

# Training Costs for Support Staff

8 July 2014

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru  
National  
Assembly for  
Wales



## Request for Information.

Thank you for your request received on 5 June in which you asked:

*Please itemise all training and education courses paid for by the Welsh Assembly since 2007 for family members of AMs who are employed as support staff. Please provide details including costs.*

Before 2011, the cost of training and development for Assembly Member Support Staff (AMSS) was met by Assembly Members' staffing budget. Since 2011, the Assembly Commission has had a central Continuous Professional Development (CPD) budget for Assembly Members (AMs) and AMSS, following a recommendation made by an Independent Review Panel in 2009. The overall aim of CPD is to maximise the capacity of the Assembly and to ensure that Members can deliver the best possible service for the people of Wales.

The CPD budget provides all AMSS with access to CPD opportunities to ensure they have the skills required to support AMs in their roles and to develop transferrable skills.

Each training request is accompanied by a business case demonstrating the relevance of the CPD intervention to their job role or, where appropriate, any skills gaps in their employing AM's office. The Assembly Commission's CPD team assesses each business case to decide whether to release funding for each training intervention and not all training requests submitted are approved.

Prospective AMSS who are family members currently have to be recruited through an open and fair competition in which the AM in question is removed from the appointment process, for as long as their family member is a candidate. The recruitment policy states that:

*The appointment of the employing Assembly Member's family members will only be permitted where the Assembly Member plays no part in the*

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*selection process, which will instead be conducted by the Members' Business Support team.*

*Where the family member is not shortlisted or decides to withdraw, the process will be handed back to the Assembly Member at that stage.*

Below is a table showing the total costs per financial year of training and education courses undertaken by AMSS who are family members. There are important points to note about the data in the table:

- In-house or Assembly run courses do not incur costs and are not included in the table.
- Many of the courses captured within the table were also attended by other AMSS who are not family members; the costs of their training have not been included.
- Not all AMSS who are family members are included in the table as some have never undertaken any training that has incurred a cost to the Assembly.

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
<b>2007-2008</b>		
	Further and Higher education	565.00
	Welsh Language	550.00
<b>2008-09</b>		
	GovNet Communications	405.38
	Welsh Language	420.00
<b>2009-10</b>		
	Welsh Language	224.00
	European Computer Driving Licence Essentials	215.50
<b>2010-11</b>		
	Welsh Language	292.00
<b>2011-12</b>		
	Effective Writing	214.28
	Managing emotional contacts	143.47
	Handling Difficult People	107.91
	Assertiveness Skills	199.04
	Welsh Language	74.72
	Speed Reading	145.00
	Managing challenging behaviour	108.98
	British Sign Language	680.00
	Media Relations	163.00
<b>2012-13</b>		
	Introduction into Facilitation	185.70

	Welsh Language	370.63
	Universal Credit	102.50
	Mental Health First Aid	120.00
	Confidence in Public Events	72.20
	Social Media and Democracy	33.33
	Introduction to social media	83.33
<b>2013-14</b>		
	Universal Credit	64.73
	Legislative Scrutiny	51.42
	Speech Writing	133.33
	Welsh Language	135.00
	Managing Challenging Behaviour	62.50
	Financial Scrutiny	107.14
	Further and Higher education	1414.00
<b>2014-present</b>		
	Personal Independence Payment	200.00
	Confident Communication	179.00
	Caseworker Training - Providing Support to Constituents	175.00
	Office Management and Personal Assistants	1200.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>9198.09</b>

Your request has been considered according to the principles set out in the Code of Practice on Public Access to Information. The code is published on our website at [http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about\\_us-commission\\_assembly\\_administration/abt-foi/abt-foi-cop-pub.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about_us-commission_assembly_administration/abt-foi/abt-foi-cop-pub.htm)

If you have any questions regarding this response please contact me. If you feel you have cause for complaint, please follow the guidance at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**Buddug Saer**  
**Programme Officer**  
**National Assembly for Wales**

Cause for concern or complaint with your FOI response?

If you believe that I have not applied the Code correctly or have not followed the relevant laws, you may make a formal complaint to the Chief Executive and Clerk at the National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay. Details of the Assembly's complaints principles are set out in the Code of Practice on Complaints available on the Internet at <http://www.assemblywales.org/conhome/con-complaint.htm>. Please advise me if you wish to receive a printed copy.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
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