

APPRAISAL GUIDANCE NOTES

1. Aims of Appraisal

The University's appraisal scheme aims to provide an opportunity:

- To review your work over the last year and plan your activities for the coming year;
- To discuss and agree your planned learning and development;
- To discuss more generally your career and ambitions

The appraisal scheme is not linked to procedures for salary, probation or grading for which the University has separate arrangements. The appraisal record is not a promotion document, although any clear potential in terms of skill and experience ought to be noted.

2. Scope

The scheme applies to staff in any grade who are on a contract of one year or more.

3. Formal Records

The attached proformas show the areas that should be covered. However staff and managers may agree to record the review and the Personal Development Plan (PDP) in a different format if they cover the same basic information (references in these notes to the Forms are intended to cover any other format agreed by managers and staff).

4. Reviewers

Academic Staff

Academic staff will normally be reviewed by the Director of their Institute. However academic staff may propose an alternative reviewer and the Director of their Institute will accept provided he or she is satisfied that the person proposed will have sufficient familiarity with the reviewee's work.

All Other Staff

All other staff will normally be reviewed by their immediate line manager. Exceptionally a member of staff may propose an alternative reviewer and any such cases will be discussed between the Head of the Department, Division or Institute and the HR Office.

5. Timetable

All staff will be reviewed at least once during the year. It is the responsibility of Directors of Divisions and Institutes to ensure that reviews take place at a

time which is convenient to the work programme of each area. Directors will certify at the end of each year to the Director of HR that all their staff have received an appraisal during the previous year.

6. Timescales

The review form and PDP must be completed and countersigned and returned to the Staff Development Office (HR Division) within fifteen working days of the appraisal discussion.

7. Retention of Forms

Forms must be retained for 3 years in line with the University's records retention policies. Managers must ensure that they retain forms securely and in line with the Data Protection principles.

8. Data Protection

The data collected and the records maintained under the appraisal scheme are used solely for the purposes, administration and monitoring of the scheme itself. These include:

- Supporting the review of work over the year, the planning of activities for the coming year and of learning and development, and the review of your career and ambitions,
- Identifying any issues common across individual appraisals within the whole or part of the organisation which may need to be addressed,
- Ensuring the fair, equitable and appropriate application and administration of the scheme.

The records are accessible to the staff of the HR Office and also to the reviewer, reviewee, countersignatory, and the Director of the Division/Institute. With the individual's consent they may also be used when preparing job references.

9. Pre-Meeting

Staff and managers may find it useful to meet briefly a few days before the appraisal discussion to ensure they are both clear about the purpose and scope of the appraisal and the issues to be covered.

10. Failure to Agree

On a few occasions it may not be possible for the member of staff and the reviewer to reach agreement on the outcome of the review. In such cases non academic staff should raise their concerns in writing with the reviewer's line manager within 10 working days. The Reviewer's line manager will meet with both parties as soon as possible and no later than 10 working days from receipt of the statement of concerns and advise the member of staff of their decision in writing within a further 5 working days.

Academic Staff should raise their concerns with Director of their Institute or, if the Director is the Reviewer, with the Dean of the School. Where the Dean is the Reviewer, staff should raise their concerns with the Vice Chancellor. The same timescales will apply as for non-academic staff.

11. Training

Training in effective appraisal techniques is available for both reviewers and reviewees.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR REVIEWERS

12. Preparation for the Meeting

- Give the reviewee two weeks notice of the review discussion;
- Arrange a suitable location for the discussion which is private and free from interruptions;
- Arrange to meet with the reviewee in advance of the review discussion to ensure you are both clear about the purpose and the issues you each wish to cover;
- Agree a format for recording the Review and Personal Development Plan. You may use the proformas attached, or use another format provided you both agree and you cover the same basic information;
- Look at the previous year's Review and personal development plan, and consider how the issues identified have been addressed over the year.

13. Conducting the Review

- Use the form as a guide to cover the positive aspects of the Reviewee's work in the last year and the areas that went less well in a positive and constructive way.
- Always seek to find mutually acceptable solutions to any issues that are identified
- Agree on development actions
- Explore any longer term aims or ambitions the Reviewee may have.

14. Agreeing Key Tasks

Reviewers and reviewees should agree key tasks which are specific and measurable and achievable within a specified period.

15. Follow up Action

- At the end of the meeting or as soon as possible afterwards, write a summary of the discussion with the reviewee in Section D, record the Key Tasks in Section E and ensure that you both sign the form;

- Pass the completed form to the Director of your Institute or Division to be countersigned and returned to you;
- Retain a copy securely and, within 15 working days of the review meeting, send the original in a sealed envelope (labels are available from the Staff Development Office) to the Staff Development Office;
- If you add comments to the form at any stage after it has been signed by the reviewee you must ensure that the reviewee sees those comments

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR REVIEWEES

16. Preparing for the Review

- Meet with your Reviewer to ensure you are both clear about the purpose and the issues you each wish to cover;
- Review the previous year's form and personal development plan, and consider how the issues identified have been addressed over the year.
- Complete sections A – C of the Form

17. Completing the Form

- Attach your current job description, or provide a brief description of your main duties either in Section A or on a separate sheet of paper;
- Agree at the review meeting the points to be recorded in Sections D and E (the Summary of Discussion and the Key Tasks);
- Either at or as soon as possible after the review, fill out your Personal Development Plan, for you and your Reviewer to sign. Development actions can take the form of formal training, either internal or external, but equally can cover activities at work which expand your skills or knowledge, such as learning a new IT skill, or working on a new project or in part of a team.
- Retain the original of your PDP and send a copy to the Staff Development Office, HR Division, in Senate House.

18. Follow up Action

- Review your PDP regularly and ensure it is still relevant.
- If you would like to talk to your manager during the year about your job or your development needs, then ask to do so.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR COUNTERSIGNATORIES

19. Countersigning

All forms will be countersigned, normally by the Director of the Institute or by the Director of the Division. Directors may delegate the responsibility to senior managers if the number of forms makes it impractical for them to see them all.

The purpose of countersigning is to enable the Director or his or her nominee to ensure that the process has been properly carried out and to take note of any follow up actions. If they believe any of the comments made are unjustified then they must discuss them with the reviewer and reviewee.