



# How to do 1-2-1s

Guidance for professional  
services staff and managers





## 1. Introduction: Why 1-2-1s?

The Career Development Review process for Professional Services Staff is based around regular **1 to 1s** or catch-up meetings between managers and individual staff members.

**1-2-1s** are known to strengthen relationships between managers and their team members. The concept is straightforward: meet regularly to discuss progress on goals, engagement, professional development and more.

While sometimes it can feel time-consuming, the return on the **investment of time** is worth it. Through regular conversations you can develop trust. In turn, trust in the workplace solidifies teams, creating a safe environment for people to work in new and collaborative ways.

How often **1-2-1s** are held is dependent on the role of the team member, it will differ role to role and area to area. However, we recommend that they are held at least once a month as a face-to-face meeting. This can be combined with more frequent, briefer Teams conversations.

There is no ideal length for a 1 to 1. For some roles, a quick **30 mins** weekly virtual chat can be effective and then the monthly face to face meeting might be as long as an **hour to an hour and half**.

A little structure for face to face 1-to-1 meetings can go a long way. With preparation, a **collaborative agenda**, and thoughtful note taking 1-2-1s can be super effective.

## 2. How to prepare for a 1-2-1

What is said in the 1-2-1 should stay between the manager and their direct report. The manager should focus on asking questions and listening attentively to understand the feedback. Both parties may want to prepare some questions, but in general stay open to whichever direction the conversation goes in.

Managers should	Individuals should
Prepare areas they want updating on.	Come prepared with progress.
Actively listen.	Share progress openly.
Give and receive feedback.	Give and receive feedback.
Support the individual manage their workload.	Ensure they are managing their workload and share any challenges.
Support the learning and development required.	Identify learning required.
Ask after the individuals wellbeing.	Take responsibility for own wellbeing.
Agree clear next steps.	Take notes of next steps.
Be open minded.	Be open minded.

The **progress review form** can be used on an ongoing basis to capture any progress being made against agreed objectives that is discussed. This will be helpful when it comes to the **June/July 1-2-1** each year which is used to capture annual progress and is then uploaded to the CDR (PS) Sharepoint site.

As part of the 1-2-1, give and receiving feedback to each other is key. For guidance on how to do this effectively see the separate **Guidance on Giving and Receiving Feedback**.

### 3. How to Wrap up the 1-2-1

Make sure to wrap up the talking points and if relevant, agree any actions to be carried out by the next meeting. Managers and direct reports should take notes so they can keep track of topics and add additional context on topics discussed so they can quickly review them, before the next 1-2-1.

#### Support resources available

To support effective 1 2 1's there a range of resources available:

- [Creating a personal development plan](#)
- [Wellbeing](#)
- [Learning and development available](#)
- [PS CDR Guidance](#)
- **Guidance on Giving and Receiving Feedback**

LSE Human Resources  
London School of Economics and Political Science  
Houghton Street  
London WC2A 2AE



Design: LSE Design Unit ([lse.ac.uk/designunit](https://lse.ac.uk/designunit)).