

Associate Lecturer - Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA): Principles

This document lays out the PRINCIPLES AGREED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND OUBUCU.

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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 Associate Lecturer Career Development and Staff Appraisal, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

In line with the existing CDSA agreement between the University and OU branch of UCU the AL-CDSA framework has the following objectives for Associate Lecturers (ALs):

1. Objectives

- to improve performance in the present job and to identify ways and means of developing the present job;
- to identify changes 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 to all Associate Lecturers;
- be compatible with the University's policies on equality, diversity and inclusion;
- operate 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 Associate Lecturer staff to record dissent on an otherwise jointly agreed

appraisal record. In cases of serious disagreement, the relevant Executive Dean or nominee, in consultation with the 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 CDSA meeting, in so far as these are realistically achievable.

AL-CDSA and ongoing performance and development reviews reflect the right of all staff to receive feedback and support in order to contribute effectively. Executive Deans or their nominees, managers and individuals all have a responsibility for ensuring that this happens.

CDSA on its own is not enough. Reviews as necessary 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. Line managers will normally appraise ALs, 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 their staff, and to implement the formal AL-CDSA process and for ensuring the implementation of outcomes. It is recognised that line managers have responsibilities in relation to the appraisal of all their ALs. These responsibilities are not restricted to those staff for whom they are directly designated as the formal appraiser.
- 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 relevant Executive Dean or nominee 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 form 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 agreed follow up action. It should also summarise the work objectives for the following year. The appraisee can record comments and any dissenting views. The appraisal form should be signed by both appraiser and appraisee.
- CDSA meetings are intended to be frank and constructive. Appraisal forms are likely to contain sensitive material so safe keeping is essential. Appraisal forms should be kept only by appraisees, appraisers and Executive Deans or their nominees. Three appraisal forms may be stored by appraisers, the earliest form of the three being destroyed when the latest form is completed. (Note reference to confidentiality in point 6). Arrangements for the implementation of follow up action should be discussed and where possible 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.
- Because of the large spans of control, it is understood that ALs may need to have generic job objectives in many areas. As a result of this, the agreed objectives section of the CDSA (but not personal development objectives) can be circulated more widely, as required, to ensure job activities are properly aligned with other colleagues.

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

5. CDSA practice

In the first two years of an AL's service with the University, it is recommended that the line manager/appraiser and appraisee meet face to face where this is possible. Subsequently, it may be appropriate to liaise by email, phone, face to face or by video conference.

6. Confidentiality

- External legal requirements

Where external legal requirements require the University to release CDSA related documentation or information, this will be complied with, although the University will make every effort to preserve the confidentiality of an individual's CDSA within these constraints. The University also agrees to notify UCU of this requirement to release information.

- Sector governance requirements

Where sector governance requirements require the University to release CDSA

documentation or information, no information will be released to the sector or sought internally, without first consulting with UCU. The University will make every effort to preserve the confidentiality of an individual's CDSA within these constraints.