

1. Background and Objectives

- 1.1. At Alliance Homes we are committed to supporting the continuous learning and professional development of all colleagues. We want our colleagues to have the skills, knowledge experience and behaviours to deliver a great service to our customers.
- 1.2. Objectives of this policy:
 - Foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement.
 - Equip colleagues with the skills and knowledge to deliver their roles with professionalism.
 - Support career development and internal progression.
 - Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion through accessible learning opportunities.
 - Ensure compliance with the Competence and Conduct Standard, and other regulatory requirements.
- 1.3. Our A-Game Standards and Leadership Excellence standards set out the expected behaviour and are assessed as part of our ASK review framework.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1. All colleagues are expected to support a culture of learning and continuous improvement, acting in an open and accountable way, recognising mistakes and learning from feedback. We encourage colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning and development, regularly updating and refreshing their skills and knowledge.
- 2.2. We will identify and assess both the competence and development needs of colleagues through feedback from:
 - ASK Reviews and Real Conversations.
 - Engagement surveys and other colleague voice or feedback mechanisms.
 - Customer scrutiny, complaints and other feedback about our services from customers.
 - Horizon scanning, and keeping up to date with legal, regulatory and sector requirements.
 - Business planning for the immediate and longer-term future.
- 2.3. The Learning and Development (L&D) team will facilitate talent development and professionalism, including professional qualifications. For more information about responsibilities for learning and development, see Appendix 1.

- 2.4. This policy applies to all teams and roles. The specific qualification requirements in the Competence and Conduct Standard only apply to teams involved in housing management, specifically Housing Services, Customer Engagement, Assets and Property Operations teams.

3. Development opportunities

- 3.1. In many instances, learning activities will be tailored to meet individual needs and objectives. A one-off training course may not be the most appropriate solution. Effective learning can also take place through:
- On the job development: through activities like project work, work shadowing or secondments
 - Informal learning: receiving feedback from managers, peers and customers, attending conferences and networking events, cross team working, and Continuous Professional Development activities such as webinars, videos and podcasts.
 - Formal learning: through in-house training, external training events, online and eLearning, vocational and academic qualifications. As detailed in our Agile Working Framework, there will be some instances where colleagues must be available for face-to-face learning activities.
 - Coaching and mentoring: where appropriate, colleagues may be offered the opportunity to take part in coaching or mentoring. This may be through internal provision, working with other colleagues in the business, or through external providers.
- 3.2. In line with our Code of Conduct, colleagues are expected to meet personal training, and development needs relevant to their role and the needs of the business. Colleagues and their manager should agree together how best to access the development required.

4. Skills

4.1. Skills by role

Some skills will be relevant to all colleagues, while others will be specific to functional teams and individual roles, including managers and leaders. Identifying which skills are required for each role supports colleagues to understand pathways for their development and career progression. It also enables the business to identify skills gaps and training needs across teams and informs processes such as business systems implementation, talent mapping and recruitment.

- 4.2. Courses in our Learning Management System will identify the skills that can be developed and managers will be able to endorse colleague proficiency in the system.

4.3. Mandatory skills and knowledge

Mandatory learning ensures that colleagues have the essential skills and knowledge to uphold our standards, and comply with legal or regulatory requirements, including;

- The Competence and Conduct Standard 2026.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Safeguarding (Care Act 2014).
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Equality Act 2010).
- Alliance Homes policies and procedures

4.4. The mandatory training required for each role is allocated in our Learning Management System. Managers monitor compliance for their teams and ensure completion of mandatory training. In line with our Code of Conduct, colleagues must undertake all mandatory training for their role in a timely manner. Repeated failure to do so may result in action being taken in line with the disciplinary policy.

4.5. Non-attendance

Unless there are exceptional reasons, colleagues are expected to attend required training apply the learning gained to their role. If a colleague is unable to attend, they must speak to their manager or the L&D team as soon as possible. Non-attendance without a valid reason may result in a re-charge of costs to their operational team and could affect eligibility for future opportunities. If a colleague misses mandatory training for reasons beyond their control, they will be required to complete it within a reasonable timescale.

5. Professional qualifications

5.1. Where appropriate, we will support colleagues to gain and maintain professional qualifications related to their role.

5.2. Qualifications

We expect all colleagues to possess and maintain the qualifications necessary for their role, as outlined in regulations, their role profile or contract of employment. If it is determined that a colleague does not hold the essential qualifications required to perform their duties, we will support them to gain the relevant qualification. If a colleague refuses or is unable to gain the necessary qualifications to fulfil their role, action may be taken as outlined in the Code of Conduct and in line with disciplinary policy or capability policy.

5.3. The roles identified as falling within the scope of the Competence and Conduct Standard qualification requirements are:

5.4. Senior Housing Executives who require a Level 5 qualification applies to our Senior Leadership Team and Operational Leadership Team

5.5. Senior Housing Managers who require a Level 4 qualification applies to managers who report into our Operational Leadership Team, such as Service Delivery Managers.

- 5.6. We require colleagues in relevant roles to achieve relevant qualifications and complete top up modules within the timescales set out in the Competence and Conduct Standard.
- 5.7. Certificates for mandatory qualifications will be required as part of the recruitment process and stored on our Learning Management System.

5.8. Financial support

We aim to support colleagues financially to achieve qualifications that are aligned with their role and the needs of the business. All qualifications should be discussed and agreed with their manager as well as the L&D team, who can advise colleagues regarding options and training providers. Support may include part-funding courses for colleagues' development.

Where Alliance has covered the cost of a non-mandatory qualification, colleagues may be asked to sign a learning agreement which outlines the terms for repayment if the colleague fails the course or leaves the business within an agreed period. The learning agreement may also cover fees for examinations, including retakes, early withdrawal from or non-completion of a course or apprenticeship, learning materials funded by us and any other associated costs agreed in writing.

If a colleague needs to travel to another location for learning, they can claim expenses and subsistence in line with the Expenses Policy.

5.9. Time to study

We will support colleagues by providing reasonable time to study for qualifications which are relevant to their job role. This may be time to attend course sessions in person or online, and reasonable time to complete significant assignments. Colleagues may also be given study leave to prepare for and sit exams. Study time away from work must be agreed with a manager prior to being taken, and each instance will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

6. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- 6.1. Once colleagues have gained new skills and knowledge, we want to support them to keep up to date with developments in their specialism and within the social housing sector. We support this through corporate membership of organisations such as the National Housing Federation, the Housing Quality Network and the Chartered Institute of Housing, giving colleagues access to opportunities to network with and learn from other housing associations.
- 6.2. Colleagues are expected to keep their learning up to date and engage with any necessary continuing professional development (CPD), maintaining accurate records that show their progress.
- 6.3. Professional subscriptions

We will further support professional development by funding membership to one relevant professional body each year. We will also support costs for those working towards chartered membership.

7. Apprenticeships and traineeships

- 7.1. We offer apprenticeships to school and college leavers to provide on-the-job training combined with formal education. This is planned and agreed annually within the team establishment. We encourage managers to consider if an apprenticeship is appropriate when they have a vacancy. We also support traineeships and improver roles, as necessary, to develop our colleagues in response to their ambitions and business needs.
- 7.2. Levy funds can also be used to support colleagues to gain professional qualifications, particularly where the qualification contributes to or succession planning and talent development.
- 7.3. Work experience
We recognise the value of offering young people an insight into the social housing sector and encouraging a pipeline of future talent. We will support work experience opportunities for students from local schools and colleges, subject to placements being available.

8. Evaluation and impact

- 8.1. The effectiveness of learning and development activities will be assessed through participant feedback surveys, evaluation of training outcomes against objectives and performance metrics and through the impact of interventions on business success. Where possible we will look to determine the return on investment of learning and development programmes.

9. Monitoring, consultation, and review

- 9.1. We monitor our performance in delivering the objectives of this policy by reporting on a range of measures including colleague engagement survey results and customer satisfaction measures.
- 9.2. The Head of People is responsible for the implementation and review of this policy.
- 9.3. Customers, colleagues, and service users may be involved in giving feedback on this policy, leading to amendments where appropriate. It will be published on our intranet and external website to facilitate this.
- 9.4. This policy will be reviewed every three years and signed off by the Strategic Leadership Team.

10. Equality and diversity

- 10.1. Opportunities for learning and development will be offered to all colleagues, regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, gender identity or expression (including transgender status), or marriage or civil partnership status.
- 10.2. We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in colleague development. Decisions relating to learning and development will be made fairly and consistently. Where required, reasonable adjustments will be made to remove any barriers to learning.
- 10.3. From time to time, we may introduce targeted development initiatives designed to support the growth and progression of individuals from under-represented groups. These initiatives may include tailored mentoring, coaching, networking opportunities, or other development programmes aimed at addressing barriers to progression, enhancing skills and confidence, and helping to build a diverse and sustainable talent pipeline. Such measures are intended to promote equality of opportunity and enable all employees to reach their full potential.
- 10.4. This policy is subject to a periodic Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - see Appendix 2.
- 10.5. The purpose of such an assessment is to consider the effect of the policy regarding the recognised protected characteristics of equality and ensure that it does not unfairly impact any individual or group. Remedial action will be undertaken if a detrimental effect is identified.
- 10.6. The EIA also requires the policy author to consider whether the policy is likely to negatively impact on a person's Human Rights.
- 10.7. This policy and any other related Alliance Homes publications can be fair in other formats for those with visual, literacy or language difficulties.

11. Associated documents

Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, Capability Policy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Expenses policy, Agile Working Framework.

12. Version control and approval dates

Approval stage	Date completed
Equality Impact Assessment completed	29/09/2026
EIA reviewed by Equality & Diversity Manager	29/09/2026
SLT review / approval	08/10/2026
Next review date	31/10/2027

Appendix 1. Responsibilities

Colleagues, managers, the L&D team and senior leaders all play a role in identifying and meeting learning and development needs at individual, team and corporate levels.

Activity	SLT/OLT	L&D Team	Line Managers	Colleagues
- Provide overall direction and leadership - Executive responsibility for training compliance - Allocate resources for learning and development - Ensure Board mandatory training is completed	✓			
Hold managers to account for training compliance	✓			
- Develop and deliver a corporate training plan - Design and implement learning programmes that meet organisational and colleague needs - Maintain accurate records and reporting of learning activities and outcomes - Evaluate the success and outcomes of the learning and development provision		✓		
- Provide and maintain an up-to-date corporate LMS, with relevant mandatory and other eLearning - Proactively report on compliance, escalating any non-compliance as needed		✓		
Identify learning and development needs through assessments, performance reviews, and feedback mechanisms		✓	✓	✓
Hold regular development discussions as part of the ASK framework and follow up on agreed development needs			✓	
Ensure attendance at learning and development that has been booked and take action re non-completion if necessary			✓	✓
- Actively participate in learning and development opportunities, ensuring the timely completion and application of learning, including mandatory training - Provide feedback and evaluation, where requested, following course completion				✓

Appendix 2. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment must be conducted alongside the review of an existing policy or the creation of a new one.

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT IS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

1. Name the Strategy, Policy, Procedure or Function (SPPF) being assessed and name of author.

2. Aims of the SPPF being addresses.

- *Whose need is it designed to meet?*
- *Are there any measurable elements such as time limits or age limits?*

3. Who has been consulted in developing the SPPF?

- *Make reference or links to consultation/evidence documents.*

4. Does the SPPF promote equality of opportunity?

The policy promotes equality of opportunity across the protected characteristics as follows:

5. Identify potential impact on each of the diversity “groups” by considering the following questions:

(The list is not exhaustive, but an indication of the sort of questions assessors should think about):

- *Might some groups find it harder to access the service?*
- *Do some groups have particular needs that are not well met by the current SPPF?*
- *What evidence do you have for your judgement (e.g. monitoring data, information from consultation/research/feedback)?*
- *Have staff/residents raised concerns/complaints?*
- *Is there local or national research to suggest there could be a problem?*

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Information source/s*	Comments/Evidence
Race					
Disability					
Gender					
Transgender					

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Information source/s*	Comments/Evidence
Sexual Orientation					
Religion or Belief					
Age					
Marriage and Civil Partnership					
Pregnancy and Maternity					
Rural Issues					
Social Mobility					

*Possible information sources for assessing impact or understanding issues related to target group, such as:

- Demographic data, studies of deprivation, statistics on health etc
- Results of consultations, results of equality monitoring data, complaints, customer feedback
- Information collected from partner agencies and groups, support groups, professional expertise, 'peer review', project leads/teams, inspection reports etc.

Was there a negative impact identified in question 5? If yes go to question 6. If not go to question 7.

6. If "negative impact" identified in table (4) above, is it?

Legal	YES	NO
What is the level of impact?	HIGH	LOW

If it is not legal and/or high impact (i.e. If you have highlighted NO to legal and HIGH to impact) **then the document should be referred to Head of HR)**

7. If positive impact has been identified in table (4) above, how can it be improved upon or maximised, either in this SPPF or others?

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8. Full EIA (or if you decide full EIA is not necessary, but some changes should be considered)

- Are there changes you could introduce which would make this SPPF work better for this group of people?
- Is further research or consultation required?

YES	NO
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9. Does this proposal have any human rights implications?

If yes, please describe (If necessary, please refer to the Alliance Homes Human Rights Policy)

PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

