

Ada. National College for Digital Skills.

Staff Development and Training Policy



Ada staff development and training policy flows from our mission and beliefs:

Our Mission:

Ada works with industry to design and deliver an education that empowers all its students, especially women and those from low-income backgrounds, to progress into highly skilled digital roles and lead flourishing lives.

Our Theory of Change:

The College is an engine for social mobility and aspires for the tech sector to represent the diversity of the population. To kick-start this change, Ada will recruit 50% of its students from low-income backgrounds and 50% young women by 2022.

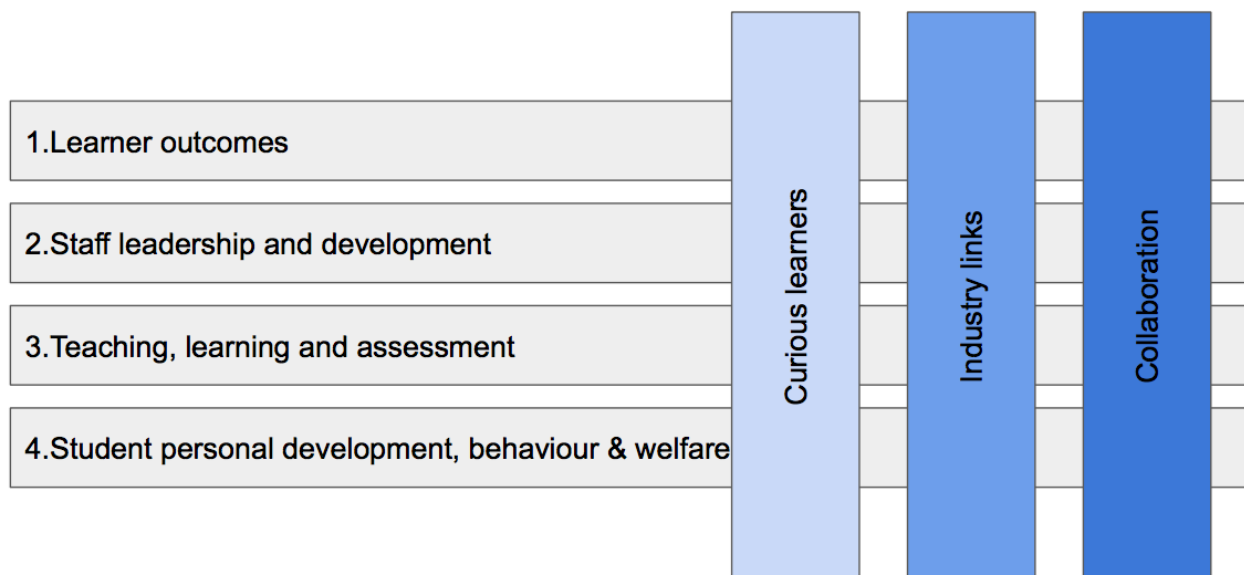
Our Beliefs - Why

In a world that is increasingly coded, digital skills are the key enabler of success. But its guarantor will be the ability to combine them with the curiosity, creativity, rigour, resilience and collaboration to adapt to the changing structures and needs of our world.

Our Staff / Our Approach:

Ada recruits staff carefully and thoughtfully on the basis of their talents to create a brilliant team where different members bring different skills and experiences. We are aware that the college works in a fast moving field where commercial technological developments can have unknown and rapid impact. So we make every effort to ensure our staff have ample opportunity to keep pace with change so they can incrementally adapt, collaborate, learn and improve.

We are equally aware of how this unusual teaching environment connects to the students' experience and convey that to our staff in induction and training through the following diagram.



We emphasise curiosity, learning how to learn, adapting, changing and growing, both as teachers and as students. Our students are always encouraged to question what is going on behind the screen, to avoid the many distractions. The job of all our staff, especially our teachers, is partly to help them discover positive new passions as well as develop their learning of the agreed curriculum. However we cannot expect our students to be passionate unless we are ourselves passionate and curious.

Our staff need to be role models for this behaviour - asking questions, taking risks, learning from industry and carrying out formal research. To maintain status as a professional teacher working in the digital sector, we all need to be constantly learning and improving. Ada is in essence, a learning organisation.

A Focus on Long Term Student Outcomes

Our students are empowered to define their own pathway, to fulfil their digital career ambitions and lead flourishing lives.

Our end goal as staff members, especially teachers, at Ada is not just to support students to obtain top grades and go on to university. Our aim is longer term and more complicated. Which means it has greater consequences for the teaching and learning activities we prepare and deliver. A key part of our role as teachers is to ask how are we preparing students for their digital careers? How is your subject used today in the tech sector? How might it be used tomorrow? What are the professional standards in your area? Are you helping them achieve their aims in every lesson?

Staff Leadership and Development

In order for Ada to be able to maintain its position as an innovative educational institution working in a rapidly evolving field, it's vital that all our staff are supported in their own professional development. This manifests itself differently for different types of staff members:

Non-teaching Staff:

As a new institution we do not have a formal non-teaching staff training policy in place as yet. However our board has approved that all non-teaching staff are allocated a £1,000 training budget on an annual basis until further notice.

All non-teaching under-go a formal performance management process beginning at the end of their probation period of employment with the College. During this process their on-going development needs are identified and noted down. Line managers, in discussion with the staff member, will then agree an appropriate development plan for the year ahead. This may include the need for paid-for CPD but equally there may be opportunities the College can identify through other channels to support a staff members development.

Examples of professional development opportunities in the past year include: Visits to other education institutions to learn from best practice, mentoring and coaching by senior members of other FE Colleges, paid for accountancy qualifications, first aid training, work shadowing of professionals in the digital sector and team-building and communication sessions.

All Teaching Staff:

Teachers are Ada's greatest assets and we believe that supporting them in their own career development is essential to the success of the college in the long term.

Teachers work with their line manager to design professional development and training plans each year at the start of the academic cycle that ensures they remain curious, passionate learners embodying the approach we wish to see in our students.

As with non-teaching staff we aim to support teachers to develop in a variety of ways that may include paid for CPD but also think creatively about other opportunities that might be useful.

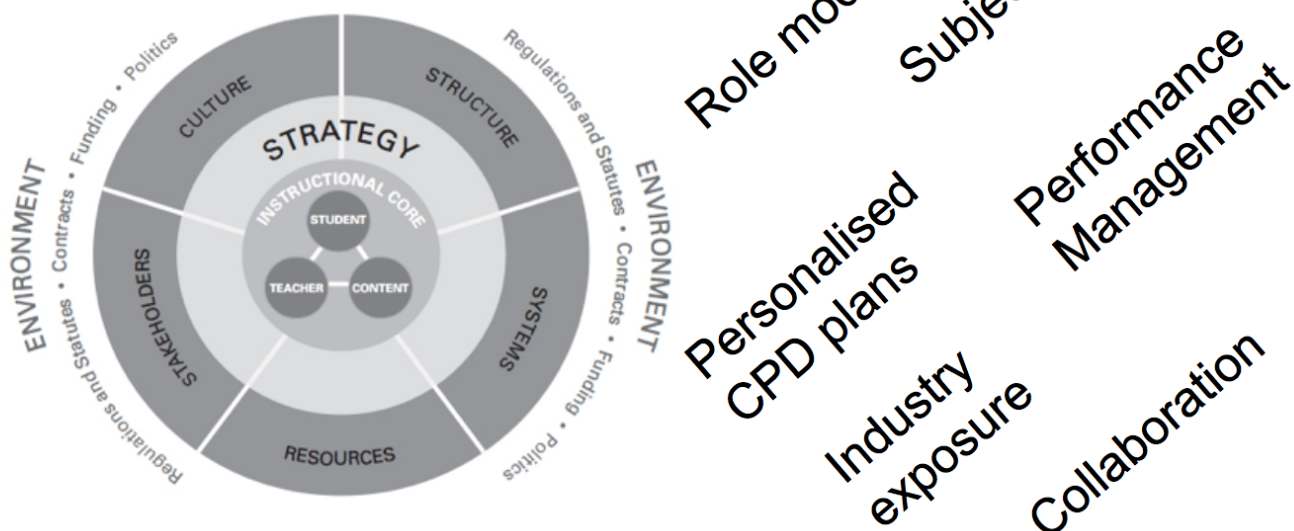
Examples to date would be: Work shadowing of industry partners, attending exam board professional development sessions, working directly with examining bodies on new qualifications (B-TEC), assisting in the development of new degree programmes, meetings with University faculty specialists, collaborating with industry partners to design curriculum projects, peer-led learning and weekly teaching and learning development sessions across both FE and HE.

Note: Where necessary the College is open to supporting FE and HE teaching staff who do not yet have recognised teaching qualifications but do possess significant industry or other useful experience. While this does not yet apply to our staff members, the College recognises this as a PD opportunity for relevant staff and will support it.

Teaching Staff CPD:

Opportunities to collaboration with colleagues are built into every teacher's timetable across FE and HE and the college will provide a regular CPD programme for all teaching staff that includes personalised plans and industry involvement with our full range of business partners and supporters.

2. Staff leadership and development



The college will also signal access to a range of academic and research resources that support its mission and identity, so that teaching staff can find and use the most up to date and credible research material to support their lesson materials and activities. The availability of these will form part of the induction experience for all staff.

The staff weekly schedule provides regular space for external lectures and training by faculties.

Staff Weekly Schedule

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
09:00 Start of day	Staff Briefing			Meeting	
09:30 Team			Assembly		
09:45 Period 1					
10:45 Period 2					
11:45 Break					
12:00 Period 3					
13:00 Lunch					
13:45 Period 4					
14:45 Period 5			Enrichment		
15:45 Break					
16:00 Period 6	Leadership				
17:00 End of day	Guest Lecture	Training		Clubs	

CPD Budgeting and performance management:

Each teaching staff member is allocated an approximate development budget of £1,500 each year that is pro-rated for part-time teaching staff.

Provision is made within the college's financial planning and faculty budgeting processes to ensure that sufficient funds are available annually to support the personalised staff development plans. Faculty heads will be required to discuss and agree a personalised plan with all their teaching staff, keep a record of that plan and submit this as part of their budgetary responsibilities annually.

Plans will feature in staff appraisal discussions and Ada sees this as a key strategy for maintaining its reputation for digital innovation. Staff are set three appraisal targets annually as a minimum, to cover values, student progress and a personal target. The College uses the following indicators for performance: Below expectations, Needs Improvement, Meets expectations, Exceeds expectations, Significantly Exceeds Expectations.

Performance management assessment will be measured using evidence. This can come from many sources including student feedback, lesson observation and student progress measures. Staff collect evidence as they go through the year to demonstrate their progress and successes. All staff have a mid year review and an end of year review with their line manager.

Supported staff research:

The College is not a research-focused institution but does benefit from research produced by HEIs and industry partners such as Google or Deloitte.

The College actively support staff to engage in research that has a direct relevance to the subjects and modules that they teach and can be linked to the improvement of teaching and student learning. A small research fund is available each year to all teaching staff at the College. Staff are able to apply for a small research grant to assist with their prior research or new research they are interested in pursuing. The Dean of the College makes final decision relating to the allocation of the staff research fund and should be emailed at tom@adacollge.org.uk. Application is done through completion of a brief 'business case' stating the objective of the research, the financial support required, the possible impact on working hours, any other special considerations and the proposed outcomes and benefits of the research proposal for the College, individual and students.

The Dean of the College will share the proposal with the Research, Scholarship and Ethics sub-committee for further consideration if this relates to a member of the HE teaching staff.

Specific Development for HE teaching staff:

The College recognises the specific needs of its HE Faculty in order to ensure that there teaching remains of a high standard and is current both in terms of industry relevance and academic research. The majority of HE lecturers will be educated to masters level and above in order to deliver the BSc. and Foundation degree programmes of the College and therefore have developed research capabilities that need to be sustained. In addition the College's degree programmes are exceptionally focused on the needs of its industry partners and the College will push all HE lecturers to actively maintain linkages with industry.

Research informed teaching:

Research Informed Teaching (RIT) at Ada, The National College for Digital Skills aims to bring the two key functions research and teaching closer together for the Degree Programme in Digital Innovation. It will involve supporting staff to develop their own research to inform their teaching.

Details of the process for applying to do this are outlined above. Greater emphasis will be placed on the rigour of proposed research for HE staff and greater scrutiny will be applied by the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Sub-Committee prior to approval.

In addition, the College proposes two pilot two approaches, based on the recommendations of the OU, to support the on-going professional development:

1. Matrix accreditation:

The matrix Standard is the unique quality framework for organisations to assess and measure their information, advice and/or guidance services, which ultimately supports individuals in their choice of career, learning, work and life goals.

The College will work with Assessment Services Ltd. to assess the benefit of this formalised approach to professional development to support key members of its HE team with their development

2. Where appropriate both full time and part-time staff will be supported to achieve [The National Teaching Fellowship status through The National Teaching Fellowship Scheme \(NTFS\)](#), which celebrates excellent practice and outstanding achievement in learning and teaching.

National Teaching Fellows (NTFs) are an active community of passionate and enthusiastic professionals, working to enhance learning and teaching in their institutions and the sector.

Faculty leaders and line managers will work with lecturers to access this development framework and expert practitioner community.

Each year we will invite the Dean and/or Head of Degree Programmes to nominate up to three members of staff to become a NTF.

VERSION	AUTHOR	DATE	CHANGES
V1	Joe Nutt	2.12.16	First draft
V2	Mark Smith	09.02.17	Update of recent developments and enhancements