

# Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA): Principles

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This document lays out the PRINCIPLES AGREED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND OUBUCU (Part A) and the PRINCIPLES AGREED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND UNISON (Part B).

## PART A) PRINCIPLES AGREED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND OUBUCU

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:

- to improve performance in the present job and to identify ways and means of developing the present job;
- to identify changes e.g. office environment or organisational structure which may enable individuals to improve their performance;
- 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;
- to improve the efficiency with which the University is managed.

In order to fulfil these objectives the system should:

- apply, with suitable modifications, to all levels of academic, research and academic-related staff (excluding Associate Lecturers);
- be compatible with the University's policies on equality and diversity;
- operate regularly on an annual cycle
- encourage staff to reflect on their own performance, and as necessary to take steps to improve it;
- be regarded as a joint professional task shared between appraiser and appraisee with the appraisee involved at all stages;
- provide for an agreed record of discussion, and of follow-up action;
- provide for staff to record dissent on an otherwise jointly agreed appraisal record. In cases of serious disagreement, the Head of Unit (or nominee)/Nation Director, in consultation with the Group People Director/Deputy Group People Director, should make arrangements to obtain a second opinion from someone qualified to make a judgement in the area of dispute;
- 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

- 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.
- 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. 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.
- 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:

- the main tasks of the appraisee's job;
- any significant changes to the job during the past year and any limitations;
- how the appraisee coped with any change;
- any standards of performance set against the main tasks, whether they were met and if they were not, why not;
- the strengths and weaknesses of the appraisee's performance on the evidence of the events of the past year;
- any aspect where more guidance or training or other experience would seem to be needed;

- the potential of the appraisee to undertake other jobs either immediately or given certain experience and/or training.

#### 4. Appraisal records

- 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
- 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

Heads of Unit are to use a summary of appraisal records agreed with the appraisee, focusing particularly on those areas which provide evidence of suitability for promotion and reward, to accompany any submission to the Academic Promotions Committee 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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## PART B) PRINCIPLES AGREED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND UNISON

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### 1. Objectives

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- to improve the efficiency with which the University is managed.

In order to fulfil these objectives, the system should:

- apply, with suitable modifications, to all levels of support staff.
- be compatible with the University's policies on equality and diversity;
- operate regularly on an annual cycle
- encourage staff to reflect on their own performance, and as necessary to take steps to improve it;
- be regarded as a joint professional task shared between appraiser and appraisee with the appraisee involved at all stages;
- provide for an agreed record of discussion, and of follow-up action;
- 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 Group People Director/Deputy Group People Director, should make arrangements to obtain a second opinion from someone qualified to make a judgement in the area of dispute;
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