



Helsinki,
04/09/2009

ECHA TRAINING GUIDELINES

(Revised on the basis of the comments by the Staff Committee)

Introduction	3
1. Admission to training courses.....	4
1.1 How to apply for training	4
1.2. Criteria for assessing applications and eligibility for training courses	5
1.3 Enrolment.....	6
1.4. Appeals against rejection.....	6
2. Classification of training.....	7
2.1. Mandatory and recommended training	7
2.2. Language training.....	7
2.3. Away days and team building events.....	8
3. Training record and certification of attendance	10
4. Annual Training Plan, Training Catalogue and Individual training plan	11
5. Contribution towards costs	12
5.1. Courses in the interest of the service.....	12
5.2 Training courses of shared interest between the staff member and ECHA attended on own initiative	12
5.3 Courses primarily in the interest of the staff member	13
6. Special training leave	13
6.1 Leave to attend a course in the interest of the service	13
6.2 Leave to attend a course of shared interest between the staff member and ECHA attended on own initiative	14
6.3 Courses primarily in the interest of the staff member	15
7. Leave for examinations	15
8. Submission of applications and recording of special leave	16
9. Appeals against refusal of leave.....	16
10. Failure to attend a course after enrolment	16
11. Objectives and evaluation of courses	16
ANNEX 1: Process and work flow	18
ANNEX 2: Proposal for away-day/team building.....	19

Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to consolidate and document existing procedures and to establish new procedures for planning and organising training for ECHA staff. In addition, the purpose is to serve as a guidance document for ECHA staff and for those involved in the planning and organisation of training in ECHA.

1. Admission to training courses

Only courses designed to ensure the acquisition, improvement or updating of competencies, occupational skills or to promote career development shall be considered as training courses.

1.1 How to apply for training

1. Applications for training courses shall be made on the form "Training – application" which is available in the intranet.

A training application is needed if the training concerns more than one unit or directorate. A training application needs to be filled in by the participant if it concerns external training organised outside ECHA. A list of attendance is sufficient if the training concerns only one unit.

2. All training applications shall be duly filled in by staff member with necessary information and justification to apply for a particular training. It is important to indicate clearly in the training application if the training is related to competences to be developed as identified during the objective setting and performance appraisal and how the training is related to the current tasks.

If participation in training involves travel, a mission order has to be prepared by the staff member and approved separately.

3. The training application must be signed by the immediate superior before submission to unit R2, Training and Development Team for technical assessment and approval (budgetary and technical feasibility, availability of places in case the number of participants is limited, contractual requirements etc.).

4. Applications must reach Unit R2, Training and Development Team preferably 6 weeks before the final enrolment date for courses.

5. The approved and signed training application submitted to the training and development team constitutes a commitment on the part of the staff member to participate in the training concerned. In approving the training application, the immediate supervisor should take into account the staff member's work load and create favourable conditions to enable them to participate in the training.

6. Application for external courses not organised by ECHA should be accompanied by relevant information, in particular detailed programme indicating the duration, venue and time of the course

7. It should be noted that there are two different applications for language training:

- application for training in the second language or third language for promotion
- application for training in other languages

1.2. Criteria for assessing applications and eligibility for training courses

1. The basic criteria for assessing the training application are that the training application is duly filled in and signed by the superior and submitted on time.

2. In addition the training application will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- priority will be given to training applications which correspond to the competences to be developed as identified in the job objectives or in the performance appraisal. This should be clearly indicated in the application.
- application matches with the content of the staff member's individual training plan
- applicant belongs to the specified target group
- relevance to the staff member's job and tasks
- special admission requirements e.g. cost (including travel and accommodation expenses)
- Eligibility by staff category:
 - o Temporary agents, contract agents may attend all types of training courses.
 - o Statutory staff will have priority to participate if a limited number of places are available.
 - o Seconded national experts (SNEs) shall be entitled to attend training courses organised by ECHA, if the interest of ECHA warrant it. The reasonable interests of the SNE in attending, in particular in the light of the SNEs professional career following secondment, shall be considered when a decision is taken on whether to permit attendance (art 24 – Training. Rules on the secondment of national experts to the European Chemicals Agency, Decision ED/15/2008)
 - o With the exception of courses aimed at induction, integration and information of a general nature, external staff (interims, consultants and staff of contractors) and trainees may only participate in training events:
 - i. which do not involve additional costs;
 - ii. which are of specific relevance to the tasks to which they have been assigned;
 - iii. language training is not available to these groups.

- Exceptions to the above rule may be granted for training that is required to enable external staff to use equipment, applications, processes or procedures internal to ECHA or essential to the tasks to which they have been assigned and where ECHA is unable to find external staff with the necessary prior qualifications.
3. If the course is fully booked a staff member shall be placed in the waiting list for the next course.
 4. Unless there are special reasons, training application may be rejected if the applicant has already attended an identical or equivalent course.
 5. Applications for external training courses (courses organised outside ECHA and involving a mission) may be rejected if equivalent courses can be organised internally.

1.3 Enrolment

1. For training courses arranged by ECHA and published internally and targeted to ECHA staff, the enrolment will be completed by Training and Development Team.
2. For individual external training courses, i.e. conference, seminar and workshop participation, language courses outside ECHA, long-term training, the application shall be completed by Training and Development Team (creation of purchase order) in conjunction with the staff member (course registration after confirmation by Training and Development Team that a purchase order has been issued).
3. In all cases enrolment is subject to Training and Development Team's technical approval (regarding budget availability, consistency of access to training) and Training and Development Team will confirm the approval to the staff member once the funds for the training have been reserved.

1.4. Refusal and review

1. Any application refused must be substantiated and the staff member must be informed in writing of the grounds for the refusal.
2. Where a request is refused the staff member may request a review from the Executive Director who will take the final decision. A copy of the request must be sent to the Head of Unit and the Head of Human Resources and Facilities.
3. The applicant and persons listed in the previous point shall be informed of the Executive Director's decision.

4. This review is without prejudice to the appeal procedures provided for under the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.

2. Classification of training

2.1. Mandatory and recommended training

The following training areas will be classified as mandatory:

1. Induction training for newcomers (including HR issues, ECHA-REACH and EU knowledge for those not familiar with the EU),
2. Management training for newly appointed heads of units if their prior management training has not been not recognized (e.g. First Steps in Managing People),
3. Training related to specific roles (e.g. selection interviewing for members of selection panels or ABAC for authorising officers)
4. Training related to corporate/organisational development targeted either to all staff or to specific target groups (e.g. SharePoint, quality awareness, security and safety training).

The following training areas will be classified as recommended

Operational training related job and tasks as defined in the job description and training to match the competences to be developed as identified in the job objectives or during the performance appraisal will be classified as recommended training.

2.2. Language training

The objective of language training is to enable the staff to attain a working knowledge of other EU languages. As from 01/01/2009 the level of knowledge considered as ability to work in a given language is set at B2, based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. B2 level corresponds to the level 6 of the Inter-Institutional language courses offered by the European Commission. Starting a language course at ECHA implies a commitment on the part of the staff member to continue studying the language until (s)he attains this level.

The Agency is obliged to provide language training for the third language because sufficient knowledge of the third language is a requirement for promotion. Article 45(2) of the Staff Regulations stipulates that "Officials shall be required to demonstrate before their first promotion after recruitment the ability to work in a third language among those referred to in Article 314 of the

EC treaty." This Article applies to Temporary Agents and Contract Agents Function Group IV by analogy.

The third language must be different from the two languages chosen or identified for the competition or selection procedure on the basis of which the temporary agent was recruited. In principle, staff members may choose the third language from among the 23 EU official languages. Taking into account the budget and other available resources, ECHA will make an effort to accommodate as broadly as possible staff members' language training requests for the official languages of the European Union.

Staff members are asked to consider carefully when selecting the language and the language course they want to attend in order to reach a working knowledge of that language. As a rule, regardless of the language, once selected, the language should not be changed.

However, should a staff member wish to change language, she/he may do so before the third lesson at the latest if there are places available in an ongoing course at the corresponding level in the new language. From the third lesson onwards, staff members wishing to change language will have wait for the next session to start.

Staff members may change language only once in any 3- year period except where they start a new language after having attained level B2 in the language they are studying.

2.3. Away days and team building events

Purpose

The overall purpose of away-days and team building events is to support organisational development and to increase unity, cohesion and commitment among the staff within Units, Directorates or Management. In general such events can be classified into two types: 1) teambuilding events: activities in which the focus is on the interaction among the members of a group with the aim of enhancing its ability to work together effectively or 2) away-days: activities in a different setting from the usual work environment that focus on developing knowledge, skills or ideas, on improving coordination and working methods or on planning activities together rather than the teambuilding itself.

Target groups and participation

Away-days and team building events are available for the following target groups

- units
- directorates
- management

Because of the number of teams in the Agency and for budgetary reasons the organisation and implementation of team building/away-days is limited to units, directorates and management. If duly justified and approved thematic

networks may organise an away-day directly relating to the theme, work and functioning of the network.

Normally, all members of the target group should be included in such events. Where external staff (interims, consultants) are an integral part of the team, they can also be included in the event, though their participation may need to be financed from a different budget line than the training budget for normal staff. Please consult the Training and Development team on this.

Target groups are requested to take into account that there might be a need to ensure the continuity of the service during the event.

Frequency

Unless duly justified (e.g. due to organisational changes) team building and away-days may be organised once a year per Unit, Directorate and thematic network. ECHA management seminars will be organised twice a year.

Costs

The costs for these events will be covered from training budget for ECHA staff¹. As a general rule, the total costs (i.e. hire of room, travel, accommodation, external facilitators and lunch and refreshments etc.) should not exceed 250 Euros per participants unless duly justified and approved.

Overnight stay

As a general rule away days/team building events should not last for more than one day with a full programme. Overnight stay with accommodation is only acceptable in duly justified cases (e.g. that the relevant programme continues the next day). At least half of the programme should be directly related to work (e.g. related to the planning of activities, development of working methods, organisational changes issues of quality, standards, integrity etc).

When planning the duration and timing of the event, directorate/units should bear in mind that some staff members may not be able to participate outside office hours (e.g. family reasons). As a general rule, participation in the programme outside office hours should be voluntary.

Planning and preparation

When planning the away day/team building event the Unit/Directorate is asked to fill in the appropriate form and send it to the training and development team (See: Annex Proposal for team building). The Unit/Directorate should pay particular attention to the purpose and specific aims of the event.

Good preparation is fundamental to the success of training/team-building actions and you should plan at least 6-8 weeks ahead, especially if an external facilitator is required. All requests for away-day/team-building actions

¹ Except where there are a significant number of external staff (see Participants above).

need to be approved by the Head/s of Unit/Director concerned before resources from the training budget can be committed.

The Training and Development team will assist in the planning the content, but a detailed programme stating clearly the purpose and aims of the event should be finalised by the relevant unit/directorate/network. The detailed programme must be annexed to the purchase order.

Steps for the organisation of away days/team building event

1. Discuss first within your Unit/Directorate and define the purpose and focus, date, the need for an external venue and external facilitator and the number of participants. You may consult the Training and Development Team at this point already to discuss what is available. Please inform Training and Development team as early as possible about your ideas. No contact should be taken with external facilitators or venue without prior confirmation from the training and development team that the necessary budget is available
2. Training and Development checks the budget availability.
3. Units/Directorate fills in the proposal for a team building and submits that to Training and Development Team with a list of participants (see Annex).
4. Training and Development Team will assist in identifying external venues and external facilitators (if applicable) based on the information provided.
5. Training and Development Team will contact the venue and external facilitators to ask for a detailed written financial proposal.
6. Units/Directorates should draft a programme for the away day/team building.
7. Training and Development Team will make the purchase order with relevant documents included the agenda/programme and list of participants provided by the services requesting an away-day/team building event.
8. Training and Development Team will inform when the purchase order has been approved.

Follow up and evaluation

Units/Directorates interested in organising a teambuilding or learning events are reminded that they should have a clear idea of the objectives to fulfil, the outcome and/or the output of the event, the follow up, and how the impact of the event will be measured (evaluation). Team-building is most useful if it is part of a process with structured follow-up after the event as well as good preparation beforehand.

3. Training record and certification of attendance

An individual training record shall be kept for each staff member. This record includes all training activities applied and attended. Participation in a training course shall be noted on the staff member's training record. A staff member may request a certificate gained to be filed in his/her personal file.

R2 Unit and Training and Development Team will issue certification of attendance upon request. Certificate of attendance and participation can only be issued on those training sessions of which there is record and proof and which have been fully completed by the staff member. For this purpose the staff member is requested to sign the list of attendance for each training session. These lists of attendances are kept in the training records managed by the Training and Development Team in Unit R2.

4. Annual Training Plan, Training Catalogue and Individual training plan

Annual training plan

An annual training plan for the coming year will be developed and drafted by the end of the year by the Training and Development Team based on the priorities set by the management and taking into account the identified needs and budgetary resources available

Training catalogue

Taking into account the needs identified and priorities defined by the management a specific ECHA training catalogue will be compiled by the Training and Development Team. This catalogue will include training sessions planned in the Agency by different operational units as well as training related to improvement of general professional skills implemented in the Agency.

The catalogue will be compiled through the training correspondent's network from each unit. Training correspondents are asked to fill in a special training format used for collecting information about training in throughout the Agency and send it to the Training and Development team.

Staff members are asked to consult this training catalogue to identify and apply for courses that match their development needs.

Individual training plan

Once competences to be developed have been identified and performance appraisal completed individual training plans for each staff member will be developed by the Training and Development Team.

Individual training plan includes the training courses needed to meet the development objectives as defined in the objective setting and performance appraisal. Individual training plan will be prepared and evaluated annually based on the needs identified during the objective setting and performance appraisal

5. Contribution towards costs

5.1. Courses in the interest of the service

ECHAs aim is to become the centre of expertise on issues relating to the safety of industrial chemicals and to apply most modern administrative practices and staff policies. Therefore ECHA needs staff who is recognized experts in different topics relevant to chemicals safety and public administration.

Courses in the interest of the service applies to all courses organised by ECHA, published in the ECHA training catalogue or Commission training catalogue and short term courses (e.g. workshops, conferences or seminars) except intensive language courses. External courses, seminars and conferences that are recognised as contributing to ECHA's expertise development shall be considered to be in the interest of the service.

1. Subject to the availability of funds, course enrolment, inscription, registration, travel expenses and other expenses for courses, including examination and certification fees, shall be paid if the training is in direct relationship to the scope of activities of the staff member, it forms part of his/her development objectives or it is recognised as contributing to ECHA's expertise development at the time when the training request is made. These courses are paid from the ECHA training budget. This budget item covers also costs for training missions (travel, accommodation and per diem) for the staff member participating in training organised outside of ECHA.

2. Applications shall be made on the form "Training – application" including full details of the course/conference programme together with cost, dates, times and any possible requirements for travel. If travel is required, a mission order has to be prepared by the individual staff member. All travel should be made by the most economical means.

3. ECHA will refund the costs of language test for third language for promotion up to 200 Euros.

5.2 Training courses of shared interest between the staff member and ECHA attended at own initiative

1. Subject to the availability of funds, ECHA may grant a contribution towards courses attended at own initiative that are of shared interest between the staff member and the Agency. All courses must relate to the job that the staff member is occupying at the time when the application is made. The form "Training – application" has to be handed in before the beginning of the course or before each academic/calendar year including full details of the course programme together with course cost and date. The number of special leave days requested for the chosen period has to be indicated.

2. The staff member will only be reimbursed after the course or the academic/calendar year upon production of the passed examinations (or certificate of attendance should there be no examination) related to the relevant year. **ECHA pays to the staff member a contribution of 60% of the course cost up to the maximum reimbursement per year which is € 1500.** ECHA reserves the right to revise this ceiling.

3. No payment will be made towards travel or accommodation.

4. The Agency's contribution shall be paid in Euros into the same account in which the staff member's salary is paid.

5. No partial refunds are made during the academic year. Reimbursement of the course/academic year is made upon evidence of course payment and successful course completion (original receipted bill or invoice stating all the relevant elements of the course, confirmation of passed examination). The original attendance certificate will be returned to the staff member if so requested.

6. Should a university course be split into modules instead of academic years, the university has to provide written evidence about how many modules correspond to one academic year. The staff member can then be reimbursed upon production of the passed examinations of the relevant academic year.

5.3 Courses primarily in the interest of the staff member

Subject to the availability of funds, in exceptional cases and duly justified by the Head of Unit or Director ECHA may grant a contribution towards courses attended at own initiatives that are primarily in the interest of the staff member are eligible for reimbursement of 50% up to a maximum of € 500 per year.

6. Special training leave

Granting a special leave for training courses (other than language courses e.g. courses in REACH related scientific fields) is a way to increase and develop the scientific or technical capacity of staff.

6.1 Leave to attend a course in the interest of the service

Courses in the interest of the service

Time spent attending a training course in the interest of the service shall be considered working time and shall not require special leave.

Language training organised in ECHA

Participation in language courses organised in ECHA in order to fulfil the requirements of Article 45 (2) of the Staff Regulations (third language for promotion) will be considered as 100% working time and 50% of your attendance will be considered as working time when participating in Finnish lessons. This would apply also to all intensive language courses organised in ECHA. Attending language training for the second language or advanced English language training shall be considered as working time. Participation in other language courses not linked to the third language requirement will not be considered as working time.

6.2 Leave to attend a course of shared interest between the staff member and ECHA attended on own initiative

Courses that constitute a shared interest are

- A: intensive language courses organised outside of ECHA,
- B: other training courses or courses that spread over one or more years or through distance learning attended on own initiative and not organised by ECHA which are not recognised as being in interest of service or not directly contributing the expertise development.

Following the Commission rules and rules adopted by other agencies (EMEA) if required the ECHA may grant a derogation from the flexitime rules to be absent during core hours or a special leave up to 10 days per year for courses attended at own initiative, which constitute a shared interest between the staff member and the Agency. The rest is counted as annual leave.

A. Intensive language courses organised outside of ECHA

For intensive language courses organised outside of ECHA and attended at own initiative lasting not more than twenty working days, special leave of up to 10 working days per year shall be granted on the following terms:

- unless an exception is made in duly substantiated cases that the training is in the interest of service, courses must relate to the improvement of skills in the second language or third language for promotion as indicated by the staff member and support the reaching of the sufficient level (B2 or equivalent) knowledge for 3rd language for promotion or local languages Finnish or Swedish) or advanced English language courses
- such courses may not be attended by staff who have no knowledge of the language in question and the relevance of the course to the work of the applicant must be attested by the relevant Head of Unit or Director;
- courses must be approved by Training and Development Team and must be at a level appropriate to the needs of the applicant to support the reaching of the sufficient level knowledge of the 3rd language;
- the courses must involve at least four hours' of tuition per working day for at least five days a week and last at least two weeks
- unless special reasons are put forward by the Unit concerned only one period of special training leave shall be granted for any one during a staff member's career at the ECHA .

B. Other training courses or courses that spread over one or more years or through distance learning attended at own initiative and not organised by ECHA which are not recognised as being in interest of services or which are not directly contributing the expertise development.

Provided that they meet the admission and registration requirements, staff members attending an authorized training course spread over one or more years or through distance learning, e-learning, or correspondence and provided that the course is of reasonable relevance to the staff member's current function, may be granted special leave for half the number of hours' tuition up to a maximum of 10 working days (or the equivalent number of hours) per academic or calendar year.

Leave for examinations (oral and written exams incl. thesis) is not included in the maximum of 10 days special leave per year.

At the end of the training course/academic year, the staff member must provide Training and Development Team with a certificate from the training body concerned confirming the number of hours of attendance at the course as well as with a confirmation of the passed exam.

For each year, a new application with confirmation of having passed the exam has to be submitted to Training and Development Team at least one month prior to the start of the course.

In exceptional cases, special leave for study and exams may be granted to staff attending courses of shared interest between the staff member and the ECHA without reimbursement of training cost by the ECHA. In this case a form "Staff training – application" including full details of the course/conference programme, course dates indicating the number of special leave days has to be submitted to Training and Development Team signed by the immediate superior and the Head of Unit.

6.3 Courses primarily in the interest of the staff member

Courses that are primarily in the interest of the staff member shall not be considered as working time.

7. Leave for examinations

In addition staff shall be entitled to special examination leave of up to five working days per year for the number of days they are required to be present at the examination plus any travelling time needed unless the journey can be undertaken at a weekend or on a public holiday.

Written proof from the university has to be submitted stating date and time of the exams in addition to the leave form.

Special leave will be granted to staff members who will take the official level test for the third language for promotion. Special leaves will not be granted for level tests in other languages.

8. Submission of applications and recording of special leave

Applications for special training leave to attend courses or to sit an examination shall be made on the usual leave form accompanied by the relevant documents, e.g. invitation letter for the examination, confirmation of seminars. These applications must specify the places, dates and times of the courses or examinations. Special leave applications will be updated in Centurio and FlexWin by the secretaries and HR/Individual rights team will then verify and store the original special leave applications. Training and Development team need to be informed about the special leave request.

Special leave shall not be finally granted until the applicant has submitted within two months of the end of the course an original document or certified copy to Training and Development Team showing that the courses have actually been attended and that the examinations have actually been passed. Failing this, the period of absence shall count as annual leave.

9. Refusal of leave and review

Should special training leave be refused, the member of staff concerned may have recourse to the review procedure described in chapter 1.4.

10. Failure to attend a course after enrolment

Once the immediate superior has approved the training application, attendance to the course is mandatory. A member of staff who has enrolled for a training course but is unable to attend must immediately inform Training and Development Team. A staff member will try to find a replacement to attend the training course.

11. Objectives and evaluation of courses

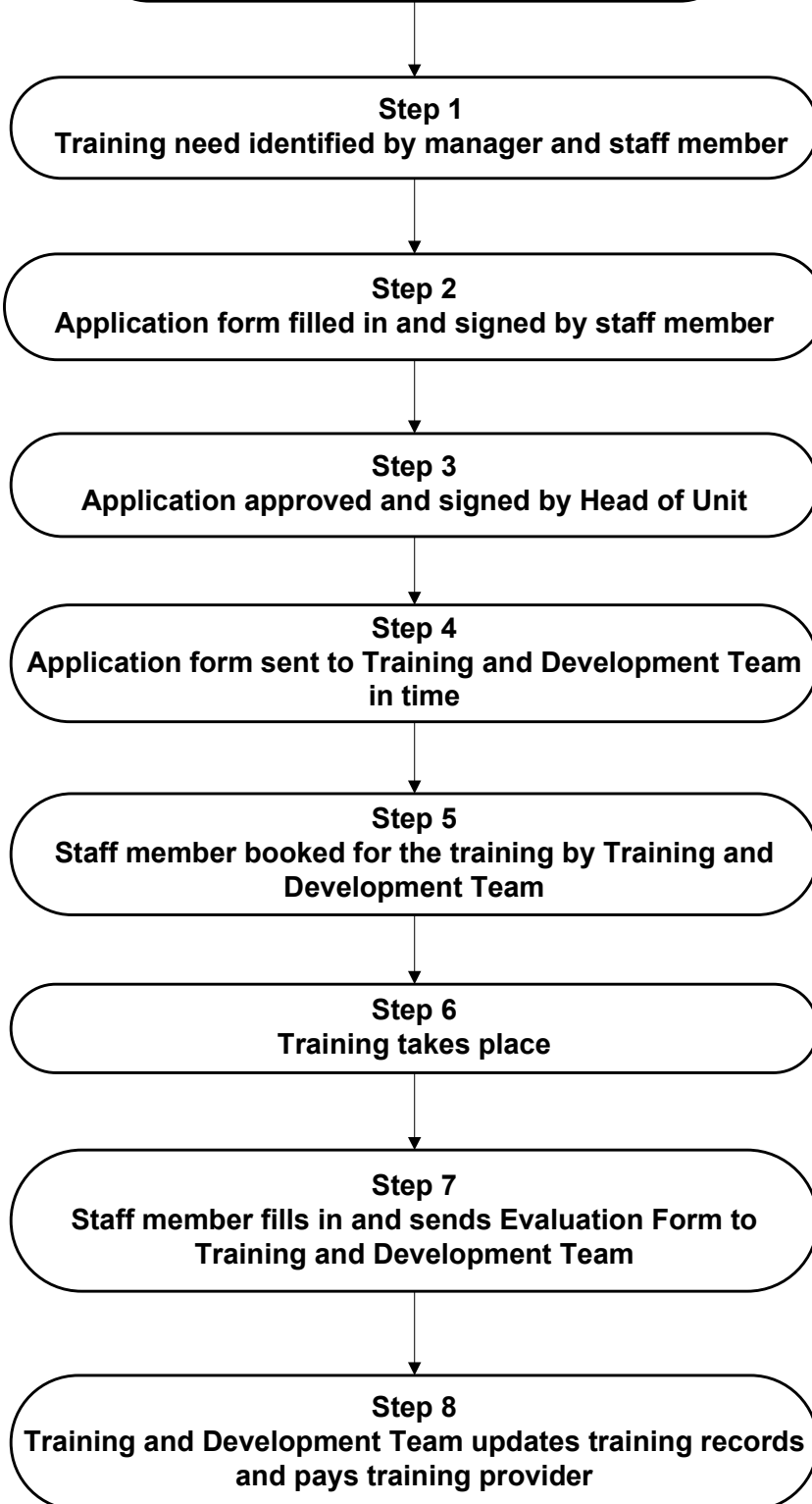
In advance of any training course, when filling in the training application the staff member together with the manager shall agree on the main goals/expected results to be attained from the course. These goals/expected results shall be included in the training application.

After completing a training course, the staff member fills in the evaluation form and shall submit an evaluation form to Training and Development Team right after the course or at latest within a week.

As a minimum the impact of training on the performance of a staff member will be assessed annually as part of the performance appraisal.

Annex 1: Process and workflow

**General Training organised by the Agency:
Process and Workflow**



ANNEX 2: Proposal for away-day/team building

PROPOSAL FOR AWAY-DAY / TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITY

Overall purpose	
Specific aims	
Target audience	
Size	
Venue	
Time	
Length	
Logistics	
Working methods	
External facilitator	
Dinner	
Plan for follow up /evaluation	
Additional comments	