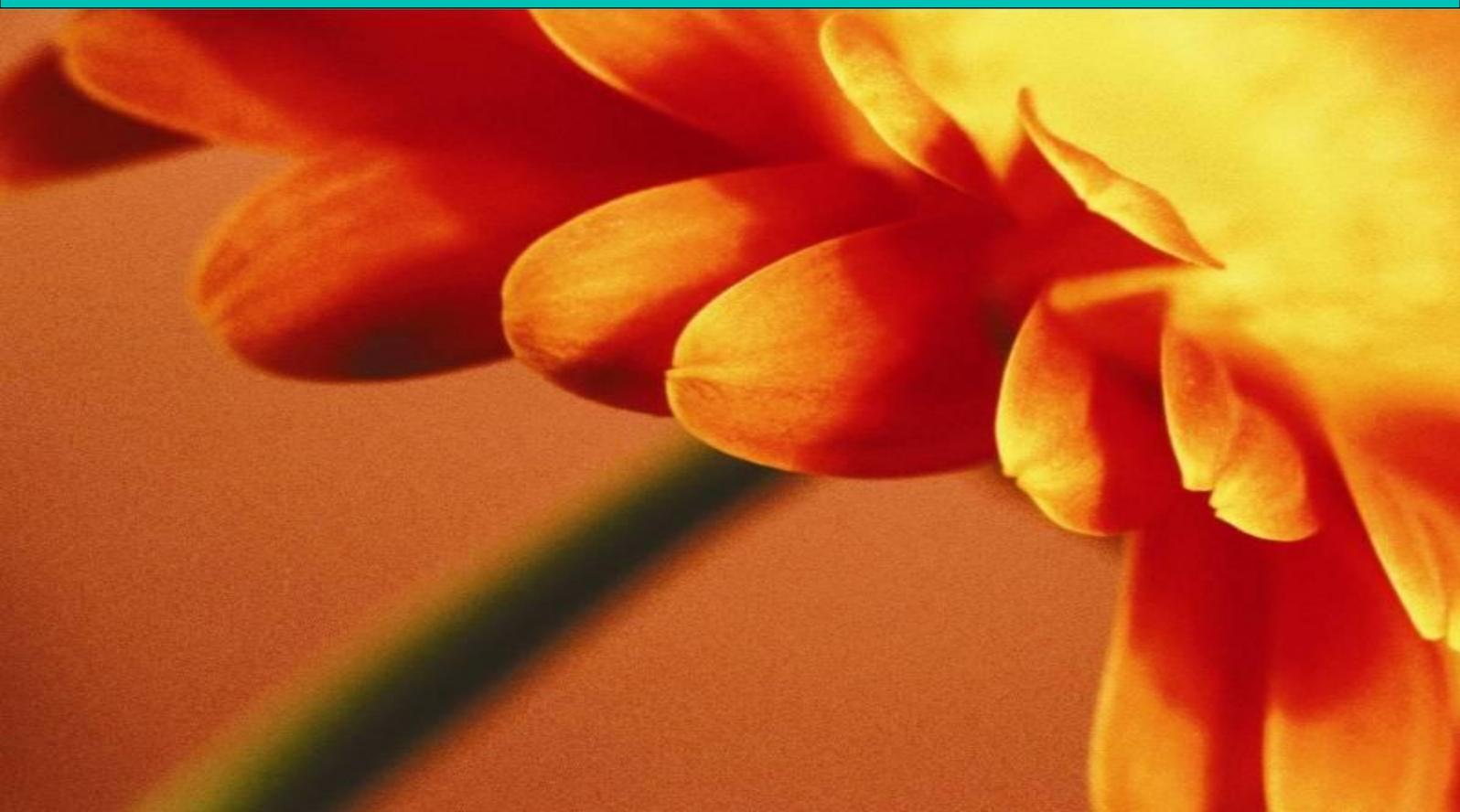


Performance Development Review (PDR)
Guidance Notes for Reviewers

Version 1.3 – Aug 2011



Message from the Vice Chancellor

Dear Colleague

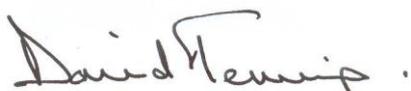
Welcome to the Guidance Notes for Performance Development Review (PDR) at York St John University. We have prepared these notes to help you understand why we have PDR, how staff can benefit from engaging with the process and how it will actually work.

Staff tell us that they value playing a full role in shaping York St John and contributing in the best ways they can to student wellbeing and organisational success.

To secure our future success, we need to continually review our institutional aims and how well we are achieving them. Your invaluable work – acknowledged through PDR plays a significant part in our accomplishments as an excellent provider of learning and teaching opportunities.

We hope that the Guidance Notes prove useful to you. If there is anything that you think we can improve on, we would welcome your feedback.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Fleming". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Professor David Fleming
Vice Chancellor

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Purpose of the Guidance Notes

About these Guidance Notes

These Guidance Notes aim to help all managers prepare and conduct Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) for their team, ensuring a positive two-way discussion. This Guide (and other PDR documentation) is available to download from the York St John website.

The Guidance Notes cover four main areas:

- Overview of the process.
- Questions about the process.
- Questions about the PDR.
- Questions about the documentation.

Overview of the process

Aims of PDR

The overall aim of the PDR is to:

- Provide a constructive two-way discussion of activities, achievements and areas for improvement.
- Agree objectives for the forthcoming year, in alignment with Faculty/Departmental plan.
- Agree a development plan, addressing individual needs and aspirations, to allow staff to achieve their full potential.

Benefits of PDR

The PDR process is a mutually beneficial one. Reviewees are given the opportunity to discuss their achievements, professional needs and areas for development in a supportive environment. Reviewers have the opportunity to motivate and engage their staff for the good of the University and their own immediate area.

How it will work

All permanent staff at York St John need to have a PDR. This should happen once a year, with ongoing review throughout the year to discuss progress.

A month before the PDR is due to take place, the reviewer should contact the reviewee to agree a date. The reviewee then completes the PDR Preparation Form (Form A) and gives a copy to the reviewer in good time before the meeting. They can then meet in private for approximately 1-1 ½ hours to discuss the topics covered. Topics will include: performance over the past year; what the coming year's objectives should be and how these link to the University/Faculty/Department plans; and what training and development might be required in order for the objectives to be met.

Questions about the process

Who is reviewed?

All permanent York St John staff are to be reviewed annually. Visiting lecturers, fractional staff and people who are on temporary contracts will not be reviewed, unless they specifically ask. For further guidance on visiting lecturers, please see page 8.

When do the reviews take place?

PDRs should take place once a year. It is recommended as good practice to also have an informal mid-year review.

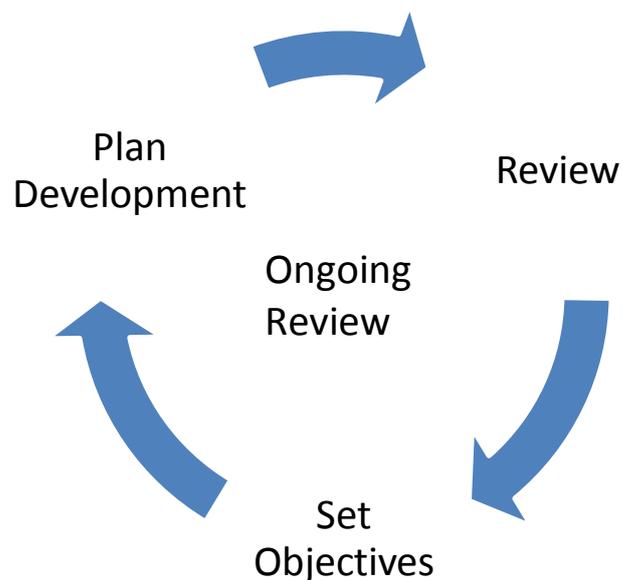
Why give PDRs?

A PDR meeting, when done correctly, is one of the most important meetings that any manager can have with their staff. It is their opportunity to motivate and engage the individual in the team and University priorities.

The purposes of having a PDR are to:

- Provide a constructive two-way discussion of activities, achievements and areas for improvement.
- Agree objectives for the forthcoming year, in alignment with Faculty/Departmental plan.
- Agree a development plan, addressing individual needs and aspirations to allow staff to achieve their full potential.

The 'ideal' process looks something like this:



Who 'owns' the PDR process?

The final accountability for ensuring PDRs happen on an annual basis rests with the appropriate Dean of Faculty or Director of Department. Their management teams will deliver the process and the numbers completed will be monitored on a regular basis. However, it is a two-way process and reviewees are also encouraged to be proactive in collating their evidence and ensuring they gain as much as possible from the review.

Statistical information on which PDRs have taken place, and when, will need to be sent by Faculties and Departments to the Staff Development department where they will be collated and sent through to the Human Resources Committee.

How does the PDR process relate to HR policies and procedures?

For further guidance on giving PDRs to staff who are either within their probationary period, or being taken through the Disciplinary or Capability Procedures, please see pages 10 and 11.

My Faculty employs Visiting Lecturers (VLs). Do they need PDRs?

If you are planning on employing VLs again in the next academic year, it might be appropriate to meet with them to review their progress. It is not essential, however, to conduct a full PDR.

Are all staff (academic, professional, support, managers and ancillary) treated the same?

Yes. However, some of the paperwork is slightly different, to make certain that the needs of the different groups of staff are taken into account. Specific customisations of this documentation can be made and agreed at a local level, where necessary.

Who should I review?

In the vast majority of cases, line managers will review their staff. This ensures that the reviewer has a good understanding of the reviewee's work.

Should I attend PDR training?

Yes. Staff Development delivers appropriate development sessions dependent upon individual experience.

Refresher	Essential for all experienced reviewers
Reviewer workshops	Essential for all new reviewers
Coaching workshops	Optional

Please note that reviewees are also given the opportunity to attend a Reviewee Briefing session but this is optional.

What is my responsibility?

Reviewers are expected to:

- Attend the appropriate PDR development session.
- Encourage reviewees to attend the Reviewee Briefing session.
- Follow the PDR process of review, agree objectives and plan development.
- Read these Reviewer Guidance Notes.
- Prepare for the review using the forms provided.
- Ensure that any training and development opportunities discussed during the PDR are communicated, where appropriate, to the Staff Development team.
- Offer ongoing support to reviewees at regular intervals throughout the year, i.e. via one-to-one sessions.

What is the reviewee's responsibility?

Reviewees are expected to:

- Understand the aims of the process.
- Read the Reviewee Guidance Notes.
- Gather evidence throughout the year and prepare for their PDR on the forms provided.
- Give a copy of their PDR Preparation Form to their reviewer at least two weeks before the PDR meeting.
- Contribute to the discussion at the PDR meeting.
- Agree objectives with the reviewer.

Reviewees are also strongly advised to attend a PDR Briefing session.

As a manager, how can I ensure that YSJ can deliver the development my reviewees ask for?

All development discussed within the PDR should be realistic. Reviewers are requested to evaluate whether they believe the need is specifically related to job role or is a generic need which the central Staff Development team could deliver. The Deputy Dean/Director is responsible for the local allocation of staff development funds and this can be divided at their discretion.

If I have any further questions about the PDR process, who should I ask?

In the first instance, you should ask your line manager. However, if you require further assistance, please contact a member of the Staff Development team.

Questions about the PDR

Who should arrange the PDR?

It is appropriate that the reviewer should arrange the PDR meeting; however, once this has been done, it is the reviewee's responsibility to fully prepare and give a copy of their PDR Preparation Form (Form A) to their reviewer 2 weeks before the PDR is due to take place.

Where should the PDR take place?

It is essential that the PDR discussion is professionally conducted. It is therefore recommended that it does not take place off campus. The reviewer and reviewee will need to agree a location which they both deem appropriate. This may be in a room elsewhere on campus or in the reviewer's office. It is essential to ensure that both parties feel comfortable in their surroundings.

How long will it take?

In order to discuss all that you both wish to cover, you should allow at least 1-1 ½ hours.

I have a member of my team who is still in their probationary period. Should I give them a PDR now?

There are separate procedures in place for staff who are still in their probationary period (for ancillary staff, the period is six months, for academic and professional and support staff, the period is one year).

As a manager, you should be meeting regularly to discuss the level of performance that is expected within the probationary period. Until they have completed their probationary period, these discussions should be handled outside of the PDR process. Please see the new procedures on the York St John website for further information.

Is it appropriate that I tell a member of my team within the PDR discussion that they are not performing as they should?

No, this is not the right forum. In a PDR, you should only broach issues that you have already discussed. There should be no surprises. If you have mentioned these issues before, it is only right and proper that they be discussed within the PDR. Make sure, however, that the PDR is not used as a discussion around capability issues; there is a separate Capability Procedure on the YSJ website to use in those circumstances.

One of my reviewees is currently being taken through the Capability Procedure. Should I postpone their PDR?

There is no reason why the PDR should not take place. The Capability Procedure may be focused on one area of their work, whereas one of the main purposes of PDR is to review performance against objectives set over the past 12 months. Although you should not get embroiled in discussions about the progression of the case (as it is a separate process from

PDR), you can still conduct the PDR. When setting objectives for the next 12 months, it might be that the PDR incorporates some objectives from the capability procedure's recommended action plan.

I am due to give a PDR to one of my team but I am in the middle of taking them through Disciplinary Procedure. Should the PDR still take place?

No. As the Disciplinary Procedure is linked to misconduct, it is appropriate to wait until the issue has been resolved before embarking on the PDR process.

What should I do before the PDR meeting?

- Book the PDR meeting with the reviewee and agree the location.
- Once you've received their PDR Preparation Form, prepare your own, ensuring that future objectives are linked to the faculty or departmental plan. The reviewee may also wish to see a copy of your Preparation Form.
- If the reviewee is an academic member of staff, they should also give you an updated copy of their Development Plan.

What should I do during the PDR?

- Talk honestly and constructively about their achievements, objectives and areas for development. If the reviewee has known disabilities discuss and agree any specific needs.
- Use specific evidence to illustrate feedback.
- Ask them about their future career aspirations.
- Be realistic about whether the faculty or department can meet these aspirations.
- Take into account the individual's personal research and scholarly activity plan, if appropriate.
- Agree what their future objectives should be (and how they link to the faculty or departmental plan) and by when they should achieve them.
- Agree to write up the notes of the PDR within two weeks of the review taking place.

What if the reviewee and I can't agree?

This will rarely happen, as the review is a compiled view of the reviewee's work over the previous year and if you have carried out ongoing discussions, then nothing discussed at the review should be a surprise to the individual. If, however, you really can't agree on the way forward, it is the responsibility of the reviewer to take the matter up with the next most senior manager within your faculty/department; the reviewee also has the opportunity to take the matter forward.

What should I do if the reviewee identifies that they want to change their work pattern or retire?

The PDR provides the opportunity to explore the reviewee's short, medium and long term career plans. During this discussion the reviewee may identify that they are considering changing their work pattern, increasing or decreasing their working hours or retiring at some point in the foreseeable future.

While it is appropriate to explore their thinking with the reviewee it's important to remember that people change their minds and personal circumstances change so you cannot hold them to what is said in this part of a discussion. Formal action should only be taken if and when a reviewee officially requests a change in work pattern or formally states their intention to retire.

N.B The University does not operate an age-related approach to retirement. The decision on when to retire is one for the individual to make and, subject to satisfactory performance and the needs of the business, employees may work for as long as they choose.

What are the training and development opportunities?

There are many different opportunities available dependent upon an individual's preferred learning styles. Examples include:

- Professional qualifications (MA, PhD, etc)
- Reading materials
- Coaching
- Mentoring (internal or external)
- Short courses or workshops
- Servicing a committee
- Inclusion on a working party
- Secondment opportunities
- Delegating more challenging work
- Short periods of work shadowing
- Research leave (for academic staff)
- Peer observation (for academic staff)

How can my staff access training and development opportunities?

All YSJ staff are entitled to access development opportunities, as long as it is relevant to their role and there is money available. Please refer to the Fee Remission Policy available from the Staff Development pages on the YSJ website for further details on funding.

What do I do after the PDR?

- Write up the PDR within 2 weeks using the correct paperwork, which is stored electronically on the Staff Development pages on the YSJ website.
- Give the reviewee a copy of the signed PDR form.
- Inform the Dean or Director that the review has taken place.
- Store the PDR Form in a secure place for future reference.
- Send a copy of the PDR Form Part 3 Development Plan to Staff Development.

Who writes up the PDR?

The normal expectation would be that the reviewer would write up the PDR.

Who is entitled to see the formal record of the PDR?

The Dean, Deputy Dean, Director, Deputy Director or Head may see a copy of the Performance Development Review Form (Form B) signed by both the reviewee and

reviewer. HR may also request access to this form, by agreement with the reviewee and reviewer. Staff Development will see a copy of the Performance Development Review Form Development Plan (Form B, Part 3).

Who will keep a record of the PDR Form and Summary, for how long and in what format?

Reviewers and reviewees will each keep a paper copy of Form B Performance Development Review Form. This will be kept confidentially in the reviewer's office. An electronic copy of this form will also be confidentially stored by the reviewer. This form will be kept by the reviewer for a maximum of three years.

Questions about the documentation

What is the right paperwork to use?

There are separate forms for academic staff, managers, professional and support staff and ancillary staff.

Where is it kept?

All PDR documentation is stored electronically on the Staff Development pages on the YSJ website.

How long should I advise my reviewees to spend on their PDR Preparation Form?

Reviewees should allow approximately one hour to complete the form but it may take longer to gather their evidence. Best practice suggests that both reviewers and reviewees keep notes from their ongoing coaching sessions and therefore the preparation time required becomes less.

Should I see a copy of the reviewee's PDR Preparation Form before the PDR meeting?

Yes. Your reviewee should give you a copy at least two weeks before the PDR meeting is due to take place, so that you can prepare fully for the meeting.

What should I do with my (reviewer) PDR Preparation Form?

Once you have completed it, you should give it to your reviewee at least one week before the PDR meeting, so that they can also know in advance what you wish to discuss.