



University of  
St Andrews

## Academic review and development

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<b>Purpose</b>	Outlines the procedure to manage the annual performance and development review for academic employees.

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2.4	Remove reference to previous ARDS and probation for support staff policy only.	Published.	Lisa Stewart HR	01/05/2024

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  - This document and forms associated with this document are available in an alternative format upon request.

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Academic Review and Development Scheme (ARDS) covers all academic staff and consists of the exchange of a written form and an annual meeting between the reviewer and the reviewee. The purpose is to support employees to realise their full potential by reviewing progress, discussing future plans and development needs, and setting specific objectives.
- 1.2 More specifically, the ARDS meetings provide an opportunity for staff to highlight their achievements, identify areas for improvements, raise issues or potential barriers to achieving objectives, and discuss how the School could provide support to the staff member to reach their professional/personal goals including workload balance, promotion preparation and timing, research leave and other developmental activities.
- 1.3 Staff are encouraged to reflect on how their work has been carried out, for instance in terms of collegiality, values and broader contributions to the School and University, not just on types and amount of achievements, and consider how their work has supported the strategic aims of the School and University.
- 1.4 Frequently asked questions regarding the ARDS process can be accessed via the [ARDS webpage](#).

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all academic staff ('teaching and research', 'education-focused', 'academic-related' and 'research') who commenced employment with the University on **1 March 2023 and thereafter**.

**Note:** This policy also applies to existing academic staff who commenced employment prior to 1 March 2023, who are currently in their probation period, and have transferred over to the new probation terms as per the [probation policy](#).

- 2.2 Once the employee successfully completes their probation period, they will agree objectives with their line manager, which will be assessed in line with this policy and procedure.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 When does the ARDS process commence?

- 3.1.1 The review meetings will take place annually, once probation has been completed, within the defined periods (Jan/June or June/Dec). Schools will declare when the ARDS are taking place and Human Resources (HR) will check annually to ensure these have been undertaken.
- 3.1.2 The reviewer and reviewee are expected to review and discuss performance and actions against set objectives throughout the year and should not wait until the annual review meeting to raise performance concerns, provide feedback and recognise potential/good performance. **These matters must be managed promptly by the line manager (or appropriate other)**. Where concerns exist, advice should be sought from an [HR Business Partner \(HRBP\)](#).

## **3.2 Reviewee's responsibilities**

- 3.2.1 The reviewee should use the ARDS meetings to focus on their performance, areas for development, aims and ambitions, questions and concerns. It is essential that the reviewee prepares for the meeting by reviewing objectives and being honest about what is going well, what is going less well, and where things could benefit from any change and additional support.
- 3.2.2 The reviewee should reflect on the time since their last ARDS meeting/final probation review, and on how things have gone since then. It is important to review progress against any performance or development objectives or actions that were agreed previously and how far they have been met. Understanding why intended things have or have not happened will be central to making more progress in future.
- 3.2.3 It is the responsibility of all reviewees to keep information in PURE up-to-date and accurate (where relevant).
- 3.2.4 The reviewee should complete, as much as possible, sections **A to G** of the [ARDS form](#) and return it to the reviewer at least 2 working days prior to review meeting.
- 3.2.5 The reviewee should be provided with at least 10 working days' notice of the meeting taking place.

## **3.3 Reviewer responsibilities**

- 3.3.1 The ARDS meeting will normally be undertaken by the line manager, although Schools may offer alternative reviewers as designated by the Head of School.
- 3.3.2 The reviewer is responsible for setting up and conducting the ARDS meeting, ensuring that it enables a focused discussion on core issues relating to the reviewee's work, aspirations, issues and setting future objectives, and where appropriate discussing concerns.
- 3.3.3 At least 10 working days' notice of the meeting should be provided to the staff member to allow adequate time to complete the form fully. The completed form should be returned to the reviewer at least 2 working days prior to the meeting taking place.
- 3.3.4 Once the meeting has taken place, the reviewer must complete section **H** (of the ARDS form) summarising the discussion and the agreed set of future objectives. After the meeting, the reviewee will be sent a copy of the form with this final section completed. Once the form is completed, both the reviewer and reviewee must sign and date the form to confirm that it is an accurate reflection of the conversation that took place at the review meeting.

## **3.4 Human Resources responsibilities**

- 3.4.1 HR will, on an annual basis, contact the Head of School regarding the process and will arrange to meet with them, along with [OSDS](#), before it is launched in their School and after, to provide advice and support.
- 3.4.2 HR will also ensure timely completion of the process and will liaise with the Master if there are issues of non-compliance.

3.4.3 Should any employee 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.

### 3.5 Part-time and fixed-term appointments

3.5.1 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.

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

### 3.6 Storing ARDS documents

3.6.1 In line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations), completed forms and any accompanying data will be kept securely within the School, accessible to relevant individuals only.

## 4. Version control

4.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly. Any feedback on the policy content should be directed in the first instance to the [HRBP team](#), who will consider this as part of the review.

4.2 This policy is not contractual and may be amended by the University from time to time.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Policy migrating to the Governance Zone.	Published	Lisa Stewart, HR	03/07/2019
2.0	Change to ARDS form and minor changes to wording & formatting and new FAQ section (Appendix B & C).	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	16/12/2020
2.1	Change to review date	Published.	Lisa Stewart HR	20/12/2021
2.2	Change to review date	Published.	Lisa Stewart HR	03/02/2022
2.3	Update to section 2 "Scope" in recognition of the new probation policy which launched 01/03/23. Removal of section "New Start Procedure" (formally 3.2).	Published.	Lisa Stewart HR	01/03/2023
2.4	Remove reference to previous ARDS and probation for support staff policy only.	Published.	Lisa Stewart HR	01/05/2024