



Information, Advice & Support Service Staff Association - Steering Group

Terms of Reference

1. Context

- 1.1 Every Local Authority in England must have an information, advice and support service (IAS service).
- 1.2 Every IAS service can become part of a regional IAS service network that exists to share best practice, provide peer support, organise training and work towards having a consistency in quality and offer across services. There are 9 regional networks across the country that each meet three or four times a year. Usually the IAS service lead or manager attends the regional network on behalf of all the staff in their service.
- 1.3 The IASS Staff Association is a body made up of all the IAS service staff which is represented by the IASS Staff Association Steering Group.
- 1.4 The IASS Staff Association Steering group is made up of a nominated representative from every regional network. The steering group meet three or four times a year to draw together the experiences of the regional networks. Our aims are like the regional networks to improve practice, provide peer support and consider the needs of staff. We share ideas for regional training and events and look for common themes in staff experience and training needs that can be fed into national development. Our one big task is to organise a National Conference biannually.

2. Aims & Scope

- 2.1 The aims of the steering group are to:
 - Bring together good practice and common issues from IASS staff to enable consistency of how we work and deliver our service offer.
 - Promote personal and professional development within Information, Advice & Support Services, in collaboration with statutory and voluntary partners
 - Provide opportunities for the professional development IASS Staff Association members, through professional associations, the Information, Advice & Support Services Network and national SEN strategies via the IASSN
 - Optimise opportunities for regional peer support, signposting to unions and professional bodies
 - Engage with statutory and voluntary partners within education, health and social care to influence national and local policy and practice and promote Information, Advice & Support Services
 - Promote equality of opportunity amongst its own membership and within individual services
 - Contribute to relevant research and the work of regional and national organisations
 - Share best practice among members for the overall benefit of all IAS services
 - Organise the IASS Staff Association Conference on behalf of all members

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2.2 The steering group exists to address common issues and represent the collective opinion of the IAS staff association members. It will not act upon or deliberate issues effecting individual services or individual staff members.

3. Meetings & Membership

3.1 Each regional IAS service network will nominate a regional representative to the steering group

3.2 The steering group will meet on a termly basis

3.3 The chairperson will be drawn from members of the group.

3.4 Tenure for the chairperson will be for a year at a time, renewed up to and not exceeding 3 years

3.5 Individual membership of the group will be reviewed after 3 years to ensure membership is continually 'refreshed'.

3.6 Members will:

- Give the perspective and findings of their regional network whilst recognising and appreciating the views of others
- Promote the IAS Staff Association and provide feedback on the activity of the steering group to their regional network
- Be prepared to take part in/lead small steering group task and finish groups
- Represent the IAS Staff Association on other relevant groups as agreed with the Steering Group

4. Decision Making

4.1 A minimum of 5 steering group members must be present for decisions to be made on behalf of the steering group.

4.2 To ensure consistent attendance and productivity members will:

- Notify the chairperson if they cannot attend
- Identify and acknowledge with the chairperson any conflict of interest if and when it arises
- Understand that when members are unable to attend consecutive meetings, their position may be reviewed which is at the discretion of the chairperson and their regional network
- Only delegate attendance if this has been agreed by the Chairperson in advance
- Read relevant material before and after meetings
- Abide by requests for confidentiality

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5. Finance

- 1.1 Each regional network pays an annual contribution to the IASS Staff Association this is administered by the steering group to achieve the aims set out in section 2.
- 1.2 The steering group aims to be cost neutral, reinvesting income annually to achieve the aims set out in section 2.

6. Quality

- 6.1 Regional representatives will provide termly feedback from their network to the steering group to inform prioritisation and to help monitor the effectiveness of the group
- 6.2 The steering group will survey Staff Association members at least annually to inform future planning.
- 6.3 Specific quality assurance processes will be put in place for any significant or new activities e.g. events or commissioning of projects