RDS: FAQs for the reviewer

Document type	**Guidance**
Scope (applies to)	Professional staff
Applicability date	27/04/2021
Review / Expiry date	29/04/2024
Approved date	24/05/2023
Approver	Deputy Director
Document owner	Human Resources Officer
School / unit	Human Resources
Document status	Published
Information classification	Public
Equality impact assessment	None
Key terms	Staff/Progression and development/Performance Management
Purpose	Frequently asked questions regarding the RDS process (for the reviewer)

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	New document	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	28/04/2021

1. **How long should I give the Reviewee to submit their completed form in advance of the meeting?**
At least 10 working days' notice should be provided in advance of the meeting. The completed form should be returned to you at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.

2. **How soon must I complete the RDS form for the Reviewee to see after the meeting?**
You should aim to complete and return the RDS documentation to the Reviewee within 10 working days.

3. **What should I do if my Reviewee does not want me to be their Reviewer?**
You should attempt to explore the reasons why this is the case although this may not always be possible. If you are not able to resolve the issue, or allay any concerns, you should consider if there is an alternative from within the unit who could undertake this role. You should seek advice from your HR Business Partner where such an issue is raised.

4. **What do I do if an employee refuses to participate in the RDS process?**
The RDS meetings are mandatory. If a person raises concerns, you should attempt to discuss these and alleviate the concerns. If necessary, this should be discussed with the Head of Unit to consider what alternatives might be put in place. Where an individual continues to refuse to attend an RDS meeting, advice should be sought from your HR Business Partner.

5. **Can I consult with colleagues when preparing for a review?**
Yes. For most professional services roles it will be necessary to discuss future objectives and past performance with key individuals such as the Head of Unit (or appropriate delegate) or colleagues who have previously managed the colleague being reviewed?

6. **What must I do if my Reviewee does not agree with the content of the review?**
The aim in all RDS is to reach agreement between you and your Reviewee on what has happened prior to the review and to plan for the future. In rare cases, where this is not possible, both you and the Reviewee, should discuss the issues being raised to seek a way forward during the discussion. If, this is not possible, the RDS form should reflect this disagreement but record that this is an accurate record of the discussion that took place.

7. **Who is responsible for following up on learning and development actions identified?**
Both parties are responsible for ensuring that the actions identified during the RDS are followed up. Specific responsibility for actions should be noted on the form, so there is clarity about who is doing what.

8. **What are suitable objectives?**
Any objectives that you set and agree should be SMART (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timely). They should contribute to both your local strategic plan and (not necessarily directly) to the wider University's strategic aims and objectives.

9. **What do I do if it's impossible to set suitable objectives that can be completed within a 12-month reporting period?**
Objectives do not need to be limited to a one-year period. If an objective is for more than one year, both you and your Reviewee should agree key milestones during the review period. This will provide evidence of progression to a longer-term objective. Where appropriate research objectives will be set over a three-year period.

10. **What should I do if my Reviewees are not meeting their previously set objectives?**
You should explore the possible reason(s) for not meeting their previously agreed objectives and ask whether there is anything that you can do as a Reviewer to assist. This might include discussion about whether the objectives set were SMART.

11. **Can the RDS process be used as part of, or in place of a disciplinary procedure?**
No. The RDS process is not part of the University's formal or informal capability or disciplinary procedure. Issues regarding performance can be raised during the RDS process to discuss how performance can be developed, but the RDS meetings should not be the first time that you become aware of performance issues. Should performance continue to fall short of expectation, recourse to the capability or disciplinary process should be undertaken. Your HR Business Partner can advise on the application of these procedures.

12. **What should I do if the RDS process surfaces a serious issue such as wellbeing or performance?**
The purpose of the RDS process is to provide a process for two-way communication, where the employee can signal areas that are going well and those that are causing difficultly. As the Reviewer, you should ensure that the positives are recognised but where issues are flagged, discuss how these might be overcome. If health or wellbeing is raised as an issue, you should indicate that you would like to be able to provide relevant support and one way of doing this is via a referral to Occupational Health. Clarify that this is confidential, and the purpose is to ascertain what can be done to support the individual. If performance is an issue, and this is not linked to health or wellbeing, then you should set clear objectives for review and confirm that you would like to meet again in 3 months (or alternative suitable time period) to see how things are progressing. Where there is a repeated issue regarding performance, or a person is simply not engaging, even after offering support, you should inform them that you are going to take advice from Human Resources on next steps.

13. **Do I undertake a review if someone is absent from work or on Long Term Sick?**
If an individual is absent from work due to sick leave, maternity or paternity leave, the review should be paused pending their return to work. Depending on the length of absence, the individual may then simply fall into the next cycle, if underway when they return. If not, you should arrange to undertake the outside of the normal cycle.

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