

Making PDRs Inclusive

Social Inclusion



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Social Inclusion

Tap into the talent of your team by making PDRs inclusive

Setting the scene

- PDR aims to maintain and improve employees' contributions in line with our goals and values. It is important that every employee can discuss their achievements over the past 12 months and to set objectives for the next year. It is your responsibility to clear time in your schedule to facilitate these conversations.
- Inclusive PDR is simply ensuring that we assess performance and develop talent without bias.
- A helpful starting point is to review any agreed adjustments. These can offer valuable insight into what may be needed to make the review meeting accessible and supportive, and can also help shape fair and achievable objectives.
- It is anticipated that conversations around objectives, development, and career plans will take place on a regular basis throughout the year as part of good and normal working practice. The full PDR conversation should take place during the summer of each calendar year as a minimum requirement.
- Ensure employees have sufficient time to prepare for their PDRs and set clear expectations in advance. Schedule meetings during normal working hours, particularly for part time employees, to support fairness and accessibility.

Some key pointers:

- **Avoid surprises** – Managers should discuss and address any problems or issues as they arise and not leave concerns until the end of year PDR meeting.
- Where possible, use **objective evidence** to ensure reviewees are assessed fairly and transparently. Useful criteria may include:
 - Achievement against pre-defined objectives.
 - Quality of work delivered (e.g., accuracy, timeliness).
 - Demonstration of subject knowledge.
 - Evidence of continued professional development.
 - Contribution to strategic, team, or project goals.
- **Be alert to the potential for discrimination.** By actively considering the diversity of their teams, managers can ensure performance review arrangements are fair, consistent, and aligned with the requirements of the Equality Act. For example:
 - Reasonable adjustments must be provided where an employee with a disability may be disadvantaged by performance measures.
 - Flexible working arrangements should be taken into account to ensure expectations and objectives remain appropriate.
 - Religious observance, including regular prayer or requests for leave for faith based celebration, should not negatively influence performance assessment.
 - At Warwick we are committed to provide adjustments for a range of personal circumstances and needs. Where an employee identifies barriers affecting their performance or participation in the review process or their employment, managers should follow the adjustments process to determine how these can be addressed.

Using objective evidence supports consistency and helps reduce the influence of bias in judgement or decision making.



Preparing for the Conversation

- Be aware of the potential for bias. Stereotyping, assumptions, and both favourable and unfavourable expectations can influence judgement. By actively recognising these risks, managers can help ensure that all team members receive a fair and consistent review. This can be supported by:
 - Applying a consistent, objective set of criteria for all team members.
 - Seeking feedback from a range of stakeholders to provide broader perspective.
 - Providing regular feedback throughout the year to reduce the impact of isolated events on assessments.
 - Developing awareness of common biases that can affect decision making, including:
 - Affinity bias:** favouring individuals who appear similar or familiar.
 - Confirmation bias:** focusing only on evidence that confirms existing beliefs.
 - Halo bias:** allowing one positive attribute to influence the overall assessment.
 - Horns bias:** allowing one negative attribute to influence the overall assessment.
 - Stereotype bias:** relying on generalised assumptions about a group (e.g., that part time workers are less committed).
 - Contrast bias:** comparing one team member with another rather than assessing performance against their own objectives.
 - Recency bias:** giving disproportionate weight to recent events instead of considering performance across the whole review period.
- It is important to discuss learning and development opportunities, as well as future career aspirations, with all employees in a consistent manner, and avoid making assumptions about who may or may not be interested or capable.
- Mentoring and coaching are an important mechanism used to support people's development. Familiarise yourself with [development opportunities](#) and [talent development programmes](#) such as INspire, Accelerate, EmpowerUS, Aurora and others.
- Raise aspirations by building confidence and self-esteem. Focus on what has been delivered well and where have you witnessed the employee's strengths.
- Ensure any feedback for improvement is balanced, objective, observed, specific and timely. Set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) objectives for improvement and avoid using others in the team as a benchmark.

Unchecked bias can limit development and career progression opportunities for some individuals.

Setting Social Inclusion Objectives

Social Inclusion is a key pillar of our strategy, aligned to our value Thriving on Difference. You are invited to consider a social inclusion objective to help achieve and deliver our Strategy to increase diversity, support an inclusive culture where everyone can thrive and be a leading voice on inclusion.

You can contribute to increasing diversity by reflecting on any individuals or groups within your department or team who may not be thriving, succeeding, or fully represented. This insight may come from staff or student survey results, individual disclosures, people data, or challenges in attraction, recruitment and retention.

To embed an inclusive culture you could identify effective practice that you wish to adopt, or address areas where you or your team would benefit from further development.

Once you have identified where greater inclusion or support is needed, you can determine the outcomes you wish to achieve and translate these into clear, measurable objectives.

Some example objectives may include:

Increasing confidence discussing diversity and inclusion by:

- Join a network, departmental or faculty forum.
- Join the [Social Inclusion Staff Forum](#).
- Ensure you have completed all [Social Inclusion Micro learning](#).
- Attend an [event](#).
- Check out these [resources](#).
- Join WIHEA learning circles.

Supporting the creation of an inclusive culture by understanding how to address or challenge non-inclusive behaviours by:

- Inviting report and support team to come and talk to the team.
- Ensure that team members complete Social Inclusion micro learning and then facilitate a discussion with the team.
- Invite the social inclusion strategy team to come and [deliver training](#) to the team.

Increasing diversity in your team through staff development and recruitment:

- If you have access, review your staff profile in the People App to identify areas of under representation.
- Invite the relevant member of the [Social Inclusion Strategy team](#) to work with you to identify meaningful actions that can help increase diversity in your area.
- Consult the [Inclusive Recruitment Guide](#) for ideas on how you can be more inclusive in your recruitment process.



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Responding to survey data and feedback by promoting inclusive cultures.

If your employee engagement scores or any other data or evidence is telling you that people or students are not feeling like they belong, welcomed, or included then you might want to think about how you identify what is causing them to have this experience. You could consider the following actions:

- Look at your data to understand better what the key issues are.
- You could invite a member of the [Social Inclusion Strategy team](#) to work with you to identify issues and possible interventions.

Supporting Pay Gap Reductions by:

- Raising the issue in your faculty or departmental inclusion forum to identify what actions other groups are taking.
- Consulting the following action plans:
 - Departmental or Institutional Athena Swan.
 - Institutional race action plan.
 - Pay gap report.
- Join the [Social Inclusion Staff Forum](#) to hear updates and share best practice.

Contribute to departmental inclusive Education Plans to close awarding gaps.

If you have significant awarding gaps, and you want to understand what is causing them and the action you could take to address the issues:

- Consult the departmental action plan for planned interventions.
- Work with [Inclusive Education](#) and [Social Inclusion Strategy Teams](#) for more information for established interventions and actions and support with next steps.
- Take part in WIHEA workshops for further information and guidance.

Ensuring we identify and remove barriers to success by:

- Reviewing the resources and guidance available on the [Social Inclusion Pages](#) in particular the [adjustments guidance](#).
- Work with the People Team to ensure you are following the correct adjustments process for staff.
- Work with the Disability Team in Wellbeing for students.
- Work with the Social Inclusion Strategy Team to understand potential barriers faced by staff and students and how we can support them.





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