The PI Guide to PDR

Oxford Learning Institute August 2013
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INTRODUCTION

Personal Development Review (PDR) provides a simple but powerful framework for managing the performance and development of your research staff.

PDR also helps fulfil the requirements set out in the Concordat agreed between the UK’s major funders and the employers of researchers regarding the development of research staff. The Concordat sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers (i.e. PIs), employers and funders. It aims to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK and, as a result, improve the quantity, quality and impact of research for the benefit of UK society and the economy.

The research councils and other major funders are committed to the Concordat, and actively seek evidence that it is being implemented not only at organisational level, but also at research group level. Applications for funding, and reports to funders, now often have an element dealing directly with researcher development and how this will take place during the life of the funding. At Oxford, we state our commitment to the Concordat through our Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff¹, (available online).

There are, however, some points of divergence between the guidance accompanying the Code of Practice regarding reviews and the typical departmental arrangements for PDR, and these are addressed in this document.

PDR also helps departments meet the requirements of the Athena-SWAN recognition scheme in that it provides a framework for, and evidence of, support for research staff to reach their full potential.

Your staff should receive two types of review during their time with you: probationary reviews (during probation) and PDR. It therefore makes sense to discuss both types of review and to see them as lying on a continuum, and that is the approach adopted in this booklet.

The booklet sets out a series of steps to follow, rather than a debate of alternatives and variations, providing easy-to-follow checklists and guiding principles rather than underlying theory or skills. Support is available via the Learning Institute if you wish to develop your skills, such as giving and receiving feedback or writing objectives.

¹ This will be referred to as the Code of Practice in this booklet. To read the Code of Practice, go to: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/rxemp-career/rscop/
WHAT IS PDR?

PDR is the University’s appraisal process for non-academic staff. Academic staff members have their own appraisal system, though academics who also manage staff often participate in PDR as a means of supporting and promoting their own development.

Basically, PDR:

- Reviews achievement of, or progress against, agreed objectives and development goals and summarises the reviewee’s (i.e. the person under review) achievements since the last review.
- Agrees clear objectives and clarifies expectations so that reviewees know exactly what they should focus on and what you see as important.
- Identifies any development needed to enable reviewees to do their jobs to the agreed standards and to develop capabilities needed by you or by them in the context of becoming a rounded and capable researchers.

Typically, PDR consists of an annual review supported by in-year, one-to-one meetings to discuss progress. As such, it mirrors what many successful PIs probably already do with their research staff – talk to them regularly about how things are going, ways to be more effective and so on. So why do PDR if it simply mimics what PIs who are good with staff do anyway? Two reasons:

- PDR provides a structure that enables busy PIs to remember to do fundamentally important things such as talking to staff about their performance and development;
- PDR provides a template that new, less experienced or just less ‘good with staff’ PIs can use to ensure their staff members are productive and that they develop the skills and abilities needed to be a successful researcher.

PDR is important both for research staff and for you as a PI. If done well, PDR can help you to:

- Identify gaps in your research staff’s skills and experience;
- Identify any obstacles to good performance and agree ways to remove or reduce the impact of these, so enabling your group to achieve more;
- Ensure your staff develop to be more capable researchers, which benefits you, your research, the member of staff and the University as a whole;
- Align research staff roles and responsibilities with your group’s priorities and work, and ensure everyone has a shared understanding of what you and your team is trying to achieve and what their role is in this;
• Clarify expectations – unclear expectations are often a cause of the kind of dissatisfaction and petty grumblings that can undermine the work of a research team;
• Get to know your staff better, including what motivates them, their goals and their anxieties.
• Provide a track record and exemplars for funders, who are increasingly interested in what PIs do to develop capable researchers and who are keen to have proof of this taking place.
• Leave a lasting legacy in the form of well-trained and capable researchers.

Potentially, PDR is beneficial to all parties, providing it is done well.

Note that PDR does not cover students, so any graduate students who are part of your research group as a student will not have a PDR as such, but the principles and the process of PDR could be as useful with students as with staff, as in both instances you are looking at performance and development.
PDR IN CONTEXT

Within the context of their work 'lifecycle' all staff typically undergo two types of review: Probationary Reviews, and PDR reviews. These are similar, but, technically, PDR takes place only when the person is confirmed in post. Until then, their reviews are Probationary Reviews. All reviews, however, look back to the time when objectives were last agreed and then forward to the next review, and this process is equally applicable to probationary reviews. The first probationary review, which should occur at the mid-point of the probationary period, will look back at the expectations and priorities identified at induction and then forward to the final probationary review (which should be held a month or so before the end of the probationary period).

Similarly, the first PDR review look back to any objectives agreed at the final Probationary Review, assuming the person is retained beyond the probationary period.

There is, in effect, a continuous line of reviews that starts with the setting out of expectations at induction and ends with the last PDR before the end of the contract.

Because many, probably, all, of your research staff will be on fixed-term contracts, this 'line of reviews' will be relatively short, so it makes sense to set PDR in the context of this sequence of reviews and to provide some guidance on induction and probation as well as on PDRs in their true sense (i.e., after confirmation in post).

Also, although the Code of Practice states that research staff should be included in departmental arrangements for PDR, departmental arrangements are almost always based on an annual review, which means that some research staff on short-term contracts might have only one or two PDRs, which would be a wholly inadequate approach to developing them.

So, let us explore the timing issue so you can decide what works best for you and your research staff.

Typically, departmental PDRs have a yearly cycle, with the main review taking place annually. At each review meeting, the reviewer (usually the PI, but in larger research groups it could be the person designated as the line manager or supervisor) and the reviewee (the member of staff) look back over the preceding 12 months and then forward to the 12 months to come, as illustrated below:
For a researcher on a fixed-term contract this annual cycle is much less useful than it is for permanent staff. To make it work, we need to look at four, somewhat overlapping, sets of requirements in order to find a sensible pattern of reviews. These requirements are linked to:

1. Induction;
2. Probation;
3. The Code of Practice guidelines;
4. PDR.

**Induction**

Induction starts the process of reviews by making clear what your expectations are, how things are done in your team, what the new member of staff’s priorities should be in the first half of their probationary term, and how they will be evaluated with regard to their probationary period. In effect, induction produces the first set of criteria against which both you and they can carry out an evaluation at a mid-point probationary review (e.g., at six months for a one year probationary period, or at the three-month point for a six month probationary period).

**Probation**

In the probationary period, the reviews are Probationary Reviews rather than PDR reviews. These, however, are almost indistinguishable from PDR reviews other than they have the added, ultimate purpose of helping you make a summative judgement on whether or not to confirm the person in role.

You should have at least two review points during probation: one at the mid-point of the probationary period; the other at least a month before the end of probation.

These reviews, and your observations and discussions with the new member of staff as part of their on-going work, will help you make your decision on whether or not to confirm them in the role. The probationary reviews also provide the
opportunity to look at their development needs and to agree their key objectives until their next review (assuming you confirm them in post).

Once out of the probationary period, their reviews then become PDR reviews, but their development is also shaped by the requirements of the University’s Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff.

Code of Practice guidance

The Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff states that researchers should be included in departmental arrangements for PDR, and departments usually have an annual cycle for their PDRs. However, the Code does not say, ‘researchers must have a PDR only once a year’; in essence, the Code of Practice is saying researchers should always have PDRs if the department has them. They can, of course, have them regardless of this as PDRs are one of the most effective way of shaping performance and contribution.

The guidance notes that accompany the Code of Practice state that, at a minimum, researchers should have a review not long after starting (i.e. in the probationary period) and then regular reviews during their contract, one of which should take place around nine months before the due end date of the contract. This final review allows those on fixed-term contracts time to identify and address any areas of weakness that might affect their employability either with you or elsewhere.

PDR

Once the probationary period is past, PDRs become the main framework for staff development and performance, but, as we have already discussed, annual reviews may not work well for contract research staff. For example, someone on a three year contract may only get two PDRs, as the illustration below shows.

Timings of researcher reviews using suitable intervals between probationary review and final PDR, based on a three-year contract.
In the illustrated example, the researcher would have two probationary reviews and two PDRs over the three-year period, depending on the timing of the departmental PDR.

A researcher on a two-year contract, however, might end up having only one PDR.

Neither feels right. Because of this, some PIs opt to carry out mid-point mini-reviews, so that, effectively, a discussion is held every six months or so.

A six-monthly review pattern would produce the timings below.

Timing of researcher PDR based on six month cycle for a three-year contract.

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This satisfies the needs of the department and of the Code of Practice, and, most importantly, the needs of contract research staff.
HOW TO CARRY OUT REVIEWS

Probationary reviews and PDRs are very alike, so PDR provides a good model for Probationary reviews, on which there is generally less guidance other than on timing and outcomes.

Reviews basically have three stages:

1. Planning
2. The review meeting
3. Follow-up

All reviews follow this pattern, so let’s look at what each stage involves.

Step 1: Planning for the review meeting

A principle of PDR is that staff should self-evaluate before each review meeting, thinking about:

1. What has gone well/less well against their main tasks and objectives;
2. What, if any, obstacles got in the way and how these might be removed/overcome.
3. What their objectives might be for the period between this review and the next.
4. What areas they need to develop to be successful in their current research and to be successful in their career.

Your role at the planning stage is to give some thought to the same questions. Departmental PDRs often use a planning form, usually known as Form A. A typical example can be seen in the appendix. (This example may differ from your department’s forms.) The planning form helps the reviewee to reflect on the period since the last review (or since their start date) and to plan for the period until the next review. This reflection is important and adds to the ability of the researcher to monitor and shape their own performance, a priceless personal capability to have in your researchers.

The PDR paperwork of most departments sets out the key areas to cover during the planning stage and during the review meeting, and often include forms for each of these (Forms A and Form B – see Appendixes 1 and 2). Some departments also have a Form C, which is used to notify the administrator that the review has taken place (see Appendix 3). Departments that have a preponderance of research staff, however, sometimes tailor their forms to cover the headline areas of achievement typical for researchers, such as Teaching., Conferences, Papers Published etc, but these are simply a sub-set of the ‘Key Activities’ section that the majority of departments have on their forms. Although useful as reminders, there is a danger that focusing on these headline activities might mask the skills and
experiences that underpin success as a researcher. To ensure that some thought is given to these, encourage your staff to look at the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) on the Vitae website (www.vitae.ac.uk). Vitae is the national body for the development of researchers (including PIs) and has produced a comprehensive breakdown of the key areas that researchers might seek to develop over the early years of their career.

You might find it useful to look at this framework yourself, but you should certainly encourage your research staff to use it as part of their planning and reflection.

It is a good idea for the reviewee to send you their planning form before the review meeting so you know what they want to discuss and can add anything to this that you want to discuss. You can then send the amended form back to the reviewee, or mention your proposed additions, so that you both now know what will be covered in the meeting and there are no surprises in store at the meeting.

This ‘principle of no surprises’ is important as it enables the meeting to be a review rather than a debate about new issues. Whether or not you send a planning form back and forth is up to you and your department, but the principle of no surprises is a good one to abide by as new ‘issues’ can hijack the discussion and take it in entirely the wrong direction.

Any ‘issues’ should have been dealt with as and when they arose during the preceding months. PDR is not the place to raise new performance issues, for example, or for reviewees to come to you with new gripes about equipment, money, time or whatever. It is definitely the place to summarise any issues that have arisen and to remind each other of what has been agreed with regard to these, but it is not the place to raise them.

2. The review discussion

The review usually starts with the reviewee giving their thoughts on the period since the last review. The important thing is that this is their meeting, about them, so encourage them to talk, to give their views and to reflect.

You should take brief notes as a reminder of the meeting, but these can be very concise, covering the key points discussed and agreed. Typically, the manager completes a record of the review discussion afterwards and the reviewee signs it. It is then held on the reviewee’s file (with the reviewee keeping a copy so they can remind themselves of the objectives agreed).

After the initial thoughts of the reviewee, the review then starts to focus on answering the key questions associated with ‘looking back’ and ‘looking ahead’:

Looking back: a summary of the period since the last review (or since induction) – what has gone well/less well; what were the main activities; were there any obstacles and how can these be overcome; were there any changes from the job
descriptions or unexpected aspects to the work; did any development needs emerge from this period?

**Looking ahead** to the next period: what are the important things to focus on; are there any anticipated challenges or changes; what objectives should the reviewee strive to achieve; what help/support might they need; what development needs emerge from the challenges ahead and the aspirations and skill gaps of the individual; how can these be met, and what support might be needed?

### 3. Follow up

This is the key stage. All of the reflection, planning and discussion will count for little if there is no on-going discussion and support.

During the period between reviews, you should carry out regular, short, one-to-one meetings to check that all is well, and to adjust plans if necessary, to give recognition for achievement and to deal with any performance that is not up to standard. These short meetings are the key to getting the best performance out of your staff and to preventing problems arising or festering. They need take no more than 5-10 min at most, and will repay you many times over in the time you will save not having to sort out problems and issues that you were unaware of. If there is such a thing as a ‘secret of effective management’ it is this; sit down with your individual members of staff regularly and ask them how things are going. Give them feedback, check progress against objectives, adjust plans, give encouragement and pick up on any under-performance as part of these one-to-ones and you will reap the rewards in enhanced morale, better engagement, greater achievement and better research.

Appendix 4 sets out an overview of the typical process for reviews. Bear in mind that your department’s process may vary slightly from this.
1. PROBATIONARY REVIEWS

SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE PROBATIONARY REVIEWS: INDUCTION

The review at the mid-point of the probationary period looks back over the first half of the period and then forward over the remainder of the probationary period. It evaluates how well the individual is settling in and how well they are moving from initial adjustment to being productive. The important thing is that the new starter should know what is expected of them, what their priorities are, and something about 'how things are done around here' as a result of effective induction, which would typically include induction to:

- Oxford (both the locale and the University);
- The department;
- Your team/group;
- The role they will carry out;
- You (and in particular, to your expectations and preferred way of working).

To explore expectations, you might find it useful to adapt the Expectations exercises that can be found on the Learning Institute website at:

http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/oxfordlearninginstitute/documents/overview/rsv/ExpectationsinSupervision.pdf

http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/oxfordlearninginstitute/documents/overview/rsv/Clarifying_Expectations.pdf

Very importantly, induction should cover all the legal compliance aspects relevant to a new starter, including health and safety. As with most inductions, a lot of the information will not sink in first time around, so give it time. In particular, ensure they understand how you see their role and that they know your expectations of them, including what they should focus on and what they should seek to accomplish over the probationary period. Your mid-point probationary review of them will then be able to look back at how they've settled in, and forward to what they can seek to achieve during the rest of their probationary period.

The Code of Practice guidance suggests you encourage new researchers to use the checklist on the following page to help them during their induction, and that you use the checklist on the page that follows that to guide your thinking.
THE INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR NEW RESEARCH STAFF TO USE

1. What do I want to get out of this experience as a researcher at Oxford?

2. Where do I see myself being in five or ten years' time? What are the implications of that for my career and professional development while I'm here? What opportunities do I need to look for?

3. Do I understand the terms of my contract, including the fixed-term nature of it?

4. Have I seen a copy of the University's Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff?

5. Have I looked at the staff handbook on the website?

6. Have I completed my initial induction? Do I know what induction procedures there are in the department/group? What have I been sent or given? What do I need to know about? Who shall I ask? (My supervisor? The departmental administrator? A colleague?)

7. Do I know about research and publication protocols and codes of practice in my group and department, and in the University generally? Do I know what training is available from the University on research integrity?

8. How clear am I about what is expected of me in this project?

9. Do I know what the Careers Service offers specifically for researchers?

10. Do I know what the Oxford Learning Institute and my division offer (e.g. induction seminars, seminars on teaching)?

11. Do I know what the University and College Union offers for research staff?
THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/RESEARCH LEADER CHECKLIST FOR INDUCTING STAFF

1. What departmental induction processes are in place for me to draw on?
2. Have I clarified the job description and my expectations of the researcher’s ‘output’?
3. Have I provided a copy of the research proposal, including the deliverables against which our progress will be assessed?
4. Have I explained that the contract is a fixed-term one and clarified the implications of this with the researcher?
5. What degree of freedom does the researcher have in pursuing the research objectives? Has this been discussed?
6. Is the researcher aware of the relevant standards and policies on research integrity, and have they agreed to observe these?
7. How clear is the researcher about laboratory procedure and practice (where appropriate)?
8. Have I explained the protocols for publication (authorships, favoured publication methods)?
9. Does the researcher know what resources are available – and, if not, do they know how to find out – in terms of library, computing, laboratory facilities and materials, and technical assistance?
10. Is the researcher from overseas? Do they need information or support regarding accommodation, bank accounts, signing on with a doctor, getting a national insurance number, etc.? Do they need support with English language development, and if so have I given them information about the University’s Language Centre?
11. What other information does the researcher need (e.g. about university induction events, or the University’s Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff)? Have they received this information?
12. What teaching opportunities and/or obligations are there for the researcher and have I communicated these?
13. What opportunities have I offered for the researcher to explain their own needs and aspirations, and to bring out any skills they may have that could contribute to the project or more widely to the group or department?
THE MID-POINT PROBATIONARY REVIEW

The probationary period for research staff can vary greatly, from 3 to 12 months, so the mid-point will vary accordingly. If induction has been well thought out, by the mid-point of the probationary period, you will have a feel for how well the individual is adapting to you, to the work and to others in the team. The aim of the mid-point review is to see how well the individual has settled in and to provide feedback that will help them successfully complete their probationary period.

As part of induction, you should have covered your expectations and priorities, so they know what they will be judged against. The mid-point probationary review therefore looks back at what has gone well/less well since induction; what expectations have/have not been met; any obstacles to achievement and how these can be overcome; what their objectives could and should be over the next few months; any support or development they need to help them succeed.

By this stage, you will probably have some idea of their potential strengths and weaknesses, and you may have some idea of their goals and aspirations from the interview and from early discussions. This provides a start point for discussing possible development opportunities during the time you employ them.

Much of their focus at this stage will be on their specific role and on passing the probation period successfully, which is as it should be, but you should encourage them to familiarise themselves with the opportunities available for development at Oxford and beyond, so that they can come to you with suggestions and can take some responsibility for their own development. This familiarisation will not happen overnight. At first, they will have a lot to occupy their thoughts and time, but you might want to make them aware of:

- Any departmental training and development opportunities;
- Any relevant provision shown on the Divisional website (this varies from Division to Division);
- Courses on the websites of Research Services, IT Services, OLI and the Language Centre;
- The Vitae website (vitae.com), and, in particular, the Researcher Development Framework, which might help them identify specific needs.
- The support you can give (e.g., any coaching that you or a colleague can give).
- Other opportunities, such as conferences, the possibility of contributing to publications and so on;
- Any other opportunities you have come across that might be relevant.

There is also a regular Welcome Event for research staff, organised by the Learning Institute, which will help them get a feel for the career and development support available at Oxford. (Search the Learning Institute website for this.)
THE FINAL PROBATIONARY REVIEW

This should happen at least one month before the end of the probationary period as one of the questions you will seek to answer is, *Am I satisfied that this is the right person for this role?* If you are unsure, or if your conclusion is *No*, then you should consult immediately with your Department Administrator or Personnel support person. There are two possible actions you can take as the result of this review:

1. Not confirm the person in post (which could consist of either extending their probationary period or ending their contract).
2. Confirm the person in post, which is usually done via your Administrator or Personnel person.

If the individual is retained, the final probationary review will look back at the probationary period and ahead to the period until the next review point. As such, this review follows the pattern already described though it is technically not a PDR.

Some PIs choose to carry out a short probationary review that simply deals with the issue of retention or non-retention and then hold a PDR review once the person has been confirmed in post in order to set objectives and priorities for the period until the next review.
2. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

PDR DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE CONTRACT PERIOD

Once the probationary period has been successfully completed, reviews become Personal Development Reviews and follow the format already described. The timing will depend on your departmental arrangements and on what best meets your needs and the needs of the individual but, as we pointed out earlier, the timing can be adjusted to provide a better framework for contract researchers.

You should use the forms developed by your department, but you may wish to adapt the questions to suit the situation and the individual (e.g., do you want to break down any discussion of key activities into areas such as Teaching, Conferences, Publications even if your department forms do not do this, or do you want to base any detailed discussion on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework?)

The Code of Practice suggests that during the body of the contract period, research staff should regularly ask themselves the questions on the next page, and that you, as the PI, ask yourself the questions on the page after that.

These questions, though useful and highly relevant, are overarching questions and each review will still need to work through the 'looking back' and 'looking forward' questions of the review process in order to be precise about what has gone well/less well, and about any development needed.
QUESTIONS RESEARCH STAFF SHOULD ASK OF THEMSELVES DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE CONTRACT

1. How is my work progressing? Have I asked for feedback from my supervisor or from colleagues? What am I doing well? What could I improve? How am I working on these?

2. How well am I attending to my career? What opportunities have I taken (e.g. conferences, publications, grant applications, teaching, training events and networking)?

3. How well am I attending to my personal development? Have I had a personal development review meeting?

4. What are my achievements? What are my goals? How do I see my future beyond the end of this contract? What action am I taking towards this?

5. Have I registered with the Careers Service for Researchers?
QUESTIONS PIs SHOULD ASK OF THEMSELVES DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE CONTRACT

1. How is the researcher’s work progressing? What are they doing well? What could they improve? How am I communicating my views on these? Am I making my expectations clear?

2. How is the researcher attending to their own professional development? What opportunities and encouragement am I offering for them to do so (e.g., conferences, publications, grant applications, college attachments, teaching, committee membership, training events)?

3. How does the researcher see their future beyond the end of this contract? What action are they taking?

4. Is the researcher aware of the support available from the University Careers Service, the Oxford Learning Institute and divisional research training teams; are they aware of the ‘job opportunities’ page of the University’s website?
THE FINAL PDR BEFORE THE END OF THE CONTRACT

The final PDR should take place some 6-9 months before the end of the contract period even if the intention and likelihood is renewal of the individual’s contract, as this enables them to address any development needs that might help them either to retain their current role or to seek a new role.

At this stage, in addition to the questions that form the basis of the PDR, the Code of Practice suggests that the individual should ask the questions shown on the next page, and the PI reflect on the questions on the page after that.
QUESTIONS RESEARCH STAFF SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES IN THE LAST THIRD OF THEIR CONTRACT PERIOD

1. Have I familiarised myself with university procedures relating to the expiry of fixed term contracts?

2. What are the prospects for my continuing employment on this (or a different) project? (Do I want to stay?)

3. What discussions have I had with my supervisor about this? What communication have I had with my departmental administrator? What action am I taking to secure the job that I want when this one finishes?

4. Where else can I get advice and support? In particular, have I checked what advice for researchers is available to me from the Careers Service or from divisional resources?
QUESTIONS PIs SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES DURING THE LAST PART OF THE CONTRACT PERIOD

1. What are my expectations regarding output at this stage?

2. What are the prospects for the researcher’s continuing employment on this (or a different) project? What discussions have I had with the researcher about this? What communication have I had with my departmental administrator?

3. Have I made the researcher aware of university procedures relating to the expiry of fixed term contracts?

4. Have I reminded the researcher of the Careers Advice available from the Careers Service (if appropriate) as their current contract enters the final phase, and indicated options for additional support available through the divisions?
WHAT IS ‘DEVELOPMENT’?

By ‘development’ we mean any growth in skills, knowledge or understanding that leads to the researcher becoming more capable within their current setting or within the field of research as a whole.

The Code of Practice says we will promote both ‘personal and career development’.

In effect, our promise to funders is that we will be aware of what individual researchers see as their goals and that we will support them in achieving these, as far as is practicable. This calls for some common sense. What are the goals? What options are there to support the development needed to achieve these goals? What are the resources available? There are always boundaries, but the existence of limits should not encourage a default position of ‘that is too much trouble’. You need to explore, with each individual, what can be done and, where resources do not allow some needs to be met, explain why and explore alternatives.

Bear in mind that ‘development’ takes many forms. Only a small percentage of development occurs through formal training courses; most development happens in the workplace by doing the work, by being coached, or by observing others. In an academic research context, development will also include things such as networking at conferences, critiquing papers, receiving guidance on contributing to papers, giving presentations to other researchers, attending meetings of various bodies, explaining research to non-specialists or schools, or even getting involved in discussions with colleagues. It could also include mentoring from you or from others, shadowing someone to see how they work, or searching the internet for information. Development can take many forms.

Always encourage your researchers to find out what the options are so that if they come to you seeking development, they have some ideas on how that development might be best achieved.

Encourage them to use the Researcher Development Framework (see www.vitae.com) to help them identify underlying skills and abilities that underpin being a professional and capable researcher.
APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE ‘FORM A’

To be completed by the individual reviewee and passed to the reviewer at least 5 working days before the review meeting.

1. A summary of your main achievements in relation to your aims, objectives and development plans for the review period (or in the last 12 months) and any significant changes in your responsibilities since the last review.

2. A summary of any factors affecting achievement of your aims and objectives or your contribution to the work of the department over the review period.
3. What would you like to achieve in the coming year against each of your main job areas? Do you have any personal work or career goals you would like to achieve during this time?

4. Any training or other support that you will need to assist you in achieving the key goals you have for the coming year.
APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE ‘FORM B’

Summary of discussion - to be completed by the reviewer following the meeting.

1. Significant achievements since the last review.

2. Aims and objectives not achieved, any factors that have affected the achievement of objectives and, if appropriate, actions agreed to reduce the impact of such factors in future.
3. Objectives agreed for the coming review period – these should address all major elements of the reviewee’s responsibilities and areas for development including training opportunities identified.

4. Any actions that may be required within the department/division (or elsewhere) to enable aims and objectives to be achieved.

Signed (reviewer): __________________________         Date: __________

Signed (reviewee): __________________________     Date: __________
### APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE ‘FORM C’

**NOTIFICATION OF PDR AND SUMMARY OF TRAINING NEEDS**

Date of the PDR review:  
Name of reviewee: Job title:  
Name of reviewer: Job title:  
Date of last PDR: Date for next PDR:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Requests</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Personal</th>
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Reviewee’s signature: Date:  
Reviewer’s signature: Date:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION:</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed form received by HR co-ordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of completed Form B sent to reviewee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Original or completed paperwork placed in confidential file for PDR records of scheme co-ordinator</td>
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**APPENDIX 4: TYPICAL PDR PROCESS**

**Stage 1: Preparation**

**Admin/Personnel**
Remind manager to carry out annual review

**Manager**
Book room. Confirm date or agree date/time for meeting and venue.

**Reviewee**
Agree existing date or new date for meeting and venue.

**Admin/Personnel**
Send out Preparation Form to Reviewee (Form A) or prompt manager to do so

**Reviewee**
Use Form A to help reflect on last year and on their development needs.
Send to manager 2 or 3 weeks before meeting to help manager prepare.

**Manager**
Look at Form A (if sent) and use it to help prepare for meeting.
Agree whether to seek feedback from others to help process.
Ensure adequate time set aside and no disturbances.
Stage 2: The Annual Review Meeting

**Manager**
- Facilitate meeting.
- Remind reviewee of purpose and time and use Form B to structure the meeting.
- Encourage reviewee to contribute fully.
- Agree objectives and development needs and how these will be met.
- Complete Form B and ask reviewee to sign it.

**Reviewee**
- Take part fully in meeting, using Form B to provide a structure.
- Agree objectives and any development needs and how these will be met.
- Agree notes to add to Form B and sign it (or sign it later when completed).
Stage 3: Follow up

Manager
Complete Form C and send to Administrator/Personnel along with Form B.

Admin/Personnel
File Form B on personal record and ensure reviewee has a copy.
Check any development agreed on Form Cs and look for commonalities.

Manager
Hold regular one-to-one discussions on progress and help amend plan if necessary.

Reviewee
Plan development and follow plan, keeping manager informed.
Hold regular one-to-ones to discuss progress and agree amendments to plan if necessary.