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Performance Review & Development Policy

Overarching aim of the Performance Review Scheme

The University believes that the performance review scheme is central to developing and supporting its staff, enabling them to make an effective contribution to the success of Liverpool Hope. The purpose of the scheme is to review periodically the work, development needs and career aspirations of staff in relation to the requirements of the Faculties, School and Departments plans and the University's corporate plans and strategic intent. It is intended to be of mutual benefit to the University, its staff and the services provided especially those received by the students.

2. Core Principles

The core principles of the scheme are:

- To implement an on-going process of effective performance management at the University with a formal, annual meeting to review progress supplemented by formal interim review meetings when required.
- To implement a two-way process of communication leading to agreed performance outcomes related to work priorities and the University's strategic goals.
- To provide a framework for the delivery of University and Faculty/School/Department plans and objectives, clarifying the individual's role in meeting those objectives.
- To recognise individual contributions within a framework of constructive openness that provides an opportunity for members of staff to discuss their job performance against agreed objectives.
- To identify ways in which to improve individual performance
- To identify development and training needs based on job roles, the University's strategic plan and the subsequent plans for Faculty/School/Department associated plans.
- To identify and develop potential for promotion and career development.
- To cultivate a culture of continuous improvement in line with other University initiatives, to provide an opportunity to share good practice

The scheme is mandatory for all staff¹ who have completed their probationary period. There is another process in place for staff who are within Probation. Participation is required from all employees and relevant managers. It will be monitored and evaluated at a Faculty/School/Department and University level to help improve the efficiency with which the University is managed and to support organisational learning.

3. Equal Opportunities

Liverpool Hope University is committed to the principles of equality and diversity as well as the elimination of discriminatory practices. These principles apply to the treatment of all staff. This policy together with any supporting procedures will be implemented in a non-discriminatory manner. Members of the University administering the policy are responsible for ensuring that in its application, those to whom the policy applies, shall not receive less favourable treatment on grounds of sex, marital status, gender reassignment, racial group, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, socio-economic background, trade union membership, family circumstances, or any other irrelevant distinction.

As part of this commitment effective monitoring arrangements will be conducted during and after each performance review cycle to ensure that any potential adverse negative impacts for a particular group of staff that are identified are considered and where possible either removed or minimised. The monitoring arrangements will include quantitative and qualitative feedback and consultation with appropriate stakeholders.

4. Performance Management

The performance review scheme is an essential element in the ongoing management of performance. The link between performance and development is a central part of the scheme and hence conducting a review of performance is an essential part of the process. This will involve:

- Reviewing past performance and evaluating it
- Recognising the individual's achievements and contributions
- Identifying an individual's strengths and weaknesses
- Setting feasible performance objectives within a SMART approach (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based)
- Planning staff development and improvements in performance within the framework of the University's needs

¹ All staff on full time and proportional contracts are required to take part in the scheme. Whilst hourly paid staff should be given the opportunity to join the scheme they would normally receive support and development guidance through the normal management process.

If the annual review meeting identifies areas for improvement, then an agreed action plan should be implemented and the progress made should be considered at agreed interim review meeting/s. If at the time of any designated interim review meeting there is evidence that progress is being made then further action is unlikely to be necessary and monitoring of progress should be through normal management meetings.

5. Academic and Professional Services Schemes

Liverpool Hope has one scheme for performance review although these may have a different form depending on the particular needs of each group. The format of these forms may be reviewed from time to time depending on the needs of the university.

For Professional Services staff they should use the Professional Services Performance Review form. This can be found on the staff intranet under Personnel/Performance Management.

For Academic staff they should use the Academic Performance Review form. This can be found on the staff intranet under Personnel/Performance Management.

6. Frequency

The formal annual performance review meeting should take place in good time to inform and identify needs for a new academic year.

7. Role Profiles / Job Descriptions

Role Profiles (for Academic Roles) and Job Descriptions (for Professional Services Roles) should be used by managers and staff as an aid to the process in terms of structuring preparation and focussing the discussion at the meeting. The meeting should identify the key elements of the role profile/job description and any associated duties identified in the contract or responsibilities document that underpin the identified objectives and required performance of the individual. Where Job Descriptions are used, the Performance Review is also an opportunity to review these and ensure they remain relevant and up to date. Role Profiles are part of the National Contract and are not subject to review in this way.

8. Further Action Outside of the Performance Review Scheme

It is important that staff are managed in a fair and consistent manner and that concerns over an individual's performance are dealt with promptly by the line manager as and when they arise. A line manager should not wait until the next annual review or interim review to raise matters of serious concern.

In the case of more serious under-performance, action may be appropriate under the University's capability procedure or disciplinary procedure. The performance review scheme is not the process to address serious under-performance. If the capability procedure is enacted performance review scheme documentation can be used as contributory evidence in any formal proceedings. In all such instances further advice about the management of poor performance within the formal procedure should be sought from Personnel. In cases where formal action is being taken performance review meetings are unlikely to be appropriate.

9. The Manager Conducting the Performance Review

Normally, performance reviews will be conducted by a line manager or by a senior colleague, nominated by the Head of School or Senior Manager with overall responsibility for the member of staff.

All managers conducting reviews should have received appropriate training.

10. The Individual

The individual being reviewed should ensure that they are broadly aware of the University, Faculty/School/Department future objectives and direction. Such information should include short and long term aims.

The individual should also be familiar with their job description and/or role profile to aid the annual meeting.

The individual should complete the form and submit this to their manager prior to the Performance Review meeting; the Performance Review discussion can then be captured on the form when the meeting with the manager takes place

11. Follow-Up Action

Follow-up action may be the responsibility of one or more people. The individual may have to complete tasks related to objectives within the timescale agreed with the manager. The manager should ensure that appropriate discussions take place with the member of staff about the progress of meeting agreed actions and work collaboratively to overcome any issues. These discussions can take place during management meetings or at the interim review meetings. Other targets and actions may be set outside of the scheme as part of normal managerial arrangements.

12. Records

Confidentiality is important to foster an open discussion at the meeting and what is said between the parties should remain confidential unless noted on the review form.

We recognise that the Performance Review form is a confidential document. It may be viewed by the line manager and the Head of School, Department or Executive Dean as part of the review process. Normally, the documentation may be needed for quality assurance and consistency exercises, strategic planning purposes, corporate training place, or for the collation of training and development activity and outcomes. It may also be shared (in a non-attributable format) with appropriate committees or management teams to aid planning and improvement initiatives.

The documentation will be restricted information held in a secure location within the School/Department and accessible only to the manager and individual; the Head of School /Senior Manager or his/her nominee; the Vice Chancellor or his/her nominee; the Personnel Director and Personnel Manager. The documentation will also be requested for quality assurance and consistency exercises, strategic planning purposes, corporate training plans, the collation of training and development activity and outcomes.

However as highlighted in section nine relevant performance review documentation may be used in capability processes by either party.

Communication of such information is expected to be appropriate to the situation and sensitive to the needs of the individual.

13. Monitoring

The Head of School/Senior Manager and Personnel Manager will be responsible for ensuring all eligible staff reviews are completed. An annual statement will be provided to the Vice Chancellor and Senior Management Team confirming whether the process has been satisfactorily completed with relevant information provided to be captured on the HR IT system (CIPHR).

14. Cases of Disagreement

Agreement on all points is not an essential requirement and disagreements can be recorded on the documentation as such. Where there is serious substantive or procedural disagreement between the two parties which is so fundamental to prevent agreement on objectives, action points, development needs etc. then the individual can appeal to the appropriate Senior Manager. In the case of the disagreement being with the Head of School/Senior Manager the appeal should be referred to their relevant University Executive Board Member.

15. Special Circumstances

Absence due to Ill Health

If significant absence has taken place the review needs to take into account what could have been realistically achieved within the reduced time-frame. A note should be made on the form to record either the modification to the objectives or an explanation of any failure to meet objectives etc.

New Staff

If a member of staff joins the University outside of the performance review cycle, they should be set some suitable and realistic objectives prior to the next full cycle, when they should then complete a full annual review. This will usually be done via the Probation process.

Temporary Promotion

If the period of promotion is for more than six months, the review should be carried out within the more senior role, if less then, the member of staff should be reviewed within his/her substantive role.

Member of Staff with a Disability

Managers should ensure that all reasonable adjustments have been made to facilitate the needs of those members of staff with disabilities.