

eLEARNING TEAM BUSINESS CASE

Internal / external context and influences

Over the past two years the 'digital turn' prompted by the pandemic has led to an intensive use of eLearning in both private and public organisations. In this context, new (more refined and complex) technologies for virtual learning have been developed, new 'Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations' (PSBAR) have been published, and the demand and costs of e-learning products have increased worldwide.

While the Service has been pioneering the use of eLearning since 2007, data on the activity of our Learning Management System (LearnPro) over the past three years show that the Service's use of eLearning has increased significantly. Specifically, between January 2019 and January 2022:

- Over 25 new interactive modules have been added to LearnPro
- The number of LearnPro programmes has increased from 4 to 9
- The usage of interactive modules by users has more than tripled (from 6,031 to 21,863)
- The rates of both passed modules and taken assessments have doubled (from 33,688 to 64,219 and from 38,566 to 70,822 respectively)

While eLearning used to be primarily concerned with the digitalisation of learning materials and the resolution of users' technical difficulties, the development of interactive modules with videos, online activities and built-in assessments via new technologies (from Articulate 360 to Artificial I) requires more advanced digital skills.

The participation of eLearning to many different projects has made coding and system-thinking skills indispensable to ensure that the eLearning solutions designed for one project do not compromise the correct functioning of other projects and the accuracy of the data obtained through reports.

Current Arrangements

eLearning is currently within two teams involving two people in total:

- A permanent eLearning Coordinator (Grade 6, sitting within the OD Team)
- A temporary eLearning Coordinator (Grade 6, sitting within the Firefighter Safety Team) (fixed term contract funded by Service Improvement budget - ends March 2023)

Proposed Arrangements

The proposal is to have **two** permanent eLearning Coordinators (Grade 6), sitting within the Firefighter Safety Team, but with close working relationships with the OD team.

Contribution to the SYFR Annual Plan

The overall purpose of the eLearning implementation plan is to increase the efficiency and productivity of the eLearning team by defining a clearer eLearning strategy and reorganising existing resources in a more rational way.

The improvement of reports and their management by eLearning will not only provide more accurate information to managers on the performance of their staff, but also make the use of data and figures easier.

The review of existing eLearning modules from an inclusion perspective and the use of new technologies to make LearnPros more accessible will prove, in a tangible way, the Service's commitment to equality and diversity, helping to shape organisational culture via appropriate and truly inclusive training materials.

The planner-based restructuring of LearnPro and the overall implementation of the Service's eLearning provision (including their accessibility via mobile phones) will improve the user experience, offering better and more engaging training to staff while also being aligned with the digitalisation process that is being undertaken to support agile working.

The digitalisation of training materials via LearnPro will help the Service become more sustainable (e.g., just the digitalisation of TDC training materials has made the Service save c.1000 A4 pages per recruit during the last recruitment).

Overall, the use of new technologies and the strategic reorganisation of the eLearning team will result in a more cost-effective management of the eLearning provision, protecting the Service from the sharply increasing costs of external eLearning products.

Benefits Analysis

The implementations proposed will serve to:

- Make eLearning more efficient and better equipped to support current and future projects across the Service (NOG, MOC, MAKO, Body Worn Cameras, CM Passport, etc)
- Save resources by producing more courses in-house and by using the existing capabilities of LearnPro to meet the needs of the new operational programme (NOG/MOC projects) as opposed to subscribing to new (increasingly expensive) external services
- Make the Service's eLearning platform compliant with the new 'Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations
- Improve the users' experience
- Establish consistent methodologies, procedures and templates for the creation and delivery of different eLearning materials, which will also put South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) in a better position to collaborate with other services
- Provide both corporate and operational managers with accurate reports (generated by eLearning), to reduce their workload and offer more support when monitoring eLearning performance
- Enable eLearning to manage completion of mandatory modules and chase up users with outstanding items, so to reduce pressure on modules' owners and managers
- Reduce the number of modules assigned to different roles by creating more tailored programmes for different staff groups.
- Improve the accuracy of LearnPro reports by investigating potential ICT issues

Risk Analysis

The risks associated with this report are not meeting the required improvements to our approach to eLearning delivery. These are detailed in the benefits analysis above.

Financial Implications

	2023/24	2024/25
2 nd Permanent eLearning Coordinator	£34,895	£36,305
Total	£34,895	£36,305