

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

AIMS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

In order to achieve Heriot-Watt's strategic aims the University needs to:

- align the contributions made by individual members of staff (referred to as colleagues in this document) to University Strategy and School/ Service objectives
- ensure that colleagues are fully equipped to carry out their roles
- assess and recognise individual contribution
- gain a better understanding of each individual's potential and assist colleagues to develop to their full potential.

In addressing these points, it is important to ensure a consistent approach while recognising the different roles and responsibilities throughout the University. The University's Performance Management policy is designed to do just that, through a Performance and Development Review (PDR) process which:

- Engages colleagues in objective setting to ensure they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how they contribute to the success of the University
- Identifies the necessary resources, training, development and support that colleagues need to carry out their role and achieve their objectives
- Evaluates contribution in respect of how well objectives have been met and in respect of other skills which maximise effectiveness
- Provides a basis for linking exceptional contribution to reward
- Facilitates the achievement of personal career objectives by providing an opportunity to take stock, consider future direction, assess progress and identify further needs for development.

BENEFITS OF PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (PDR)

The University recognises employees as its most important resource and the PDR process is one of the ways in which individuals can be made aware of their value to the organisation through being able to highlight their own contribution, receive feedback on that contribution and understand how it links to School/Service/team objectives. The process also enables opportunities for individual development to be identified and addressed and provides a formal opportunity for Reviewees to discuss and address a range of other work related issues.

The PDR process encourages good management practice across the University and improved communication between management and their colleagues. For those with management responsibilities, the process will assist them in gaining a better understanding of their colleagues (e.g. abilities, skills, development needs, issues) with the aim of helping individuals fulfil their potential and to contribute as effectively as possible.

In applying the PDR process, Heads of Schools and Directors of Service are able to agree, with individuals, objectives that are critical to the success of the School/ Service and to help

ensure that individuals are managing resources effectively. Crucially, PDR has a key role to play in the retention of appropriately skilled and motivated colleagues.

PRINCIPLES OF PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (PDR)

The PDR process is based on openness and colleagues are entitled to see their completed PDR form. The University is also fully committed to equality of opportunity in the workplace and the PDR process will be applied in accordance with the University's Equality and Diversity policy.

COLLEAGUES INCLUDED IN PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (PDR)

All colleagues in the University are required to take part in the Performance and Development Review scheme with the exception of those who are not covered by this scheme (i.e. casual workers, and colleagues employed under Knowledge Transfer Partnerships). Colleagues employed in Craft grades are not currently covered by this scheme but will be included at a later date.

PDR PROCEDURES

The PDR procedures comprise this policy document and the PDR Guidance Notes. This document gives an overview of the main stages in the process but it must be read in conjunction with the Guidance Notes which give more detailed information to each of the role holders involved in the process, so that they can better understand what is expected of them and how to complete each stage of the process.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The responsibility for implementation of the PDR process rests with Heads of Schools/ and Directors of Service. This includes ensuring that all reviews are carried out within agreed timescales and in accordance with the procedures.

The Human Resource Development team is responsible for providing guidance to managers and colleagues and the OD team is responsible for monitoring the PDR process to ensure it is fit for purpose. It is the responsibility of line managers to induct new colleagues on PDR procedures, as part of local induction processes. Reviewer Training, which is mandatory, is provided by Organisational Development.

ALLOCATION OF REVIEWERS & COUNTERSIGNATORIES

The person being reviewed is the Reviewee. The Reviewer is the person responsible for carrying out the review (normally the Reviewee's Line Manager). The Countersignatory is normally someone more senior in the Reviewee's Line Management chain (most probably the Reviewer's Line Manager) and is responsible for encouraging the Reviewer to fulfil their role and for noting outcomes of the review process.

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Schools//Directors of Service to allocate Reviewers and Countersignatories to Reviewees. This should take place before the beginning of each PDR year and the details circulated to all the relevant parties so that colleagues know who will be reviewing them, and Reviewers know who they will be responsible for reviewing, during the coming year.

The Reviewee will normally be reviewed by the person to whom they report i.e. their Line Manager. Where reporting lines are less straightforward, other arrangements will need to be

considered and in such cases it is vital that colleagues are allocated the most appropriate Reviewer. Heads of Schools/ Services should refer to the Guidance Notes for more detailed advice on this point.

A Reviewee may wish to request an alternative Reviewer. They can do this by contacting their Head of School/Director of Service giving their reasons. If the Head of School/Director of Service considers it appropriate, then an alternative Reviewer will be allocated.

Where a Line Manager manages a large number of colleagues it may not be practical for them to act as Reviewer to them all. In such a case the Line Manager may agree an alternative Reviewer with the Head of School/Director of Service and will then advise the Reviewee.

Training and Briefing of Reviewers

It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Director of Service to ensure that all designated Reviewers and Countersignatories have received the necessary training before they conduct Performance and Development Reviews and that they understand how their School/ Service's objectives impact on the individuals they are reviewing.

THE PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (PDR) PROCESS

The University's PDR process is based on an annual cycle of:

Planning: looking ahead and planning individual objectives in order to achieve the School/ Service's objectives, and planning how best to address individual development needs.

Monitoring: reviewing progress against the plan on a regular and ongoing basis.

Evaluating: looking back to review how well objectives were achieved and assessing overall performance.

The Performance and Development Review Year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Planning: The Forward Job Plan (FJP)

The FJP provides the framework for the PDR process. It is:

- a record of the individual's main responsibilities and objectives which have been agreed for the coming year
- updated during the year, if necessary, to take account of changes to responsibilities or objectives
- used to record progress made against those objectives during the year.

Whilst the FJP has to be agreed by both the Reviewee and the Reviewer, the Reviewee would normally draft it, initially. However, there are times when it is more appropriate for the Reviewer to draft the FJP, for example when someone is new to the job.

The FJP is normally created at the beginning of the PDR year i.e. January. When a new colleague joins, the FJP should be created within the first month of taking up appointment.

Monitoring objectives and performance

The setting and reviewing of objectives and performance, and providing feedback on a regular basis, are aspects of good management. The PDR process is the formal mechanism for this and is intended to complement good management practice, not to be a substitute for it.

It is for the Reviewer to agree with the Reviewee how to monitor progress against the Forward Job Plan (FJP) through the course of the year. There are no formal meetings during the PDR year other than that at the start of the year; see below; however it is recommended that Reviewers and Reviewees have regular one to one meetings to review progress against agreed objectives and development needs. There may be circumstances where it is necessary to review progress on a more frequent basis for example with a new employee or where performance issues have been identified.

Evaluating: The Performance and Development Review (PDR) Meeting

The PDR meeting is the most important part of the PDR process and it takes place at the beginning of the PDR year i.e. January. Its purpose is to allow the Reviewee and Reviewer to:

- discuss the Reviewee's performance over the past year
- agree objectives for the next year
- discuss training and development needs
- address any other work related issues
- discuss future career plans.

The meeting should take the form of a discussion between Reviewee and Reviewer. Contained within the '*Guidance Notes for Reviewers*' is a checklist which should be used at the meeting as a prompt to ensure that all the relevant topics for discussion have been covered.

Preparation by Reviewee and Reviewer

An important factor in achieving a productive and helpful review meeting is good preparation on the parts of both the Reviewer and the Reviewee and the normal expectation is that this would be undertaken in work time. This is covered in more detail within the PDR Guidance Notes and it is important that colleagues read these before undertaking a review meeting.

PDR Documentation

PDR guidance and PDR forms are available on the [Organisational Development PDR Pages](#)

FOLLOW UP

Follow up at Individual level

Both Reviewee and Reviewer are jointly responsible to follow through on any actions agreed at PDR meetings. If a Reviewee is concerned that a commitment made via the PDR process is not being met then they should raise this with their Reviewer in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved they should then refer it to their Countersignatory with a view to resolving things informally. If the Reviewee is not satisfied with the outcome of that referral, they should contact HR for advice and support on how to resolve the situation. If the matter is still not resolved through informal discussions following referral to HR, then they have the option of pursuing it through the appropriate University Grievance procedure.

Follow up at School/ Service level

Following the annual PDR meetings it is the Reviewer's responsibility to update individual iHR records with PDR data for the period just reviewed. If the Reviewer is not the individual's Line Manager then the Line Manager will be required to update iHR. This data will be used to provide School/Service level statistics, reported at Secretary's Board meetings and for Athena SWAN purposes; however individual data will not be disclosed,

It may be necessary following the PDR meetings for Reviewers to provide feedback to others in the line management chain. For example, issues raised by the Reviewee may need to be drawn to a senior manager's attention in order that they can be addressed. If outcomes of the PDR are likely to have an impact on School/ Service planning then these should also be fed to the School/ Service management team. This also assists the management team in managing limited resources whilst ensuring that critical needs for resources, support and development are met. Where such feedback is given, it should always be with the Reviewee's knowledge and special care must be taken if sensitive issues are involved.

Collation of Training and Development Needs

Each School/ Service is responsible for collating their team's training and development needs and for prioritising and addressing those needs. For more information on the development opportunities available to you, visit the [Organisational Development intranet site](#) or the [Centre for Academic Leadership & Development's](#) site

ANNUAL BOARDS FOR CONTRIBUTION, PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT

Submissions to the Contribution Pay Board, or the Academic Promotion/Advancement Boards are made in accordance with separate procedures which can be found on the [Reward and Engagement Intranet Pages](#). Note that information from PDR records will be required to support any submission to the Contribution Pay Board

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

University Guidelines on Employee Records state that all employment records held within Schools/ Services must be held securely (both physical and systems) and should only be seen by colleagues who have a legitimate reason to do so. In the case of PDR records this would normally be HRD colleagues and those in the line management chain e.g. the Reviewer/Line Manager, the Countersignatory and the Head of School/ Service.

The PDR Form is a confidential document and should be treated/handled with due care and attention. Colleagues should also ensure that any PDR records, whether hard copy or electronic, are held and processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection policy. PDR records should be retained for three years. This will also apply to PDR information held in iHR.

The University reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time. Such amendments may be notified to employees through Network or e-mail. The policy will be maintained on the HR website.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

APPENDIX A: DEALING WITH UNDERPERFORMANCE

Employees have a contractual responsibility to perform to a satisfactory level.

It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that employees have a manageable workload and that agreed objectives are realistic. In considering whether an employee is underperforming, account must be taken of workload

Where underperformance is found to be a result of ill-health, disability or sickness absence, the Maximising Attendance Policy will normally apply.

Where less than satisfactory performance is found to be due to misconduct (e.g. negligence or lack of application) on the part of the employee, then the Disciplinary Procedure will normally be appropriate. However, issues of an employee's capability may arise from time to time where underperformance relates to a lack of the required knowledge, skills or ability rather than misconduct. In this case, the employee should be given support and reasonable time to achieve the required standard.

DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH INSTANCES OF UNDERPERFORMANCE

If a Reviewee's performance becomes a matter of concern, Reviewers must take action promptly to manage that performance issue using the PDR process and following the stages laid out below. In managing underperformance, Reviewers are encouraged to seek guidance from an HR Partner at each stage of the process.

The first step is for the Reviewer to investigate the underlying cause of the Reviewee's unsatisfactory performance through discussion with the Reviewee by holding an Interim Review meeting. At any Interim Review meeting where unsatisfactory performance is being discussed, the Reviewer will:

- Clearly state the nature of the problem and explain why it is a problem, for example the consequences for the School/ Service when the Reviewee makes mistakes or misses deadlines
- Give the Reviewee specific examples of instances where performance has fallen below the required standard or where tasks have not been completed on time or satisfactorily
- Consider what might be done to improve the situation and help the Reviewee
- Agree, with the Reviewee, clear performance targets and a realistic timescale for improvement
- Set a date for a further Interim Review meeting to be held at the end of the agreed timescale to review progress
- Keep a record of the meeting and what has been agreed
- Ensure the FJP is updated to take account of revised objectives.

Where someone other than the Line Manager is carrying out the role of Reviewer, the Line Manager and the Reviewer must liaise closely during this process.

STAGES TO BE FOLLOWED IN MANAGING UNDERPERFORMANCE

STAGE 1 REVIEW MEETING

The Reviewer must hold an Interim Review meeting with the Reviewee to explain how their performance falls short of the standard expected of someone in their position or grade. Specific examples of the ways in which the performance has fallen below acceptable standards must be provided including the occasions on which this was noticed.

The Reviewer will consider whether training or colleagues development opportunities may enable the Reviewee to meet the required standard of performance. A plan for improvement will be drawn up which will clarify the areas and level of improvement needed. Clear performance targets will be set together with a realistic timescale for improvement. A date will be set to hold a second Interim Review meeting at the end of the agreed timescale to review progress. A note should be made of the main points discussed and actions agreed and this should be signed by both the Reviewee and Reviewer as an agreed record of that meeting. The FJP should also be updated to take account of revised objectives.

STAGE 2 REVIEW MEETING

The Reviewer will meet with the Reviewee to review progress and evaluate any improvement in performance. The outcome of the Stage 2 Review meeting, including any agreed actions, must be confirmed in writing to the Reviewee.

If performance has reached the required level and no further action is required, then this will be acknowledged and noted in writing by the Reviewer and a copy given to the Reviewee.

If adequate improvement has not been made, the Reviewer will re-examine the cause of the problem and consider what else can be done to support and assist the Reviewee to improve. This could include, for example, further training/coaching/development or changes in the Reviewee's duties. The meeting should follow the same format as in Stage 1.

If there has been an improvement but the Reviewee's performance has still not quite reached the required level, then the period for improvement should be extended by a reasonable period of time and support given to facilitate that improvement.

At this stage, if performance is still less than satisfactory, the Reviewer should make the Reviewee aware of the Capability policy and explain that, should the necessary improvements not be achieved, the Capability policy will apply and continued employment may, in due course, be at risk.

STAGE 3 REVIEW MEETING

As in Stage 2, the Reviewer will meet with the Reviewee to review progress and evaluate any improvement in performance. The outcome of the Stage 3 Review meeting, including any agreed actions, must be confirmed in writing to the Reviewee

If performance has reached the required level and no further action is required, then this will be acknowledged and noted in writing by the Reviewer and a copy given to the Reviewee.

If adequate improvement has not been made, the Reviewer will advise the Reviewee that further action will be now be taken under the terms of the Capability policy.

If, at Stage 3, there has been an improvement, but the Reviewee's performance has still not quite reached the required level then the period for improvement should be extended for a reasonable, final, period and a date set for a further, final Review meeting. If, at that meeting, performance has still not reached the required standard, then the Reviewer will advise the Reviewee that further action will be taken under the terms of the Capability policy.

NB If at any of the above stages it becomes clear that the underperformance is due to misconduct, rather than capability, then the Disciplinary procedures should be followed. HR must be consulted in such cases before any action is taken.

Further guidance on how to conduct Stage 1, 2 and 3 meetings and how to manage underperformance is available from HR.

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