

Career Development Review (CDR) Guidance 2025/26

For New Academic Contract (NAC) & pre-NAC Academics, Research, Policy, Teaching and ECT staff (who are no longer on probation)

1. Introduction

The School expects that all staff, and particularly those in the early stages of their career, will receive good advice from their Head of Department (HOD)/Research Centre Director (RCD)/Institute Director (ID) or other senior colleagues on progressing their careers. While staff are expected to be proactive in managing their careers, the School has in place two approaches to structuring these conversations:

- a [Career Development Review](#) (CDR) scheme (this applies to all staff groups listed in section 3 below).
- a [Mentoring scheme](#) (this applies to early career staff as explained in guidance that is available [here](#)).

Mentors give informal, frequent advice, and provide a sounding board throughout the year, whereas formal CDR meetings take place annually for most staff and are normally conducted by the HOD/RCD/ID. This guidance has been written for the following staff groups, with additional notes for specific staff groups where applicable:

- New Academic Contract (NAC) & pre-NAC staff
- Research staff
- Policy staff
- Education Career Track (ECT) staff (who are no longer on probation) and Teaching staff

LSE Fellows should follow the CDR guidance and form available [here](#).

2. Purpose of CDR meetings

The CDR scheme reflects the School's commitment to ensuring that staff receive good advice in relation to their careers and their professional development. The principal purposes of CDR meetings are to:

- provide constructive advice to staff on the structuring and advancement of their careers across all career stages and on setting suitable aims given their career stage and interests, and on how to achieve them.
- allow for an open and constructive exchange of views, which includes both future plans as well as a review of past performance, contributions, achievements and experience, noting that the knowledge, skills and experience required to move successfully towards the next career stage or meet new career goals may not be the same as those required to achieve the staff member's current position.
- provide a space for reflection on further training and development needs in relation to longer-term career planning and discuss plans for research leave and grant applications where relevant.
- raise concerns about matters such as mentoring and work allocation. If it is not possible to raise this in the CDR meeting, this can also be confidentially communicated with the VCAC.
- provide an opportunity to raise any personal issues which may affect career planning such as parental leave and elder care, sickness and disability, all of which can be discussed sensitively. Human Resources can provide support and further guidance on this.
- where relevant, provide an opportunity to share information about a disability (where this has not already happened) and to discuss potential reasonable adjustments so that the individual is appropriately supported in their career development, or provide an opportunity to evaluate any existing adjustments in place.
- where relevant, discuss any plans the staff member may have for retirement. (LSE's retirement policy is [here](#).)

The CDR meeting is not intended to replace the regular meetings which should be taking place between staff and managers. Beyond the general points above, for specific career paths and stages, the following can be principal topics of discussion.

- **NAC staff:**
 - **Pre-Major Review staff:** Discuss the structuring of this academic career and the staff member's progress towards Interim and/or Major Review and what they need to pass them and to flag at an early stage issues of possible concern to the Promotions Committee.
 - **Post-Major Review staff who are not full Professors:** Provide constructive advice on the further development of their careers, specifically advice on working toward promotion to Associate Professor (for post-Major Review Lecturers and Assistant Professors) or to Professor (for Associate Professors). The meeting may concentrate on maintaining a focused research strategy leading to high-quality outputs (including, for promotion to Professor, world-leading outputs), on curriculum development and innovation, on improving teaching scores, on extending and developing

service to the department and the School, and on building a stronger external profile.

- Guidance on Interim Review, Major Review, and Promotion can be found [here](#).
 - **Professors (where requested by staff member or HoD):** Discuss recent and planned contributions to research, impact, teaching, and citizenship (in the School, profession, and wider society) and to provide constructive advice on which career aims are suited to their role, career stage, and interests.
- **Research and Policy staff:** The CDR process aims to give staff guidance on their professional trajectories, including guidance on promotions prospects. Where research and policy staff are contributing to teaching or undertaking administrative duties, such activities should be discussed and recorded on the CDR form. For staff currently on fixed-term appointments or open-ended contracts dependent on external funding, it is also an opportunity to discuss issues related to employment options at the LSE or elsewhere. The CDR should also draw attention to the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#).
 - **Education Career Track (ECT) staff and Teaching staff:** The CDR process aims to give ECT and teaching staff guidance on their professional trajectories and promotions prospects. The LSE EDEN Centre can work with staff on how to evaluate teaching via a mix of sources across the different areas of education captured in the CDR form. Note that the CDR guidance for ECT staff only applies to staff that have passed their probationary period. ECT staff on probation should follow the Education Probationary Review Scheme, available [here](#).

3. Who should have a CDR and how frequently?

The table below provides a summary of who is due a CDR and how frequently.

	NAC staff (& pre-NAC academics):	Research staff:	Policy staff:	Teaching Staff & Education Career Track Staff that are not on probation	LSE Fellows
Annual	All NAC & pre-NAC academic staff who are not full Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Officers - Research Fellows - Senior Research Fellows - Principal Research Fellows - Assistant Professorial Research Fellows - Associate Professorial Research Fellows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy Officers - Policy Fellows - Senior Policy Fellows - Distinguished Policy Fellows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Professors (Education) - Associate Professors (Education) - Course Tutors and other salaried staff of band 7 or higher who are engaged on teaching terms and conditions. (This excludes teaching staff within the Language Centre who will be covered by other appropriate CDR guidance) 	All LSE Fellows
Biennial	Professors in departments participating in the pilot of CDRs for Professors	Professors in departments participating in the pilot of CDRs for Professors	Professors in departments participating in the pilot of CDRs for Professors	Professors in departments participating in the pilot of CDRs for Professors	

Notes:

- CDRs are not standardly required for Professors (which for the purpose of this CDR Guidance includes Professors on the New Academic Career (NAC) and pre-NAC Professors, the New Research Staff Career (NRSC), the Education Career Track (ECT), and Professors in Practice). However, a meeting can take place upon their request or at the request of the HODs/RCDs/IDs. In departments participating in the pilot of biennial CDRs for Professors, the HOD will make such a request. In the case of Professors on the NRSC, the ECT, and of Professors in Practice, given the distinct nature of their roles and of related departmental needs, HoDs are encouraged to hold an annual or biennial review meeting. There is also an expectation on the part of the School that Professors on the ECT will be meeting regularly with the HODs/RCDs/IDs as they collaborate in leading on education in the department.
- Anyone not scheduled to have a CDR this year can request a CDR for themselves.
- Staff on any form of leave for most of the academic year (e.g., sabbatical leave, research leave, maternity leave) are not required to complete a CDR that session.
- Staff working 0.2 FTE or less should be offered a CDR but can choose to opt out.
- The following rules apply to academic staff who are due for review/promotion this session:
 - Staff who successfully pass Interim Review are required to have a CDR.
 - Staff who successfully pass Major Review with Promotion to Associate Professor this session can have their next CDR the next academic session.

4. Who should hold the CDR meeting?

The expectation is that CDR meetings are normally conducted by the HOD/RCD/ID. Particularly in large departments/centres/institutes, HODs/RCDs/IDs can delegate responsibility to their nominee (e.g. a senior Professor or Deputy HOD). HODs/RCDs/IDs are responsible for finding the person best placed to hold the CDR meeting, if not themselves.

- **NAC & pre-NAC academic staff:** the nominated reviewer must be sufficiently versed with the School's review and promotion guidelines to hold CDR meetings.
- **Research staff:** The mentor cannot hold the CDR meeting. Where the member of staff conducting the CDR is one of the Principal Investigators (PI) on a project the researcher being reviewed has worked on during the review period but there are other relevant projects, then they should involve the other PIs for the purposes of the CDR. Where the member of staff conducting the CDR is not one of the PIs on

projects the researcher being reviewed has worked on during the review period, then they should involve the PIs for the purposes of the CDR.

5. The process

Early in the academic year, HR will send departments/centres/institutes a list of staff who are due a CDR that session and provide a deadline for submission of the CDR form. The department should review the list and ensure that it is correct and inform HR of any changes. HODs/RCDs/IDs should then ensure that CDR meetings are scheduled and remember that the CDR can take place at any point in the year, ahead of the deadline. The next stages are as follows.

Stage 1 - The preparation by the member of staff of a self-evaluation statement for section A of the CDR form

The self-evaluation statement provides members of staff with the opportunity to write a concise summary of their performance, achievements, and contributions as well as on their progress toward meeting the criteria for upcoming reviews or promotions and on the fulfilment of their role and the realization of their key aims. Concerns about matters such as mentoring and work allocation can also be raised here. If it is not possible to raise this in the CDR meeting, this can also be confidentially communicated with the VCAC. Where relevant, this stage is also an opportunity for the individual on any additional measures (including reasonable adjustments) that can support them in their career development.

Inclusion of a CV

The CV submitted can be in any format though staff might find it helpful to use the School standard CV template, links provided below.

- [NAC](#) staff undergoing Interim or Major Review in the near future, or those wishing to be considered for promotion this academic year, are encouraged to use the School's standard CV template.
- [Research and policy staff](#)
- [ECT staff](#)

Stage 2 - A meeting with the Head of Department/Research Centre Director/Institute Director, or their delegate

The CDR meeting provides a space for reflection on performance and aims, including support and developmental needs in relation to longer-term career planning. The reviewer should ensure that the colleague under review is aware of the relevant criteria for review and promotion suitable for the staff member's next envisioned career stage, and the staff member's [role profile](#), alongside department/centre and School priorities. In addition, the reviewer should be prepared to discuss any additional needs (such as

reasonable adjustments) that the member of staff has identified on the CDR form, seeking further support and advice (e.g., from their HR Partner) as appropriate.

Stage 3 - The preparation by the HOD or their delegate of an evaluative statement for section B of the CDR form

After the meeting, the reviewer will fill in this section evaluating the performance, achievements, and contributions of the member of staff in relation to their role profile and their progress in meeting the criteria for review and promotion pertinent to their career path and stage. Where a member of staff being reviewed disagrees with the evaluation, they have the right for their disagreement to be noted in a supplementary document.

The reviewer will also provide constructive advice about the staff member's career goals and how these might be achieved, including where appropriate with further professional development/training as well as discussing employment options at LSE or elsewhere for those on fixed term contracts dependent on external funding. When considering training opportunities for departmental staff HOD/RCDs should consider, in particular, opportunities for staff from underrepresented backgrounds.

Stage 4 - The co-production of a summary of agreed action points in section C of the CDR form

The reviewer will produce a summary of mutually agreed upon action points arising from the meeting, which will be recorded in this section of the CDR form and mutually agreed.

Stage 5 – Signing off the form

The form and any attachments must be signed off by:

- the staff member being reviewed
- the reviewer
- the HOD/RCD/ID (if not the same as the reviewer).

The CDR and CV must then be forwarded to Human Resources by the deadline.

Throughout the CDR process, staff members and reviewers should be mindful of LSE's [Code of Practice on Free Speech](#), which outlines the responsibilities of LSE to protect and promote freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law for students, faculty, staff, and visiting speakers. It applies to all activities on LSE premises and those conducted in the name of the School or LSE Students' Union at any location. The Code confirms that LSE does not take formal positions on political or international issues but provides a platform for critical debate within the law, taking account of the various legislative requirements and the context provided by policies and procedures.

6. Training and support needs arising from the CDR

Individuals should take the lead in arranging any training or development activities identified, with the support of their manager.

A range of sessions are run by the LSE Eden Centre, Human Resources (HR), Research and Innovation, the Eden Centre and LSE Careers.

LSE Eden Centre

Staff have full access to all LSE Eden Centre provisions including [Atlas](#), its academic development programme. Research staff who are teaching are also welcome to undertake the [LSE's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education](#) and can request funding to attend external specialist training, subject to approval and signed support from their HOD/RCD/ID.

The LSE Eden Centre can work with teams to either provide or help fund bespoke development. For further information, contact Dr Claire Gordon at c.e.gordon@lse.ac.uk.

Research and Innovation Division

The Division provides advice on support for grant applications and opportunities for involvement in professional bodies, particularly for members of staff seeking to enhance their external profile. Research and Innovation supports academic staff in:

- winning research grants;
- the School's management of research and research-related engagement, innovation, and impact, and
- the School's research and research-related engagement and impact strategies, including as part of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

They also provide support throughout the lifecycle of the funded research project and offer sessions such as grant application and project management, team building and management, leadership, and research planning, in collaboration with HR. Further information is available [here](#). For further information, please contact research.innovation@lse.ac.uk.

Human Resources (HR)

A series of bespoke workshops for research staff are offered by the Organisational Learning team within HR. For further information contact the Organisational Learning team at HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk.

HR Partners can offer guidance and advice, including where the need for additional support has been identified during the CDR process (e.g., in case of a disability).

LSE Careers

Research staff can book individual, confidential discussions by either registering for an account and booking online or by emailing careers@lse.ac.uk.

For further information, please contact Catherine Reynolds at C.Reynolds1@lse.ac.uk.

7. Monitoring and Implementation

The VCAC, in conjunction with the Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development) (VPFD) and Human Resources, is responsible for oversight and implementation of the CDR scheme and for reporting on any issues to the relevant committees for example, the Promotions Committee, Research and Policy Staff Committee, Department Heads Forum and Appointments Committee.

The CDR form will normally be seen only by the member of staff, their reviewer and the HOD/RCD/ID (if not the same person as the reviewer), as well as, subject to the HODs/RCDs/IDs discretion, the Professoriate. The CDR form is also seen by HR, the VCAC for monitoring purposes and by the Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development) and Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) for Teaching and ECT staff, for supporting HODs in their work. The VCAC and VPFD will follow up with HODs/RCDs/IDs where additional steps need to be taken with regards to the content of particular reviews. With the staff member's permission, the form can be shared with their mentor.

If colleagues have concerns about confidentiality - e.g. in declaring a disability or any other personal information - they should flag this with their HR Partner and/or VCAC so protections can be put in place.

Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
Annual	01/06/2026	01/05/2026

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
2	25/11/2025	Version 2: VCAC and VPFD – 25 November 2025 Version 1: Appointments Committee – 12 June 2024	-

Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
HR	HR Reward Team	hr.cdr@lse.ac.uk	-

Communications and Training

Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	No
Will training needs arise from this policy	No
If Yes, please give details -	