

Career Development Review (CDR):

Guidance for professional
services staff



1 Introduction

The Career Development Review Scheme (CDR) is for all salaried professional services staff and is designed to:

- Provide a framework for regular meetings between employee (the reviewee) and manager (the reviewer) which focus on the following: agreeing objectives in line with School aims, performance in relation to these objectives, personal and professional development needs, career aspirations and plans for the future.
- Enable all professional services staff to have the opportunity to reflect on their performance, to discuss this with their line manager and to develop their skills in line with their contribution to the School and its aims.
- Enhance organisational performance in line with the School's aim of delivering excellence.

The Scheme includes:

- Agreed objectives and performance standards
- A review of progress against these objectives and performance standards
- Discussion of development needs and career aspirations
- Regular individual catch-up sessions throughout the year (often known as 1 to 1s)

Objectives/performance standards are set to start from August each year as part of the School's business planning process. Where an area's annual operating cycle makes this particular timetable difficult to achieve, a revised timeframe should be agreed with that area's HR Partner.

A progress review should be recorded between April and May each year. This can be used to inform any Contribution Pay nomination. HR will track completion of the reviews and these will be reported to the Chief Operating Officer.

2. Target setting

Targets for the coming year can be a combination of either objectives and/or performance standards dependent on the individual's role.

These should always be specific, measurable statements of what is required within clear time frames. The acronym SMART is a **useful guide** for writing objectives/performance standards:

S–Specific

M–Measurable

A–Achievable

R–Relevant

T–Time bound

A total of 5–7 targets should be set for the role. These should clearly relate to LSE 2030 (the School's strategy) and the business plan of the Division/Department/Centre.

Those in managerial roles should include targets about that part of their role (i.e. being a people manager).

Other areas that could have targets include customer service and impact of the role on the student experience. They can also include behavioural objectives that detail the behaviour required to achieve these objectives/performance standards, provided that these are specific and observable. Typical behavioural objectives could include being a proactive and supportive team member, demonstrating excellent customer service and always thinking about how to improve.

Learning and development

The next step is to discuss whether any training and/or development would be beneficial. This should include:

- Any support required to achieve the objectives/performance standards set
- Immediate career development needs
- Broader career aspirations
- Personal development

All staff should be encouraged to develop a Personal and Professional Development Plan (PPDP) and any other support which would be beneficial to them.

3. Regular catch up sessions (often known as one-to-ones)

Regular catch-up sessions should be held throughout the year to share on-going feedback, explore progress and ideas, and allow for any unexpected issues to be identified and addressed.

The timeframe of these will be as is relevant to the role; however they should be held at least once a term (most areas of the School hold them monthly or fortnightly).

These are a vital part of the CDR process – when managed well, the progress review should be a formal summary of these on-going discussions.

The format for these catch-ups can involve:

- Giving and receiving feedback
- Prioritising workloads and ensuring a good work/ life balance
- Monitoring work and work performance
- Sharing information relevant to work
- Clarifying task boundaries
- Identifying learning and development needs
- People management (if relevant to role)

It should also include, where appropriate, pastoral matters relating to personal issues that have been raised through work, such as:

- Discussing how outside factors are affecting work
- Enabling people to deal with stress.

4. Progress review meeting

Before the meeting

Preparation is essential to get the most out of the process. The reviewer (manager) should agree a suitable date, time and location for the review meeting, giving at least two weeks' notice so that there is enough time to gather all relevant documents.

The reviewee (employee) should complete the review part of the CDR form in preparation for the meeting, ideally at least a week beforehand so that the reviewer has time to read the form and consider the contents.

When completing the form, the reviewee should aim to include:

- Their key achievements against their performance standards and objectives.
- Any other achievements on top of their objectives, including wider activity beyond the scope of their role. The nature of these other achievements may vary but could include involvement in Green Impact Teams, School networks (such as Spectrum, Power, Embrace and Parents and Carers), or contribution towards School achievements (such as Athena Swan or Investors in People).
- For headings of the Effective Behaviours framework relevant for their role, examples of

how they have behaved in a way that supports these areas (the reviewee can refer to the Effective Behaviours Guidance for examples). This framework is designed to support the LSE's Ethics Code, which sets out six core principles underpinning life at LSE and applies to all members of the School community.

The reviewee may also choose to seek additional feedback from colleagues with whom they work closely, either within or outside the reviewee's own Department/Division. The names of these additional colleagues should be agreed before the meeting so that the reviewee can contact them to ask for feedback and send them a copy of the additional feedback form to complete. The form can be found on the [CDR web page](#). Additional feedback is confidential to the reviewer and reviewee which means that the form should be returned to both.

The meeting

The review meeting should be a positive and constructive experience for those involved. The meeting should usually last for 1-1.5 hours and should be held in a quiet room so that the employee and manager can have a productive discussion without being interrupted. The focus of the meeting should be on the reviewee, which means that they should do most of the talking.

The manager should make sure that everything needed for the meeting is to hand, such as the CDR form, any previous forms and the latest job description for the reviewee's role.

The manager should start the meeting by referring to the job description, ensuring that it provides a complete and accurate picture of the reviewee's role.

Review of progress

This conversation should look at the reviewee's progress against their objectives/performance standards. For some people, there will be legitimate reasons why they have not met their objectives, and it is important that these reasons are identified and acknowledged.

For those in roles that manage other people, this review should include their people management.

The key achievements section of the CDR form will form part of the conversation, although it is important to consider the reviewee's approach to their work as well as the outcomes.

The reviewee's approach includes how they have demonstrated the behaviours outlined in the School's Effective Behaviours Framework, considering:

- Which of the behaviours are most relevant to their role: while all are important, some may have a higher priority than others depending on the nature of the work and the objectives.
- To what extent the reviewee has demonstrated the behaviours during the year just ended.

All staff are encouraged to play an active role in the life of the School, so the review should also include any School-wide activity in which the reviewee has been involved.

This can be things such as involvement in Green Impact Teams, the School's networks (e.g., Spectrum, Power, Embrace and Parents and Carers) or contribution towards School achievements such as Athena Swan recognition, Customer Service Excellence, etc.

There should also be a discussion of any additional feedback which has been received.

This review of performance should be the main evidence used to support a submission for a contribution pay award (if one is made).

After the meeting

Following the meeting, the reviewee should complete the main sections of the form to summarise the conversation.

The reviewee then passes the form to the reviewer for their overall comments. Once this is completed, the reviewee can add their signature.

The form should then be uploaded onto the online CDR system. This will enable the individual, manager and senior manager to access the form at any time. It will also enable management information about rate of completions of CDRs to be provided to the Chief Operating Officer.

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