

Accountability and Development Review

Policy

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Accountability and Development Review Policy

1 Introduction

The University is committed to ensuring that all of its staff are managed and developed effectively in a manner which enables every staff member to contribute fully to the achievement of the University's strategic objectives and which promotes on-going professional development. This Policy reflects these values and provides an Accountability and Development Review (ADR) framework to structure regular discussions between members of staff and their manager (or nominee). It is, however, recognised that the ADR framework itself is simply a means of facilitating meaningful discussions and that the quality of that discussion is key. At its heart is the aim to foster a culture in which staff are empowered to take ownership of their own performance and development, in alignment with the strategic direction of their Department/School/Directorate/Faculty and the University, through discussion and agreement with their manager (or nominee).

2 Scope

This policy covers all University employees, with the exception for those on very short term contracts of three months or less. Individuals contracted as workers rather than employees (e.g. those on an as-and-when basis such as Tutors) are not covered by this policy.

3 Benefits

The Accountability and Development Review process provides a formal opportunity to review progress and plan for future activities and development which will support institutional objectives. Individual staff members will benefit through:

- An exchange of experience and feedback to support professional and personal development
- Recognition of achievement and excellence of contribution
- Opportunity to enhance understanding of contribution to Departmental/School/Directorate/Faculty and University objectives
- Opportunity to suggest improvement and changes which will benefit the individual's Department/School/Directorate/Faculty and the University
- Increased job enrichment, empowerment and motivation
- A formal and regularly updated record of experience and learning over time
- Support and encouragement to overcome any difficulties and achieve full potential

ADR offers the following benefits at Departmental/School/Directorate/Faculty and University levels:

- Improved communication of organisational plans and objectives
- Identification, pursuit and achievement of common objectives
- Fostering a culture of team and collaborative working
- Planning for learning and development on an individual, Departmental/School/Directorate/Faculty and University wide basis and closer alignment with strategic priorities
- Regular evaluation of learning and development outcomes
- Leadership and management development
- Improved organisational performance and staff morale
- Focus on continuous improvement

4 Statement of Policy and Key Principles

This Policy provides a framework and guidance to ensure that staff accountability and development is embedded consistently across the University. In this context accountability and development is defined as the process through which the University will deliver lasting improvement by placing the emphasis on managing, supporting and developing staff at all levels within the organisation.

This framework is intended to provide a clear, coherent, fair and equitable set of procedures for reviewing individual performance, setting objectives and identifying training and development needs. The dynamic context in which research, teaching, knowledge exchange, professional activity and service delivery take place necessitates a framework which supports regular review of individual activities, to take account of the broader organisational context and the following principles:

- That performance and development is an on-going process that takes place from the time an employee joins the University until they leave.
- A commitment to share information about the University's direction, stakeholder requirements, Departmental/School/Directorate/Faculty objectives, individual roles and expected outcomes to enable continuous improvement in the context of changing internal and external demands.
- Valuing individual professional and career development activity.
- Managing staff respectfully through processes that are fair, transparent and encourage flexibility and responsiveness in work arrangements.
- Developing staff and organisational capabilities to achieve the University's goals and targets.
- Ensuring that staff are clear as to how their work contributes to overall organisational success.
- Providing honest, evidence-based feedback to support performance improvement.
- Resolving staff or organisational issues by applying fair, respectful and efficient review processes and mechanisms in a timely manner.
- Motivating staff to perform at a high level with pride in their achievements.
- Accountability and development should, by its very nature, embody the positive aspects of performance and, while it is accepted that there will be cases of poor performance, these are relatively rare and should be addressed as and when issues arise.
- Preserving confidentiality during the whole process and providing information on a need to know basis only.
- Providing appropriate management development for all those with staff management responsibilities who will be involved in reviewing others as part of the ADR process.
- The University is required to demonstrate effective performance against key indicators to key stakeholders being funded by students, government and other bodies.

5 Process

Accountability and Development Review meetings will normally take place between the member of staff ('reviewee') and his/her line manager or nominee ('reviewer') on an annual basis, during May to July each year. Interim meetings are encouraged to review progress towards objectives and consider any further actions that may be necessary to ensure that appropriate progress is being made. Where these meetings are held any updates can be recorded on the ADR Review Record Form.

The Accountability and Development Review meeting will focus on the following:

- Review of the past review year, identifying successes and challenges. This will include reflection on the achievement of previously agreed objectives and learning and development activities.
- Plan for the future by setting objectives and target dates for activities for the coming review year (1 August to 31 July), taking into account the aims and objectives of the Department/School/Directorate, Faculty and the University.
- Identification of learning and development activities and any other support required to achieve the objectives set for the coming year and addressing broader professional development needs as appropriate.

The value of the process comes from the focused and meaningful discussion between the reviewer and the reviewee. It is, however, important that the process is documented to ensure that both parties are clear on what has been agreed and are able to use the record as a reference point to inform on-going work and future discussions. There are two versions of the ADR Review Record Form: one for the Academic Professional staff categories (i.e. Academic, Research, Teaching and Knowledge Exchange) and another for all other staff categories (i.e. Administrative and Professional Services, Technical and Operational).

5.1 Self-Review

Prior to the meeting the reviewee is asked to summarise by drafting wording for the relevant sections of the ADR Review Record Form (section name in brackets):

1. their contribution and achievements over the past review period (Review)
2. details of progress against objectives previously set (B/F Objectives)
3. progress against the learning and development plan set in the previous review period and planning for future learning and development activities (L & D Plan)
4. If appropriate, comment on their leadership of others during the review year (Leadership)

The reviewee is also asked to consider and suggest (by providing draft wording for the relevant sections of the form):

1. possible performance objectives for the forthcoming review period (Objectives)
2. possible learning and development needs for the forthcoming review period (L & D Plan)

In undertaking this self-review it may be helpful to consider the following factors and questions:

- How have you performed and what have you achieved during the review period? (Be as specific as you can, giving examples. Where possible quantify your successes and identify the benefits of your successes to your Department/School/Directorate/Faculty/the University.)
- What work or achievements have you found particularly satisfying or rewarding during the review period?
- What objectives have not been met or what has proved particularly challenging during the review period? (Be as specific as you can, giving examples. State cause of difficulty and what needs to be done to move this forward more effectively.)
- What are the Departmental/School/Directorate, the Faculty and the University objectives during the forthcoming review period?
- What needs to be achieved in your job to contribute to these objectives? How might these activities be expressed in terms of your objectives for the coming year? How can you build on your previous achievements?
- What assistance will you need from the reviewer and other colleagues to support you in achieving your objectives?
- What experience, qualifications, skills or abilities do you need to gain/develop to enhance your job performance, to develop yourself and to support your career aspirations?
- What are you going to work on during the next review period to enhance your skills and performance and to develop yourself? How might these activities be expressed in terms of your development plan for the coming year?
- How might your job change in the future?

Academic reviewees may also refer to the “Additional Guidance for Academic Staff” document.

The reviewee should ensure that the draft ADR Review Record Form is available to the reviewer at least one week in advance of the review meeting.

5.2 Review Meeting

In order to clarify the role of the reviewer in the discussion, it is recommended that he/she introduces the meeting by establishing:

- The two-way supportive nature of the discussion, through which the reviewer and reviewee will review past performance, agree future objectives and plan development activities.
- That the reviewer has a responsibility to provide feedback on past performance and to agree future priorities, which will be reflected in the information recorded in the ADR paperwork.
- The reviewer should encourage the reviewee to discuss any other relevant factors which may have an impact on their work i.e. caring responsibilities, health issues, etc. Appropriate support should be offered where possible. The University's [Carer Policy](#) outlines the type of support which might be considered. Pending the launch of this policy, reviewers may wish to discuss any caring issues which are raised during an ADR discussion with a member of the HR team for their area.
- That the outcomes of the discussion will be reported to the Head of Department/School/ Directorate or senior nominee

The reviewer and reviewee will review the past review year's performance, including achievement of objectives and learning and development activities previously agreed, and agree appropriate objectives for the coming review year, informed by the reviewee's written comments. Please refer to the "Guidance on Setting Work Objectives and Associated Development Activities" document for further guidance.

The learning and development plan should capture progress on identified learning and development needs for the previous review year and development needs for the forthcoming review year. These should be directly relevant to job performance and/or the work objectives established earlier in the ADR discussion. The discussion should identify what the development need is and its relevance/importance to both the individual and to the wider team/Department//School/Directorate/Faculty and University. Once development needs have been established the discussion should address:

- The most appropriate method of learning and development to address the need in question. This consideration should take account of time, cost and resources available. Methods could include coaching and mentoring, external/internal courses, project work, self-study, e-learning, CPD, learning and teaching programmes etc. The University's Organisational and Staff Development Unit (OSDU) can provide further advice where required.
- Identify responsibility for taking forward the agreed development activity.
- The timescale for completion of learning and development activities which can cover more than a 12 month period. If an extended timescale is involved then key milestones and a final end-date for completion of the development activity should be identified.
- The reviewee will have the opportunity to discuss the impact of any relevant factors (i.e. caring responsibilities, health issues, etc.) on their work and any support that they may require from the University.

5.3 Following the Review Meeting

Following the review meeting the reviewer will finalise the form taking into account the discussion which has taken place. The final optional section of the form, Section E, allows both the reviewee and reviewer to provide comments on the review, particularly in relation to elements not covered elsewhere. This might include comments in relation to future career development and career aspirations or in relation to changes for the forthcoming period to the role/within the Department/School/Directorate. The reviewer will return the form to the reviewee following the review meeting to enable the reviewee to complete Section E and sign the form. The completed form should be signed by the reviewee, reviewer and by the relevant Head of Department/School/ Directorate or senior nominee. The relevant Head of Department/School/Directorate or senior nominee also has the opportunity to comment on the review, if they wish to.

5.4 General

If a reviewee has concerns about issues they believe to compromise the fair conduct of their review in terms of the procedure which has been followed, the matter should be passed in the first instance to the relevant Head of Department/School/Directorate. Advice can also be sought from Human Resources.

Completed ADR documentation should be treated confidentially, with copies being securely retained by the reviewee, reviewer and the Head of Department/School/Directorate.

5.5 Reporting by the Head of Department/School/Directorate

At the conclusion of the review period the Head of Department/School/Directorate will ensure completed and finalised ADR Review Record Forms for staff in their Department/School/Directorate are forwarded to Human Resources. HR receives all forms for purpose of:

- Quality assurance
- Ensuring a return is made for all staff members
- Retention

5.6 Other Relevant Processes

In some cases it will also be appropriate for the ADR documentation to inform other processes, for example:

- The Senior Academic Review and Development (SARD) process for Professorial staff, Academic HoD/S's and Vice-Deans
- Remuneration Committee which reviews the performance and remuneration of the Senior Officers, Deans and Professional Services Directors
- The Academic Career Development Framework
- Promotion/regrading recommendations
- Contribution pay recommendations

Please refer to the appropriate policy documents if a case for promotion, regrading or contribution pay is being considered or where a report requires to be submitted for a probationary member of Academic staff. Where required the completed ADR Review Record Form will be part of submissions being made under such processes.

6 Monitoring and Review

This policy framework will be reviewed and updated at periodic intervals.