moving & Handling (if physical support required)
- Autism-specific communication tools
- Easy-read / accessible communication skills

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board of Directors**
  - Strategic oversight of training strategy
  - Review compliance and impact quarterly
- **CEO**
  - Overall accountability for training framework
  - Ensure resources and time are allocated
- **Training Lead (Lynn James-Jenkinson)**
  - Coordinate delivery, tracking, and evaluation
  - Maintain training matrix and compliance records
  - Commission/co-produce content with Experts by Experience
- **Line Managers**
  - Identify individual training needs
  - Support access and protected learning time
  - Monitor application of learning in practice
- **All Colleagues, Associates, Volunteers, Experts by Experience**
  - Participate fully in required training
  - Apply learning and raise development needs
  - Contribute to co-production of training where appropriate

7. Delivery and Access

Training is delivered through:

- Co-produced sessions with Experts by Experience
- E-learning (accessible platforms)
- Virtual/in-person workshops
- Reflective practice groups
- External accredited providers where required

We provide:

- Protected time for learning
- Reasonable adjustments (e.g., extra time, breaks, support workers)
- Reimbursement of reasonable travel/costs
- Certificates and records of completion

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

- Training compliance tracked via central matrix (reviewed quarterly by Board)
- Completion rates, feedback, and impact evaluated annually
- Learning needs identified through supervision, appraisals, incident reviews, and co-production feedback
- Training content refreshed following policy changes, incidents, or national guidance
- Annual report to Board and inclusion in CIC34 summary

9. Conclusion

Pathways Associates CIC is committed to a workforce that is skilled, confident, reflective, and inclusive. By investing in co-produced, accessible, and high-quality training, we ensure our team can deliver safe, effective, empowering services that truly make a difference for people with learning disabilities, autistic people, and their families.