

# Policy

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**Title:** Appraisal – MSA, TAE and CAO staff

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**From:** HR/Reward

**Date:** 27 October 2015

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## Introduction

Appraisal is a key tool for developing and enhancing individuals and University performance. Reviews for staff in the Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA), Technical and Experimental (TAE) and Community and Operational (CAO) job families will be based on three areas of contribution, as detailed in Career Pathways: Operational Excellence and Innovation; Customer Service (Supporting Education, Research and Enterprise or Supporting the Wider University); and Leadership, Management and Engagement.

## Guiding Principles

The framework and operation of the appraisal process is guided by the following principles (listed in alphabetical order):

Alignment of Goals - Appraisals will be informed by targets that are cascaded top-down from University level, where data permit. Objectives agreed at appraisal will, thus, support the attainment of departmental and University goals.

Confidentiality - Appraisal discussions will be treated as confidential. Record storage will be secure and controlled. Only people with an approved need to know will have access to an employee's appraisal information.

Development Requests - Development requests will be prioritised at departmental level and agreed subject to operational requirements and resource constraints. The University will support the use of 360 degree developmental activities as meets the needs of individual departments.

Emphasis of the Future - The majority of the appraisal will be future-focused. This will include:

- i. vision and intent (the what),
- ii. processes rather than outcomes, including development of competencies (the how),
- iii. and the support, resources and training required.

Fairness and Consistency - Appraisal will be a fair and transparent process, consistently applied and aligned to the University's equality and diversity policies. Quality assurance of appraisal activities will take place at departmental level, through to University level.

Flexibility - The University's appraisal framework will set core principles and standards of operation, but enable a high degree of flexibility of emphasis as appropriate for individual roles and/or departmental needs.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours - The assessment and development of knowledge, skills and behaviours will be integrated into the appraisal process, broadening the discussion to encompass not only "what" has been and will be achieved, but also "how" things were and will be best achieved.

Ongoing Process - Enhancing performance and developing staff is an on-going process of which the appraisal is just one part. An interim review and regular 1-to-1s are recommended to provide focus and enable the review of objectives and personal development plans in line with changing circumstances, and an on-going dialogue between appraisee and appraiser.

Participation - All appraisees and appraisers are required to fully participate in the appraisal process.

Records - Appraisal records will be fair, balanced, accurate and supported by evidence and example.

**Responsibility** - The line manager is responsible for undertaking the annual appraisal of their staff. The head of department is responsible for ensuring that line management processes allow sufficient time to meet this requirement.

**Role of Electronic Documentation** - Appraisal documentation will be automated for ease of monitoring and reporting. In particular, the appraisal will provide a snapshot of an individual’s state at a particular time, while the system will allow continuous updating of that state by the individual. However, face-to-face discussions will remain central to the process.

**Scope of the Appraisal Discussion** - The appraisal will encompass five main areas of discussion:

- i. Joint review and update of the job description if appropriate
- ii. Performance
  - a. Looking back at achievements and outcomes (i.e. ‘WHAT’ has been achieved during review period, and any barriers to achievement)
  - b. Looking forward (expectations and agreed objectives).
- iii. Behavioural competencies (i.e. the ‘HOW’\*)
  - a. Looking back (i.e. ‘HOW’ things have been achieved\*)
  - b. Looking forward (expectations and objectives)  
 \*To encompass alignment to [University values](#).
- iv. Career aspirations
  - a. Action plan for achievement
- v. Learning and Development
  - a. Impact on work practice of past learning and development activities.
  - b. Agreement of personal learning and development action plan, needed to enable achievement of objectives, further enhance competencies, and support career aspirations.

**Training** - All managers and supervisors required to conduct staff appraisals will attend mandatory training on best practice prior to undertaking a review. Online guidance will be available to appraisees. Online training, best practice guidance, and supporting documentation will be provided on the [HR](#) and [ILaD](#) websites.

**Use of Outcomes** - The outcomes of appraisal discussions will be used to inform key HR processes, including

- i. learning and development plans,
- ii. initiation of capability discussions
- iii. assessment of satisfactory performance.

**Policy**

All employees of the University can expect to be appraised once per year.

- For employees at Level 7, appraisals should take place between September and December each year.
- For employees at all other levels, appraisals should take place between January and May each year.

The following ratings, and associated definitions, apply to appraisal outcomes. These ratings are further explained in the related guidance and will be defined locally within Service or designated Faculty.

Rating	Definition	Indicative Proportion of Employees Expected to Achieve this Rating**
Box Five	<i>Expectations Exceeded Significantly</i>	5 per cent
Box Four	<i>Expectations Exceeded</i>	15 per cent
Box Three	<i>Expectations Fully Met</i>	75 per cent
Box Two	<i>Expectations Partly Met</i>	3 per cent
Box One	<i>Expectations Not Met</i>	2 per cent

\*\*The percentages above represent the expected distribution of performance ratings. Any box 4 and 5 ratings will be moderated and are subject to formal approval.

### **Maintaining this policy**

The University will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and its general compliance within the organisation. This policy will be kept up to date and amended accordingly to reflect any changes in response to revised legislation and applicable standards and guidelines. . All policies within the University of Southampton are subject to equality impact assessment prior to implementation or modification.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually in partnership with the appropriate recognised trade unions.

<b>DATE</b>	<b>REV No</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PREPARED BY</b>	<b>APPROVED BY</b>
27 October 2015	2	New policy	A Gameson	UCU ballot