

Re-draft

FINAL

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Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA): Principles

PRINCIPLES

These principles have been agreed by representatives of the OUBUCU and the University and they form the underlying principles of the OU's Guide to CDSA, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

1. Objectives

The University's career development and staff appraisal system (CDSA) has the following objectives:

- (i) to improve performance in the present job and to identify ways and means of developing the present job;
- (ii) to identify changes e.g. office environment or organisational structure which may enable individuals to improve their performance;
- (iii) to identify development and training needs and to help individuals to develop their careers both within the institution, for example by identifying potential for promotion, or outside;
- (iv) to improve the efficiency with which the University is managed.

In order to fulfil these objectives the system should:

- (a) apply, with suitable modifications, to all levels of academic, research and academic-related staff (excluding Associate Lecturers);
- (b) be compatible with the University's policies on equality and diversity;
- (c) operate regularly on an annual cycle
- (d) encourage staff to reflect on their own performance, and as necessary to take steps to improve it;
- (e) be regarded as a joint professional task shared between appraiser and appraisee with the appraisee involved at all stages;
- (f) provide for an agreed record of discussion, and of follow-up action;
- (g) provide for staff to record dissent on an otherwise jointly agreed appraisal record. In cases of serious disagreement the Head of Unit, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources, should make arrangements to obtain a second opinion from someone qualified to make a judgement in the area of dispute;
- (h) provide for effective follow-up action in relation to staff development needs, weaknesses in organisation, provision of resources or to other matters identified at the appraisal interview, in so far as these are realistically achievable;

CDSA and ongoing performance and development reviews reflect the right of all members of staff to receive feedback and support in order to contribute effectively. Heads of Unit, managers and individuals all have a responsibility for ensuring that this happens.

CDSA on its own is not enough. Regular reviews against objectives and development plans are vital to ensure that performance and development issues are addressed as they arise.

2. Appraisers

- (a) It is essential that appraisers have the confidence of their appraisees. For this, they should be experienced and responsible members of staff who have been formally recognised by the University as appraisers and who have been properly trained for, and have sufficient time to devote to, their appraisal duties. Heads of departments or sections (or equivalent) will normally appraise in their departments, but this does not exclude the designation of other staff with management responsibilities as recognised appraisers.
- ← b) Line managers are expected to have continuous responsibility for all of their staff, to have an input to the formal process of CDSA and for ensuring the implementation of outcomes. It is recognised therefore that line managers have responsibilities in relation to the appraisal of all of their staff (see para 4a of the 1987 agreement). These responsibilities are not restricted to those of their staff for whom they are directly designated as the formal appraiser. Appraisers will not be expected to appraise more than 10 staff annually.
- (c) ← Appraisees should have the right to request that an alternative appraiser be appointed and, if an alternative is appointed, this should be formally agreed by the Head of Unit and the appraisee.

3. Content

Appraisal should focus on present and future performance in the job, not on an individual's personal characteristics. Appraiser and appraisee need to agree what the job of the appraisee has involved during the period covered by the appraisal and to identify the key areas on which the appraisal should concentrate in assessing and helping to improve performance. The appraisal should consider:

- (a) the main tasks of the appraisee's job;
- (b) any significant changes to the job during the past year and any limitations;
- (c) how the appraisee coped with any change;
- (d) any standards of performance set against the main tasks, whether they were met and if they were not, why not;
- (e) the strengths and weaknesses of the appraisee's performance on the evidence of the events of the past year;
- (f) any aspect where more guidance or training or other experience would seem to be needed;
- (g) the potential of the appraisee to undertake other jobs either immediately, or given certain experience and/or training.

4. Appraisal Records

- (a) The appraisal record should consist of a description of the work undertaken by the appraisee during the period covered by the appraisal, an appraisal of performance and a statement of any agreed follow-up action. It should also summarise the work objectives for the next year. The appraisee can record comments and any dissenting views. The record should be signed by both appraiser and appraisee. Records are not required in any rigid format but they should be consistent with the principles set out in this document
- ← (b) Appraisal interviews are intended to be frank and constructive. Appraisal records are likely to contain sensitive material so safe-keeping is essential. Appraisal records should be kept only by appraisees, appraisers and Heads of Units. Three appraisal

records may be stored by appraisers and Heads of Units, the earliest record of the three being destroyed when the latest record is agreed. Arrangements for the implementation of follow-up action should be discussed and agreed between the appraiser and appraisee. In some cases it may be necessary to involve other relevant officers of the University in the discussion of the follow up action because, for example, it requires special training provision. In this event the appraisee should be fully involved in the discussions.

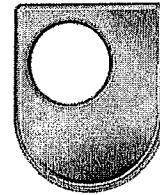
NOTE: any consultation by the appraiser must be recorded on the appraisal record and must be related to job performance.

5. The Relation between Appraisal and Academic Promotion

Head of Units are to use a summary of appraisal records agreed with the appraisee, focussing particularly on those areas which provide evidence of suitability for promotion and reward, to accompany any submission to the academic promotions committees and/or other relevant bodies. If a summary cannot be agreed, the Head of Unit and the appraisee may submit separate summaries.

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GUIDE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF APPRAISALS (CDSA)

(For Academic, Academic Related and Research staff this should be read in conjunction with the document CDSA: Principles - Agreed between the University and the OUBUCU)

WHAT IS CDSA?

- A look back at goals attained and standards reached.
- An assessment of strengths and weaknesses with a focus on personal contribution.
- A look forward at short and long term objectives.
- A review and identification of agreed training and development activities.

This process operates within the wider context of regular reviews of performance and development. These enable:

- regular exchange of informal feedback
- reassessment and revision of priorities
- prompt recognition of achievements and issues to be addressed.

Together these provide the framework in which staff are supported and developed to help them fulfill their potential and optimise their contribution to the University's goals. It requires good working relationships between managers and staff and willingness on both sides to engage actively in a regular cycle of priority setting, personal development planning, ongoing reviews and the completion of an annual report. It is not just about line managers setting aside time for their staff but also about individuals' taking responsibility for their own performance and development.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CDSA?

For the University, it helps to:

- recognise and reward individuals' contributions
- align the contribution of individuals to University goals
- foster a culture where achievement and excellence are valued
- build respect for individuals and value diversity
- enhance capability for organisational learning and change
- encourage accountable management

For managers/appraisers it provides opportunities to:

- set standards and clarify expectations
- build effective working relationships between staff by giving and receiving constructive feedback
- recognise the contribution of staff
- improve your understanding of different perspectives
- motivate staff
- agree ways of improving performance

For staff it allows time for:

- reflecting on job role and purpose
- reviewing workload and priorities

- discussing needs for recognition, support and development
- giving and receiving constructive feedback
- building a good working relationship with your manager/appraiser

It is an OU expectation that every member of staff will have a CDSA once a year and that CDSA should look back at achievements during the past year as well as look forward to objectives and development needs in the forthcoming year.

THE KEY COMPONENTS OF CDSA

The CDSA record form provides the structure of the meeting and the means of summarising the discussion. There are 3 main components:

1. Review of achievements and objectives

The purpose of the review is to discuss and record the employee's objectives and achievements during the review period. Both appraiser and appraisee have responsibility for collecting evidence to inform this discussion.

2. Setting Objectives

The purpose of objective setting is to define the specific contribution expected of staff over the forthcoming review period (normally 12 months) and the tasks to be given the highest priority. This takes place within the context of university plans and priorities and day-to-day work demands and resource constraints. Outcomes may be expressed as SMART objectives (see below) or as project, action or workload plans as appropriate.

3. Development Planning

The purpose of Personal Development Planning is to provide dedicated time for managers and staff to assess learning and development needs, explore ways of meeting them within resource and time constraints and generate commitment to undertake and support learning and growth.

The CDSA forms are supporting documents that enable appraisees and appraisers to prepare for and record the CDSA discussion; they do not drive the process itself. There is a degree of flexibility around how the discussion is recorded, providing that the format of the record is appropriate and acceptable to the appraiser and appraisee.

STEPS TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE CDSA MEETING

Prior to the meeting:

- Appraisees may find it helpful to complete the Appraisee Preparation Form.
- Appraiser and appraisee should gather evidence of achievements and development activities undertaken during the review period.
- Appraiser should obtain relevant details about team, departmental and strategic priorities to inform the objective-setting discussion.
- Appraiser and appraisee should agree an agenda and decide who will draft the CDSA Record form.

Things to consider when reviewing objectives and achievements:

- Evidence of achievement in meeting agreed objectives and other examples of excellent performance (e.g. from employee's achievement log, observation by manager, feedback from other colleagues or customers)
- Evidence of commitment to equality and diversity
- 360° feedback or other assessment against core and functional capabilities
- Evidence of specific learning outcomes (e.g. from employee's Learning Log, observation or feedback)

- Up-dated CV - recording work and professional achievements
- A retrospective review of work plans and the time allocated against key activities and any adjustments needed for the future
- Actions and priorities to be carried forward to the next review period.

Things to consider when setting objectives:

- Making explicit links to team, departmental and strategic priorities
- Consistency with workload, professional development and study leave plans to ensure that individuals are able to maximise their contribution without being overloaded.
- Recognising *what* needs to be done and *how* (linking to OU Values and Capabilities)
- Building in specific responsibilities for equality and diversity
- Building in sufficient flexibility to allow for later reprioritisation as necessary
- Making objectives SMART:
 - Specific** – is it clear what has to be achieved?
 - Measurable** – how will outcomes be defined in terms of quantity, quality, cost?
 - Achievable** – will it stretch without causing overload?
 - Relevant** – how will it contribute to team or departmental goals?
 - Time bound** – when are outputs to be delivered?

Things to consider when development planning:

- Building in sufficient flexibility to allow for later reprioritisation as necessary.
- Objectives agreed for the forthcoming review period
- The University's capability framework and other functional capabilities
- Feedback from colleagues and customers (e.g. 360° feedback)
- Career aspirations and potential
- The guidance offered in the online Manager as Developer guide

It is essential that appraisers have the relevant skills and knowledge to facilitate effective appraisals and they will be required to undertake training as appropriate, which may involve attendance at a training course or other training as agreed. Appraisers who are new to the role are encouraged to attend the CDSA training course offered by the HR Development team.

Individuals who have received similar training or gained experience of appraisals from a previous employer can refer to the CDSA guidance notes and seek coaching from their manager and/or colleagues to familiarise themselves with the approach of their unit. It will be the responsibility of Heads to decide which of their line managers should attend the training course in consultation with HR as appropriate.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- CDSA and ongoing performance and development reviews reflect the right of all members of staff to receive feedback and support in order to contribute effectively. Heads of Unit, managers and individuals all have a responsibility for ensuring that this happens.
- Line managers are expected to have continuous responsibility for all of their staff, to have an input to the formal process of CDSA and for ensuring the implementation of outcomes. It is recognised therefore that line managers have responsibilities in relation to the appraisal of all of their staff (see para 4a of the 1987 agreement). These responsibilities are not restricted to those of their staff for whom they are directly designated as the formal appraiser. Appraisers will not be expected to appraise more than 10 staff annually.
- CDSA's should normally be carried out by the staff member's line manager. Occasionally this may not be practical due to the number of staff reporting to an individual manager and in this situation, the line manager will agree with the Head of Unit on an alternative appraiser. The line manager, however, will need direct input to that discussion in regard to that employee's objectives and performance and they will

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also need to see the final appraisal documents (subject to the provisions of para 6 (b) of the 1987 agreement). Where there is a dual reporting line, there will be a need for the line manager to consult and involve the other manager as appropriate. — ?

- Appraisees may ask for an alternative appraiser, giving reasons for their request. The Head of Unit should give this request reasonable consideration. This request should not be unreasonably refused. The Head of Unit will decide on the alternative appraiser, if the staff member is unhappy with the alternative they may exercise the right to request another alternative.
- Where *written* comments on an individual's job performance are obtained from others, (including by e-mail) the appraisee must have access to them. Those submitting written comments should be aware that the appraisee will see their comments. Three appraisal records may be stored by appraisers and Heads of Units, the earliest record of the three being destroyed when the latest record is agreed.
- Where there is a dual reporting line, there will be a need for the line manager to consult and involve the other manager as appropriate.
- Only the appraiser, appraisee and Head of Unit (or nominee) should have a copy of the CDSA form and all have a responsibility for ensuring the contents remain confidential. If the line manager does not undertake the CDSA for operational reasons, they will still be expected to input to the CDSA and see and agree on the final document (subject to the principles agreed on record-keeping-see above). The Head of Unit will review the outcomes agreed at the CDSA and may need to amend as appropriate depending on the availability of resources and consideration of unit priorities.
- Heads of Unit have access to all staff records for their staff and a new line manager within a Section/Unit should have access to CDSA records completed by their predecessors for their appraisees. If a member of staff changes post within a Unit, their new line manager/appraiser will have access to their CDSA records.
- When a promotion case is put forward, the Head of Unit and appraisee will agree a summary of the CDSA focusing on areas which give evidence of suitability for promotion. If a summary cannot be agreed then two summaries may be submitted by the Head of Unit and the appraisee.
- CDSA on its own is not enough. Regular reviews against objectives and development plans are vital to ensure that performance and development issues are addressed as they arise. The frequency of these should be agreed and recorded on the CDSA record.