**Supplementary notes for PDR reviewers for Research Staff.**

Below is some supplementary information for PDR reviewers, on the context for the review.

The PDR Meeting is intended to allow for an open and constructive conversation, which as well as taking into account future plans enables a review of past performance, achievements and experience. Personal development review (PDR) can be particularly useful to research staff because many are on fixed-term contracts and need to compete in a tough market for jobs. To facilitate wider discussion around career development rather than specific research project-related goals, the PDR for research staff will be undertaken by an academic who is not the PI on the research project.

The PDR process for research staff is separate from the mentoring scheme that is also available through the PERCAT scheme. There is no expectation that a reviewee will be seeing you on a regular basis (this is a role for a mentor). Mentors give informal and frequent advice and provide a listening ear throughout the year, whereas formal career development meetings take place annually.

All research staff are allowed 2 hours a week for personal career development and so a useful discussion for the PDR might be around how the reviewee is using that time to develop his/her career. This time could be spent flexibly e.g. could involve having a day a month for paper writing from previous posts for example or writing papers/grants/developing own pilot studies or undertaking teaching duties.

In terms of **tone**, the PDR process should be seen as an opportunity to view a person’s work “in the round”, but keeping these in the broader context of personal development, including planning an academic career over the medium term. **It is important to acknowledge and celebrate successes as well as develop realistic forward looking plans that will help reviewees meet their own objectives.** PDR reviewers should think explicitly about assumptions and stereotypes that may affect these meetings, bearing in mind that we are all at risk of implicit bias.

**Information.**

Everyone should submit an up to date CV as part of their PDR.

Everyone should submit their PDR form as per instructions at end of form.

**Background information for the different sections**

**Career planning**

Some research staff will wish to continue with an academic career but others will not and so it is useful to have open decision about future aspirations and next steps. Regardless of the choice of career direction, research staff should be proactive and continue to develop their competencies

**Support and training**

There are a variety of training courses and opportunities for development and relevant work experience within the University of which researchers should be aware. Directing reviewees to the PERCAT web site if they have not visited it is a good start. The School also offers opportunities for researchers to gain experience in teaching should they wish. There could be a discussion around contacting module leads of courses for which the reviewee may be able to guest lecture or contacting the head of the UG programme to offer to supervise UG project students. All these activities should be discussed with PI.

**Progress with research project**

This section provide researchers with an opportunity to reflect on progress with their research project and identify things are are going well as well as things that might be improved. Note that this is not intended to be a full discussion of progress on the project, which will be conducted in regular meetings with the PI, but a chance for independent reflection.

**Publications**

Some discussion around current papers is appropriate, as is discussion of how to boost chances of future papers being as high-impact as possible. This should be balanced with consideration of what is necessary for promotion and for reputation in one’s field, which would typically include publishing a broader body of work, not all in top journals.

**Impact activities and business engagement and outreach**

Impact activities and outreach are an important part of research projects and can be valuable in gaining wider CV experience Useful discussion can be had around engagement with public communication of science activities, engagement with schools and potential for secondments with industry etc. However, it is also possible that a reviewee may over commit to these activities. Reviewers aren’t expected to know the perfect balance – but encourage the reviewee to reflect on this.

**Leadership and supervisory and activities**

There are different ways in which researchers can gain leadership experience – a good resource is on the Vitae web site which provides online information, advice and resources for higher education institutions and researchers on professional development and careers. The University of Birmingham is a registered member of Vitae, and you can register using your university email to gain full access to the website

**External, professional and other activities**

Professional activities are important for career development as well as providing opportunities for “learning on the job”. There are a variety of options available and researchers can be proactive in asking for experience e.g. volunteering to perform reviews for journals and serve on committees.

**Networking and International Activity**

Internationalisation is a key strand of the University’s Strategic Framework. The PDR offers an opportunity to discuss how staff may develop their own and the University’s ambitions on internationalisation. There could be some useful discussion around collaboration with international colleagues and visibility of research (attendance at major conferences, organising international conferences at UoB) as well as building networks for future career opportunities. A high proportion of research staff working in higher education report having gained their current job through their networks. Note that the School provides some funding to support RS to present at conferences. It is also useful to point out that there are additional sources of funding available for RS including Brain Travel awards and Experimental Psychology Society Grindley grants (for those in first 2 years of postdoc)

*Objective setting*

Bearing in mind that they will be evaluated at the next PDR, objectives should be **a mutually agreed and specific but realistic reflection of the earlier discussion and should be within the control of the reviewee i.e. submitting high quality grants and papers rather than securing funding/publications**. Where appropriate they should include dates (e.g., grant submission deadline). If discussion reveals that the PDR-ee might benefit from meeting again to discuss progress against these objectives it is appropriate to highlight the mentoring programme run through PERCAT.

**Finishing**

There is just the one form, which should be amended by the PDR reviewer during or after the meeting. Agreed objectives should be placed in BOLD. The comments box should be used by the PDR reviewer to identify salient points for consideration by Head of School and/or for future PDR meetings. The final form should be agreed with the PDR-ee, and a copy emailed to HoS PA.

**Some information and links relevant to PDR discussions**

University [Performance & Development Review process](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/humanresources/staff/all/pay/pdr/pdrprocess/) <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/employment/pdr/index.aspx>

**PERCAT**

Postdoctoral and Early Researcher Career Development and Training provides a gateway to resources and support available at the University of Birmingham for career development and training for postdoctoral and early career researchers. PERCAT organises career development events, training and development programmes, and mentoring (separate to your PDR process). Early Career researchers are strongly advised to explore the opportunities offered by PERCAT.

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/les/college-services/percat/index.aspx>

**Vitae**

[**https://www.vitae.ac.uk/**](https://www.vitae.ac.uk/)

**Promotions guidance**

[**https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/benefits/progression/Academic-promotions.aspx**](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/benefits/progression/Academic-promotions.aspx)

**Leadership programmes:**

*Internal HR/POD courses:*

For Senior Lecturers and Readers: Emerging leaders programme

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/development/index.aspx>

*External:*

Aurora leadership programme – a women-only leadership development programme. Attendance financed by POD.

<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/programmes-events/programmes/women-only/aurora/index.cfm>

**Other personal development HR/POD courses:**

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/les/college-services/percat/Training-and-Development.aspx>

Of particular relevance for helping people pursue their individual goals more effectively are:

Assertiveness, Time management, Confidence building, Mentoring, Handling challenging conversations, Career development. They also offer coaching to support individuals.

**Flexibility and family friendly working** <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/collaboration/equality/staff/flexibility-and-family-friendly/index.aspx>

**Equality and diversity information**

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/about/equality/index.aspx>