



**Workforce**

**Personal Development Planning and  
Performance Review Policy: guide  
for managers**

This guide will help managers understand the Personal Development Planning and Performance Review Policy. The policy facilitates employees' engagement with appraisal, personal development planning, and associated activities. It will help to make sure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the required standards of their role.

The following guide forms part of the standard for workforce policies. These policies apply to all eligible employees within NHS Scotland, regardless of the board they are employed by.

The Personal Development Planning and Performance Review Policy supports the [National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland](#). This sets out a national framework to achieve a sustainable, skilled workforce with attractive career choices where all are respected and valued for the work they do.

Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and developed is also a strand of the Staff Governance Standard. It establishes a collaborative responsibility for personal development planning and appraisal between you and the employees you manage. This will help to make sure that employees have the skills and knowledge to deliver the required standards of their role. Encouraging personal development and learning will support workforce planning, career development, and employee experience.

You should provide equal access to learning and development opportunities based on individual and service needs. This person-centred approach will be without discrimination, regardless of working arrangements or profession. The guide covers:

<b>What is the purpose of the Personal Development Planning and Performance Review Policy? .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Who is covered by this policy? .....	4
<b>Manager's responsibilities .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Reviewer's responsibilities .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Possible benefits .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Appraisal systems .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Feedback .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Performance review .....</b>	<b>6</b>

<b>Objectives.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Personal Development Plan (PDP) .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appraisal sign off.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Resolution of disagreements .....</b>	<b>8</b>

# **What is the purpose of the Personal Development Planning and Performance Review Policy?**

The Personal Development Planning and Performance Review Policy supports employees, so they have the skills and knowledge to deliver the required standards of their role.

It also provides a framework to make sure all employees actively participate in appraisal, personal development planning and related activities.

## **Who is covered by this policy?**

This policy applies to all employees and bank and sessional workers. References to employees should be taken to apply to bank and sessional workers unless otherwise stated.

## **Manager's responsibilities**

As a manager, you should:

- Consider what skills and knowledge the employee requires to deliver their role and meet future service needs.
- Make sure that details held on relevant appraisal systems are accurate.
- Make sure the employee has access to relevant appraisal systems.
- Make sure the employee has an annual appraisal discussion to review their performance and agree on their personal development plan.
- Make sure that employees have objectives jointly agreed upon with the employee for the coming appraisal year.
- Make sure that new employees have training plans and PDP within 3 months of their start date.
- Make sure that employees are provided with the time specifically to prepare for their appraisal.
- Consider reasonable adjustments required to support the process in response to the employee's declared needs under the Equality Act 2010.

- Make sure that the employee has undertaken statutory and mandatory training.
- Regularly provide constructive and positive feedback on the employee's work and related development.
- Promptly discuss any performance concerns in line with the appropriate NHSScotland Workforce Policy.

As a manager, you might also have responsibilities as a reviewer. However, depending on the structure of your service or the appraisal scheme, others may undertake this role.

## **Reviewer's responsibilities**

If you are the reviewer but not the manager, you should:

- Make sure you have the necessary skills to undertake the appraisal.
- Make sure you have the required information from the manager or key stakeholders to prepare for the appraisal.
- Make sure you have completed the required training if you are a medical or dental reviewer.

## **Possible benefits**

It is recognised that regular performance reviews and personal development planning should:

- Increase the employee's understanding of their role.
- Clarify the expectations of the employee within their role.
- Encourage shared ownership of the employee's learning and development, including continuing professional development (CPD) and their career plan.
- Improve communication and build more effective working relationships between managers and employees.
- Support wellbeing through focused conversation on the employee and their needs.
- Increase the effectiveness of the organisation's performance by aligning the employee's objectives to service delivery plans.

# Appraisal systems

There are 3 different appraisal systems depending on the staff group. These are:

- Agenda for Change - [Turas Appraisal](#)
- Medical and Dental - [Scottish Online Appraisal Resource \(SOAR\)](#)
- Executive and senior managers - [Turas Appraisal](#)

Completing PDPs and performance reviews on the appropriate system is required to maintain individual records of the process and produce organisation-level data.

## Feedback

The personal development planning and performance review process provides a clear framework for managers to give feedback and support employees. As a manager or reviewer, you should meet with employees to discuss their progress and provide any feedback. This should be at least annually and in line with the requirements of the relevant appraisal scheme.

Regular meetings, both informal and formal, provide an opportunity to discuss any issues or challenges. You should address any issues affecting the employee's performance as they arise. Any performance or capability issues would normally be managed in line with the [Capability Policy](#). As outlined in the Capability Policy, this does not apply to medical and some dental staff.

[Read the Guide to supportive and difficult conversations.](#)

## Performance review

As the manager or reviewer, you should meet with the employee to discuss their performance over the review period, usually 12 months. For some employees, this will also include a mid-year review. You should agree on a date for the review with the employee, allowing sufficient time to prepare.

As a reviewer, you and the employee should discuss:

- what went well
- what could have gone better
- what difference does the employee want to make next year

There should not be any surprises for the employee at the performance review meeting. You should only raise performance issues previously discussed with the employee.

## **Objectives**

You and the employee should agree on a number of work objectives for the following 12 months. The number may be specified depending on the staff group. However, emphasis should be placed on the quality of the objectives.

Employee objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART). Objectives should also reflect organisational priorities and needs.

**Specific** is to make sure the objective is detailed, focused, and well defined.

**Measurable** is to make sure the objective has a measure of success that is understandable.

**Achievable** is to make sure the objective is challenging but achievable within available resources.

**Relevant** means making sure the objective is realistic and relevant to the employee's role, team and organisation.

**Time-bound** is to make sure the objective has a deadline or specific time frame to be achieved.

Employee objectives should inform ongoing discussions, appraisal, and PDP for the coming year.

Where the appraisal of some staff has been delegated to a reviewer, you should have discussed and set service or targeted objectives before any appraisal meetings take place.

## **Personal Development Plan (PDP)**

As a manager, you need to agree on a learning and development plan with the employee for the coming year. This is often referred to as a Personal Development Plan (PDP).

The plan should reflect work priorities and objectives and any areas for improvement identified in the performance review. Statutory and mandatory training requirements are a key element of personal

development. Like objectives, any areas identified should be specific and time-bound.

You should be mindful of the need to make sure all employees have equity of access to development opportunities. Within this context, you should support all employees in your team in accessing appropriate learning and development.

The immediate requirements of the PDP relate to the requirements of the current role. However, where possible, wider development and career aspirations can also be considered.

Some employees in your team may be required to revalidate with a regulatory body to maintain their professional registration. Regulatory bodies include:

- General Medical Council (GMC)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- General Dental Council (GDC)
- General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

The PDP process can support employees to produce the required evidence for revalidation.

## **Appraisal sign off**

This is when the reviewer and employee confirm that the appraisal discussion has taken place and that both parties are in agreement with what is recorded.

## **Resolution of disagreements**

Should a disagreement arise, the reviewer should first discuss it with the employee. If the concern is not resolved, either party may seek advice on resolving the matter from HR or a trade union representative.

They should seek early resolution wherever possible. The employee also has the right to raise matters under the [Grievance Policy](#).