

Personal Development Conversation

Line Manager's Guide



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It is important for managers to check in with their staff to ensure they are well supported and have an opportunity to reflect on their achievements over the past year. The Personal Development Conversation framework is designed to support staff by encouraging constructive conversations between an individual and their line manager, Head of Department or nominated colleague.

The conversation should provide a 'look back', capturing the achievements and contributions made during 2021/22; and a 'look forward' to 2022/23 to agree goals and any development or support required. At this time, it may be helpful to reflect on the particular successes or challenges experienced during the pandemic and hybrid working.

How to use this guide

Aim to have one-to-one conversations with each of your direct reports between 16 May and 29 July. The development conversation is designed to be supportive and open, so although the guide outlines four suggested areas for your conversation (along with some questions prompts if needed), please do flex and add to the conversation to reflect the experience and needs of your team.

An optional notetaking proforma is available should you wish to record notes. Each conversation is likely to take around an hour, although be flexible to meet different needs.

1.

Hybrid working review (where relevant) and optional wellbeing check-in

- Where relevant, discuss and acknowledge the working context and challenges of the past 12 months.
- As the University continues to transition to hybrid working, encourage colleagues to share any implications or feedback and discuss any questions they may have regarding hybrid working. All colleagues who work remotely will need to complete the Remote Working Assessment Form to ensure their working environment is safe and effective.
- Should the individual wish to, discuss their wellbeing, including wider work-life balance and working arrangements, and things that may affect this.
- Follow-up with relevant support services such as Wellbeing, HR, Occupational Health, etc. as appropriate.
- Useful resources available include staff wellbeing provision and the Employee Assistance Programme.
- You could ask: What is working well with hybrid working? Where and how could we improve? How have you found this year? What have been the challenges?



2.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Discuss how colleagues have contributed to increasing diversity and inclusion over the past year. Consider any learning they have attended or project/work they have been involved in.
- Discuss how colleagues can continue to contribute over the coming year.
- Let colleagues know that they are required to complete the new Moodle, [Warwick Principles and Social Inclusion](#), in ongoing support of the University's commitment to an inclusive community.



3.

Reflection on the past year's goals, achievements, contributions and development

- Thank colleagues for their efforts and achievements during the past year and take time to reflect on their positive contributions and successes.
- Reflecting on progress against key goals and work outputs from the last year enables you and your colleagues to talk about what went well, strengths and how to continue to perform well. Where work hasn't gone to plan, you can discuss what's happened, what steps are needed to correct any issues as well as what support might be needed.
- If no formal goals were set, consider the key pieces of work completed in the past year.
- Reflect on the impact and value of any development experienced during this period. Whilst we recognise that opportunities for formal development have been limited, consider the development that may have occurred as a result of reacting to change and undertaking different kinds of work and projects.
- Discuss any impact on probation and development/ progression.
- You could ask: What were the key pieces of work for you over the last year? What have been the biggest challenges/ successes? What development have you benefitted from?



4.

Future goals and development

- Begin to think about priorities for the next academic year, and consider the goals and priorities required for the next academic year, including any associated development.
- For each goal, consider the 'what' (desired achievements and contributions, and any interim milestones or objectives that will keep the goal on track), and the 'how' (expected ways of working relevant to the role/team/department).
- Consider how the goals set align to the University's strategy and values. It may be helpful to consider the outcomes and how will your colleagues know when a goal has been achieved - what will be the measures of success?
- Discuss the hybrid working statement and principles and implications for colleagues and any additional considerations, such as support or flexibility that may be required.





Further support and information for line managers

The [PDC Top Tips Moodle](#) micro e-learning course is designed to provide you with some core skills and tips in preparation for having development conversations.

Online drop-in slots with the Leadership and Management Development team are available for managers to support you with preparing for and holding development conversations.

Hybrid working

Ongoing support for managers is available via the [hybrid working webpages](#), which contain webinars, checklists and additional resources for line managers, covering the essential topics of communication, defining a smart working charter, and managing work activity.