University of St Andrews

Human Resources

Academic Review and Development Scheme – New Starts Guidance Note

The groups of staff covered by this guidance note are: Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Readers, Professors, Research Staff (independent and postdoctoral) and Teaching Fellows (temporary and standard).

1. Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Readers, Professors

Heads of School should meet with new starts within one month of their start date. Objectives set should look forward overall to the first 4 years of employment with emphasis on the first year. Objectives should take account of stage of career at appointment and reasonable expectations for the relevant academic discipline, including workload management. They should be specific to the individual. After this initial meeting, subsequent meetings should form part of the normal annual review cycle.

The initial form should be sent to the School’s HR Business Partner for information but subsequent years’ forms do not have to be as the School’s HR Business Partner will ensure that new starts are being supported and reviewed annually through liaison with the Head of School.

The 4 year period is intended to be supportive and encouraging and the University will look for sustained high quality performance throughout.

At the start of year 4, HR will confirm with the Head of School that performance is on track as per the initial form’s objectives which will, in turn, be confirmed to the Deputy Principal/Master.

If any issues are identified throughout the 4 year period the Head of School and HR Business Partner will decide how to proceed which may involve initiating the University’s Capability Procedure (Poor Performance).

Support for new colleagues is very important and the mentoring scheme fulfils a key role in this respect. The role of mentor is not a managerial one and provides guidance, support, encouragement and feedback to the new Lecturer.

2. Research Staff/Teaching Fellows

Heads of School/Line Managers/Principal Investigators should meet with new starts within one month of their start date. Objectives should look forward to the first 15 months of employment (or to the end of their fixed-term contract if less than 15 months). Objectives should take account of stage of career at appointment, the reasonable expectations of the position and the opportunities for career enhancement. Objectives should be specific to the individual.

Completed forms should be retained in the Schools.

The review period is intended to be supportive and encouraging and the University will look for high quality performance throughout.

HR will contact the HoS/Line Manager/PI 3 months before the end of the individual’s review period to confirm that their performance is satisfactory and if it is, the new start review period will be considered complete and both parties will receive confirmation of completion.

Individuals should then be reviewed as part of the normal annual review cycle.

If any issues are identified at any point through this initial review period, the Line Manager and HR Business Partner will decide how to proceed which may involve initiating the University’s Capability Procedure.
3. **Capability Procedure**

The Capability Procedure (Poor Performance) should be used to be supportive if reasonably possible rather than punitive, and it should be recognised that the existence of this procedure is to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of performance and to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

If performance problems are judged to result from conduct over which the employee has control, the University disciplinary procedure will apply.

Should a member of staff consistently fail to meet all or some of their objectives, display conduct that is unsatisfactory to the University or generally not perform in line with the expectations and requirements of the University for that particular group of staff, as set out in contracts and other formal agreements, the appropriate University procedure may be invoked as a result of which his/her contract may be terminated at any time during the 4 year period.

4. **Part-time and Fixed Term Appointments**

While the length of the review will remain the same for part-time appointments, the objectives agreed should recognise the part-time nature of the employment. Any change to the objectives should not imply a reduction in the quality of performance required.

The review period applies to both open ended and fixed term appointments to ensure that progress and performance of fixed term staff are assessed against the same standards and expectations which apply to those on open ended contracts.

5. **Absence during the review period**

Where a member of staff is absent during the review period, for example, on maternity/adoption leave or extended sickness absence, the University will normally adjust the review dates. Again this will have no impact on the quality of performance required and the objectives will be set accordingly.

6. **Support Available**

Should any member of staff feel that they need support or advice outside their School, they can speak to their HR Business Partner about any issues that arise during the course of their employment.

7. **Appendices**

Academic Review and Development Form

Academic Staff Development Programme
http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/ppd/resources/academicstaff/

Research staff resources
http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/staff/researchstaff/

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