

Metronet Learning Agreement

This agreement is between AMICUS, RMT, and TSSA Unions and Metronet who will be known as 'the partners' in the following agreement.

Aims

Metronet, AMICUS, RMT, and TSSA are committed to working in partnerships to:

- Encourage employees within Metronet to participate in lifelong learning opportunities
- Provide access to learning opportunities
- Build upon the Government's current learning initiatives
- Work with organisations such as the TUC Learning Services and other education providers to ensure the partnership is a success
- Distinguish between learning (personal development) and workforce development (job training) promoting development as well as skills training.
- Ensure at all times the need for confidentiality when dealing with basic skills (numeracy and literacy) needs. Metronet will support staff improving those skills.
- Establish a learning centre within the workplace

The partners accept that professional and approved training providers are used at all times. A joint statement of the agreed aims and objectives of partners will be displayed in a prominent position on notice boards in the workplace.

Who the agreement covers

This agreement covers all full and part time employees in the workplace.

Although participation by employees in non vocational training will be on a voluntary basis, the Unions agree to actively encourage their members to fully participate in all learning initiatives and opportunities.

The Establishment of a Steering Committee

The Partners agree to establish Steering Committee no later than 3 months from this agreement.

The Steering Committee will comprise of equal numbers of Employer and Union representatives and Metronet will place at least one senior member of its management team on the joint Steering Committee, so that the Committee is able to take effective decisions. The Steering Committee will meet once per quarter as a minimum to carry out the tasks identified by this partnership agreement

A Chairperson and Secretary will be appointed at the first meeting of the joint Steering Committee, and once a year thereafter, to facilitate the future meetings of the Committee. The chairperson should be nominated on an annual rotating base between the employer and trade unions.

The partners agree to ensure that the workforce is fairly represented on the Steering Committee and that members of the Steering Committee are provided with all relevant information concerning the learning provision and their duties/responsibilities as members of the Committee.

The partners will have the responsibility of disseminating all information on matters relating to learning in the workplace and will ensure that all employees and managers are made aware of the learning opportunities available and the work of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee will:

- Report progress to the Company Council.
- Will be entitled to co-opt or invite other people to meetings when necessary.
- To be kept informed of information from the employer that will inform of activities e.g. business plans, introduction of new technologies, and changes in work organisation.
- Be kept informed of company training developments.

Steering Committee Responsibilities

The Steering Committee will:

- Make every effort to ensure that when any learning takes place the specific needs of individual employees are taken into account.
- Ensure that RULRs are suitably trained to offer support, advice and guidance to their members and work with the employer to introduce a learning culture into the workplace.
- Assist the individual employees and RULRs to make informed choices in regards to learning programmes giving those concerned the ability to secure the maximum benefits possible from the opportunities available.

The responsibilities of the committee in the context of life long learning will be agreed at the inaugural steering committee group meeting and should include:

- Identifying the learning needs of both the staff and the employer
- Identifying current and future skills gaps
- Prioritising learning needs of those groups of individuals who are to benefit from the various learning initiatives.
- Identifying funds for education and training
- Supporting staff undertaking vocational qualifications
- Determination and monitoring of the provisions available
- Maintenance of any contracts with outside education and training providers
- Drawing up a realistic Learning Plan (LP), setting objectives for the learning provision within the Workplace training/learning plan
- Ensuring that the Learning Plan is effectively implemented so that the committee meets its objectives for learning provisions
- Arrangements for establishing a learning centre

Learning Needs Analysis

The partners agree that any learning needs analysis is undertaken with the full co-operation of all partners, and that any such analysis will be solely for learning and educational purposes. The analysis will not be used in relation to other issues such as pay, performance appraisal, redundancy, disciplinary, procedures etc. The partners commit to regularly updating the learning needs analysis of participants in any learning programme.

Equal Opportunities and Equal Access

The partners recognise the importance of equal opportunities and equal access to enhance skill levels in order to meet both the business objectives of the employer as well as the individual learning and development needs of the employees. Training and development will be provided to all employees.

Rail Union Learning Representatives (RULRs)

The unions will be responsible for recruiting RULRs and will inform management of the names and workplaces/departments of the RULRs.

The number of RULRs will be agreed by the parties concerned.

Every effort will be made to achieve a fair representation of Rail Union Learning Representatives based on union membership, geographical distribution, shift patterns, gender and ethnicity.

The functions of the RULRs will include:

- Identifying learning or training needs in conjunction with the appropriate manager with responsibility for Learning and Development
- Providing information and advice about learning or training
- Arranging learning or training
- Promoting the value of learning or training
- Consulting the employer about carrying out such activities
- Preparation to carry out any of the above activities

Time Off for RULRs

Time off for training

As per the Employment Act 2002 and the ACAS Code of Practice on Time Off for Trade Union Duties and Activities, paid time-off will be granted to RULRs in order to undertake training.

Initial training consists of the following TUC modules:

Frontline advice and guidance (3 days)

Identifying learning needs (2 days)

These two modules should be available within 6 months of appointment as per 2002 Employment Act

This initial training will then be followed - within first 12 months of appointment - by the following TUC modules:

Skills for Life awareness (3 days)

Working with employers on learning (2 days)

RULRs will be granted a minimum of 3 days paid release for training in each subsequent year after the date of appointment.

Time Off to Carry Out Duties

Paid time-off of 1 day per month will be granted to RULRs to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

Additional entitlement to release may be necessary and should be considered on its merits.

Time Off for Employees to Consult with RULRs

Employees will be given time-off to participate in promotional events and to access their RULRs.

Facilities for RULRs

The company will undertake to provide suitable facilities for RULRs to carry out their duties, including:

- Access to telephones,
- Access to notice board(s)
- Access to computer, e-mail and the Internet
- Secure storage space
- Access to a room and desk

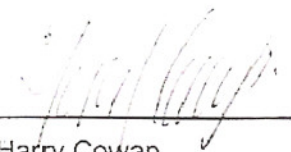
Where applicable, this may be a shared facility with other union representatives.

The company will provide travel facilities for RULRs to undertake their duties.

Review and Maintenance of the Agreement.

This agreement will be reviewed after one year. The working practices and arrangements for the provision of learning representatives will be defined in this agreement and changes to it agreed by the steering committee.

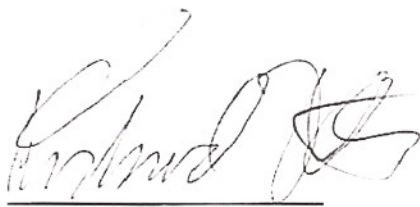
Signatories to Metronet Learning Agreement



Harry Cowap
Regional Officer
On behalf of AMICUS



Bobby Law
Regional Organiser
On behalf of RMT



Rick Justham
Negotiations Officer
On behalf of TSSA



James Reed
Vice President HR
On behalf of Metronet



Steve Hayes
Programme Manager
On behalf of Rail Union Learning Programme

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