Performance, Development and Annual Review Policy

Status	Approved
Final Approval JCC	12 March 2014
Final Approval EB	20 May 2014
Final Approval SPC	9 April 2014
Court Approval	29 May 2014
Publication on Web Site	November 2017
Last review date	August 2026
Next review date	August 2027

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Performance and Development (PDAR) guidance.

Contents

1. Purpose 1
2. Coverage 1
3. General Principles 1
4. Process 2
Overview 2
Annual Review 2
Mid-Year Review 4
Continuous Dialogue 4
Reviewer and Reviewee Skills 4
6. Accountabilities 6
7. Equality Impact Assessment 7
8. Monitoring and Review 7
9. Glossary of Definitions 7
Appendix 1. Equality Impact Assessment 8

1. Purpose

The University recognises that its staff play a vital role in the successful delivery of its vision and strategic objectives, and is committed to supporting their wellbeing and development. This policy provides a framework for clarifying expectations, for providing consistent, good quality feedback about a member of staff's contribution and for supporting their development and achievement. The key to the policy's success is effective leadership and management, as outlined in the University's people leadership and management accountabilities.

This policy has three key aims which are outlined below.

1. To create the clarity necessary to ensure that the activities of individual staff, their team and the University are aligned
2. To facilitate an on-going, constructive and open dialogue about contribution to the university and aspirational career development between staff and their managers
3. To provide support, feedback and guidance for staff in respect of their contribution to the University, their achievements and their aspirations for career and personal development.

2. Coverage

This policy applies to all staff of Glasgow Caledonian University on open-ended contracts or fixed-term contracts of at least six months duration, whether in full-time or part-time employment.

This policy does not apply to agency staff as it is the agency that employs the individual and therefore the policies in place at the agency will apply.

3. General Principles

The Performance and Development process outlined in this policy is underpinned by the following general principles:

- A stimulating, rewarding and productive review has its foundations in a strong, effective line manager/reviewer and reviewee relationship
- The Performance and Development Annual Review (PDAR) is the culmination of a continuous dialogue which takes place throughout the year; and narrative captured in the PDAR document reflects an open discussion as agreed between members of staff and their manager

- The review provides clarity for staff about what is expected of them, in the context of the University's strategic objectives and overall direction of the Department, School or Directorate. Where applicable, the objectives should be developed in conjunction with establishing an individual member of staff's work allocation
- A process for engaging reviewees in setting and agreeing team objectives provides direction and relevance for reviewees when agreeing personal objectives
- The review is actively supported by relevant training and development interventions accessible via a number of routes. The process enables the University to be a positive influence on the development and future career aspirations of staff. Staff are provided with access to career development materials to enable them to maximise their contribution to the University
- The process is based on fairness and transparency for reviewing contributions and achievements and for providing development support throughout the year
- The review upholds the principle of academic freedom: there is no impediment in the process to academic staff pursuing potentially controversial areas of research and teaching, in the context of the research and teaching strategies of the areas in which they work.

4. Process

Overview

The performance and development process is designed to be responsive to the University calendar of business and planning cycle. Schools and Directorates are expected to conduct annual review discussions at an appropriate point between May and October, to align with local planning cycles.

Reviewers and reviewees are strongly encouraged to conduct a mid-year review six months after the annual review, and to incorporate an optional career development discussion. The reviewer is normally the member of staff's direct line manager. Whilst a member of staff has the right to request an alternative reviewer through their Head of Department, Directorate or School where they believe there is a conflict of interest, the Head's decision will be final.

Annual Review

<u>Setting and Reviewing Objectives</u>

The core purpose of the annual review discussion is to establish specific personal objectives at the beginning of the year and to review performance against them after twelve months.

Personal objectives should provide clear expectations and direction for members of staff. Guidance on how to set and measure effective objectives is provided by People Services.

Within Schools and Directorates, the establishment of team objectives ahead of individual objective setting is strongly encouraged. Team objectives help to clarify broader priorities and provide a context for individual prioritisation, to support local plans.

Identifying Development Needs

To support the achievement of objectives, it is important to identify and address any development needs. This process involves defining desired levels of skill, knowledge, experience and behaviour and identifying any gaps compared to existing levels.

To meet identified needs, the reviewee and reviewer should consider a range of options, taking into account the reviewee's preferences and applying for access to local staff development budgets where required. Reviewees are strongly encouraged to take responsibility for identifying options which best meet their needs and preferences, and apply the staff Reasonable Adjustments Policy where appropriate.

Preparation and Documentation

A productive performance and development discussion relies on effective preparation by both reviewer and reviewee. Examples of contribution with reference to objectives need to be gathered and brought to the meeting by both reviewer and reviewee.

A simple template is provided to support performance and development discussions, and this should be maintained as a 'live' document throughout the year, agreed by the reviewer and the reviewee.

Following the annual review discussion, the reviewer and the reviewee should complete the PDAR document by recording their overall comments on progress and contribution.

If a member of staff is unable to agree with their reviewer the outcome of the annual review meeting and how this is reflected in documentation, he or she should address their concerns in the first instance to the reviewer's line manager. The reviewer's line manager will consider the concerns and documentation, then inform both parties of the outcome within a reasonable timescale (normally 20 days from receipt of the documents).

With the consent of the reviewee, appropriate and relevant content from the PDAR document should be shared with other managers as required to support objective-setting and to access appropriate training and development.

Mid-Year Review

Progress Check

It is important to regularly review progress, and good practice to do so formally midway through the year. The six-month progress check should review and update objectives as appropriate, to ensure they remain relevant. It should also provide interim feedback on contribution and performance, and review progress of development agreed at the start of the year.

Career Development Discussion

The mid-year review is an appropriate time to discuss career development in more depth, and a range of tools is available to staff online. a career development plan template.

Continuous Dialogue

Throughout the year, it is important that the reviewer and reviewee maintain a continuous and open dialogue on a range of issues, including work which is being carried out, the impact of other changes on the agreed objectives (e.g. available resources), any support needed and opportunities for development. The review meetings referred to above should therefore be the culmination of this ongoing dialogue.

Reviewer and Reviewee Skills

Guidance and training is available for reviewers and reviewees on preparing for review meetings, setting objectives, giving and receiving feedback and on discussing career development.

5. Learning and Development

Role-specific development

Role specific development clarifies the context of the member of staff's role and what it takes to perform the job - i.e. the defined work activity of the role. Role specific training may include training on processes and procedures, and information about reporting structures and cycles. Following completion of training, the member of staff will know how to produce defined work outputs, follow processes and procedures and demonstrate compliance with reporting structures and cycles.

Examples of role-specific development include programmes to support learning and teaching activities, research development, chairing assessment boards and on-the-job training conducted in every area. Staff are also offered training and development to support generic roles – for example, for all line managers to develop their people leadership and management accountabilities.

Mandatory training

Mandatory training is defined as training required by law and/or by the organisation, which supplements core competencies of job roles. Mandatory or compliance training is aimed at ensuring the safe and efficient functioning of the organisation and/or the safety and wellbeing of staff, and staff are therefore required to attend.

Examples of areas covered by mandatory training include health and safety risk assessment (e.g. display screen equipment), information security, equality and diversity awareness.

Personal development

Personal Development is broadly defined as the process of improving oneself by acquiring new skills, knowledge, experience and development of behaviours. This process includes activities that improve self-awareness, develop talents and potential, enhance quality of life and contribute to the realisation of career development aspirations. Personal development includes developing other people.

Examples of personal development include influencing and communication skills, analytical and problem solving skills, coaching and mentoring.

Career Development

People Services co-ordinates information about career development opportunities within the university that are available to all staff. This includes guidance on producing career development plans, information about career pathways and skills/ behaviours required to be successful in roles across the University.

Funds for Development

Each School and Directorate has a budget for staff development that is prioritised by the Executive Dean or Director annually in relation to School and Directorate objectives. Local reviewers are expected to meet regularly with the relevant budget holder to identify and prioritise staff needs arising from the performance and development process which require

funding. Funds will normally come from local staff development budgets to which all staff can apply through their line manager.

To enable informed and meaningful development discussions, reviewers are expected to be conversant with local processes and procedures for requesting staff development resources before holding discussions.

Further Development Support

The University provides further support for development from time to time - for example, staff scholarships, sabbaticals, staff exchanges and secondments. There are also development opportunities available to staff in particular roles - for example, staff involved in learning and teaching, or research.

6. Accountabilities

The Executive Board is accountable for overseeing the implementation of this policy.

Managers are accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities for performance and development, as detailed in the people leadership and management accountabilities. This includes setting appropriate objectives and holding effective performance and development discussions with their teams and direct reports.

The Director of People is accountable for maintaining and reviewing the policy, and for providing appropriate guidance and support.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy and is attached as Appendix 1.

8. Monitoring and Review

The application of the Performance and Development Policy will be monitored, taking into account feedback from all parties engaged in the process. Its impact in supporting positive culture change will also be gauged through periodic staff surveys.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis, and reported to the Staff Policy Committee. Where minor amendments are found to be necessary, the policy will be revised and circulated to the Executive Board, the Joint Consultative Committee and the Staff Policy Committee with amendments highlighted for information. Where more significant amendments are necessary, the policy will be re-drafted and updated through the normal consultation and approval process.

9. Glossary of Definitions

PDAR the Performance and Development Annual Review discussion.

Reviewer line manager or similar who is involved in delivering the performance and development process to his or her team.

Reviewee individual staff member whose contribution and development needs are being considered.

Appendix 1. **Equality Impact Assessment**

Name of policy/procedure/strategy: Policy assessed: Performance, Development and Annual Review	
School/Directorate: Directorate of People Services	
Name of policy/procedure/strategy owner: Kathleen Cleary, Director of People	
Date of Assessment: 17 August 2026	
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/strategy.	This policy provides a framework for clarifying expectations; for providing consistent, good quality feedback about a member of staff's contribution; and for supporting their development and achievement.
2. What are the intended outcomes?	To achieve three key aims: 1. To create the clarity necessary to ensure that the activities of individual staff, their team and the University are aligned 2. To facilitate an on-going, constructive and open dialogue about contribution to the university and aspirational career development between staff and their managers 3. To provide support, feedback and guidance for staff in respect of their contribution to the University, their achievements and their aspirations for career and personal development.
3. Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. staff, students, visitors)	All staff, particularly people managers.
4. How does the policy/procedure/strategy take into account different needs and circumstances (e.g. Ethnicity: cultural sensitivities, plain English; Disability: Alternate/ accessible formats; Gender: inclusive to women and men; Sexual Orientation; Faith or Belief, religious practices; Age: needs of younger and older people)?	The processes outlined in the policy are applicable to all staff, but supporting guidance for staff and managers will emphasise that application must take into account the University's Dignity at Work and Study policy and staff Reasonable Adjustments Policy. For example, reasonable adjustments must be made where required; equality and diversity should be taken into account when agreeing how best to meet identified development needs.

5. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have *due regard* to the need to **eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation** and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act? *E.g. Is there evidence to indicate that the policy may result in less favourable treatment for particular groups?*	The policy should support the general duty by providing a consistent and fair approach to staff development and annual review. Detailed guidance accompanying the policy will provide more information on upholding the duty when identifying and meeting development needs. In upholding the principle of academic freedom, there is a risk of breaching the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy, or of contravening basic human rights and values and behaviours such as dignity and respect.
6. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have *due regard* to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it? *E.g. Is there evidence to show that the policy helps to remove disadvantage or encourages the participation of particular groups?*	The above risk relating to the principle of academic freedom could also affect equality of opportunity between groups. This policy applies to all staff irrespective of personal characteristics or circumstances. Without prescriptive guidance on the identification of development needs and allocation of development funds and opportunities, there is a risk that some groups could be disadvantaged (e.g. part-time staff, older staff, staff with disabilities, those with caring responsibilities and those returning from maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave).
7. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have *due regard* to the need to **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic, or not? *E.g. Is there evidence to illustrate that the policy helps to tackle prejudice or promote understanding?*	The above risk relating to the principle of academic freedom could also impact relations between groups. Application of the policy in line with guidance should promote fairness, equality and consistent approaches to managing and rewarding contributions, and therefore should support the fostering of good relations.

8. How will any negative impact identified above be addressed?	It is the application and implementation of the policy that provides scope for discrimination e.g. prejudices or attitudes of managers supporting their staff. Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to managers through existing learning and development and information routes. Supporting guidance for managers and staff on the Performance and Development Policy will emphasise that application must take into account the University's commitment to equality and diversity, the staff Reasonable Adjustments Policy, and the Dignity at Work and Study policy, and will give examples of risks highlighted above. Perceptions of how the policy is applied to specific groups (e.g. disabled staff, part-time staff, maternity returners) will be regularly monitored through staff surveys and focus groups.
9. What is the overall impact rating? (Choose one rating)	Medium: There is some evidence that people from different groups are (or could be) differently affected (positively or negatively).
10. How will the results of the equality impact assessment be published?	The results will be published on the GCU's Equality and Diversity website, and also communicated to relevant stakeholders.
11. How will the implementation of the policy, procedure, strategy and its impact on equality be monitored and reviewed?	The Policy will be reviewed as part of GCU's annual policy review process.