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| **Appraisal Policy** |

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| **Responsibility for Policy:** | Executive Director of Human Resources |
| **Relevant to:** | LJMU Staff |
| **Approved by:** | SMT on 5 May 2015 |
| **Responsibility for Document Review:** | Head of Leadership and Development Foundation |
| **Date introduced:** | The University has had a personal development and performance review scheme in place for many years. The approach has been reviewed, refined and further developed at many stages. |
| **Date(s) modified:** | August 2016, May 2018, January 2019, September 2020, February 2021 |
| **Next Review Date:** | September 2021 |

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| **RELEVANT DOCUMENTS** |
| N/A |
| **RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS** |
| * Strategic Plan * People Strategy * Appraisal Forms for Grades 1 -10, Directorate, Professoriate and ELT * Appraisal Underlining Principles and Guidance Notes for Staff |

**Statement**

The University has an Appraisal scheme to provide clarity for staff at least once a year, about what is expected of them through their job role, how their performance objectives are linked to the delivery of the University vision and strategic plan; and to plan, reflect and record performance achieved, including any personal training and development and career aspirations.

The Appraisal scheme is a key University people management process to help achieve the key outcomes from the strategic plan of:

* A University known for excellent teaching within an academically engaging and supportive student experience that produces graduates who, as citizens, are prepared for life and the world of work and are valued as contributors to society.
* A University where scholarship is at our core and our Research Institutes are recognised as beacons of excellence that provide inspiration and motivation to staff, students and society.
* A University which is true to its values and is recognised globally as a driving force that through partnership supports wealth creation, social well-being, culture and the arts within the city-region and beyond.

**Context, Scope and Objectives**

LJMU recognises that the performance of its staff and the knowledge, skills, expertise and experience that they bring to their work are fundamental to the performance of the University and the delivery of the strategic plan.

The Appraisal scheme is concerned with each individual member of staff’s performance and development. LJMU believes that staff need to have a clear understanding of what they are required to do and how their actions play a part in the achievement of the strategic plan and localised school or professional services objectives. Staff should have a continuous dialogue with their line managers in respect of work priorities, progress made and their personal development.

The performance of staff will be maximised where they are supported and given opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and competence associated with the work that they do now and in preparing for the future in line with the ambitions of the University and the individual.

The Appraisal scheme is designed to facilitate annually, in a formal manner, the communication between a member of staff and their line manager, helping to provide direction, clarification, feedback and to reach a shared understanding around performance, achievements, areas for improvement, professional development and future plans. It is, however, a formal snapshot of performance and cannot and should not replace the day to day management and interactions between a member of staff and their line manager, which form the backdrop and context to the formal Appraisal discussion.

The Appraisal meeting provides dedicated time to reflect on the past and plan for the future. There are many benefits derived from carrying out Appraisal. It can lead to greater understanding between the member of staff and their line manager by sharing good practice, exploring misunderstandings and the factors affecting work. The opportunity for the member of staff to provide feedback to their manager as well as vice versa can help enhance the working relationship and potentially lead to higher performance levels. The experience can be motivational, create job satisfaction and encourage high levels of staff engagement.

The formal Appraisal is carried out annually and is recorded on a standardised Appraisal form. It is encouraged that a lighter touch, informal reviews every three months should take place to monitor ongoing performance and development activity. The informal reviews do not ned to be documented and the purpose is to ensure that there is regular and on-going dialogue.

The aim of the Appraisal scheme is to help all staff reach their full potential and achieve the following:

* Focus work activity through agreed objectives and performance standards
* Provide feedback on performance and achievement levels
* Involve all staff in identifying their personal contribution to the development and delivery of the LJMU strategic plan and Faculty/Divisional objectives
* Utilise and develop their strengths and capability
* Encourage staff to perform at their best
* Maintain high standards of professional behaviour
* Confirm previous discussions on under performance and provide development support and encouragement to deliver against the agreed improvement action plan
* Confirm previous discussions on good or exceptional performance providing a mechanism for formal recognition for a job well done
* An opportunity for staff to discuss their career aspirations
* Provide an opportunity for staff to give feedback to their line manager
* To demonstrate fairness and equality of opportunity
* Encourage collaboration and teamwork
* Support innovation and enterprise
* Recognise internal and external contribution and success

The Appraisal policy applies to all staff included in the staffing establishment.

**The Underlying Principles**

The principles underlying the Appraisal scheme at LJMU are:

* **Communication & Alignment to the Strategic Plan**

The process is designed to facilitate a two way communication between the member of staff and their line manager to create an understanding of how the work that they carry out is linked to the delivery of the strategic plan. All staff are encouraged to engage in open and honest dialogue both at the formal Appraisal meeting and throughout the year whilst at the same time line managers are encouraged to create a supportive and cooperative working environment.

* **Performance Assessment, Planning & Monitoring**

The Appraisal scheme is a tool for clarifying expectations, priorities and monitoring staff performance. The setting of objectives and where appropriate performance standards that are measurable makes it clear what is expected and provides a framework to review and assess the level of performance. Line managers are expected to support staff members in identifying their objectives and provide leadership in ensuring that they are measurable and the quality of the output is clear and achieved.

* **LJMU Values**

The LJMU values inherent in the Strategic Framework indicate attitudes and behaviours that will be key to the success of the University and provide the link for staff to work together in a positive culture. They are a context for what we can expect of each other and what our students, clients and the communities in which we work expect of us. Staff should reflect not only on what they have achieved but also how they went about those achievements realising their strengths and areas requiring improvement in relation to living the LJMU ethos every day.

* **Personal Learning & Development**

The University encourages a range of development activities to support continuous professional development, and to ensure all staff are equipped to do their job effectively and to the standards required. This includes all forms of experiential learning, work based development activities, formal courses or workshops and the attainment of qualifications, in particular, teaching and professional qualifications. The funding and budgets for learning and development are not exhaustive and managers and staff should consider all development options available and their link to the delivery of the strategic framework as well as the likely impact when decisions for funding are made. Through ongoing personal learning and development staff will be able to demonstrate that scholarship is at our core and ensure that the University is known for excellent teaching, research, scholarship and innovation as well as the relentless pursuit of excellence in all areas.

* **Online Modules**

All staff are required to undertake mandatory training. The Data Protection and Freedom of Information Act, Diversity in the Workplace and the Bribery Act online modules should be completed every three years. The Modern Slavery and PREVENT online training modules should be completed by every member of staff once in their employment.  These modules provide an overview of the legislation to help staff to understand their rights and responsibilities as well as identify further sources of help.

* **Individual Responsibility**

The Appraisal scheme is designed to give ownership for performance and development to the member of staff whilst at the same time recognising the important role that their line manager has in providing context, guidance, support and feedback that enables an individual to be aware of what is expected of them, how they are performing, their strengths and the areas where further enhancement is required.

The member of staff can take the lead to discuss their career development with their line manager at the Appraisal meeting and jointly explore their ambitions and how these may be accomplished. There is also the opportunity for a member of staff to raise and discuss their retirement plans.

* **Continuous Improvement**

The Appraisal scheme is intended to promote continuous improvement and support the relentless pursuit of excellence and quality in all the University activities. Personal competence and work performance is at the core of the scheme which facilitates the achievement of this by means of agreed objectives, development plans and the assessment of performance.

* **Appraisal Framework**

The Appraisal scheme has been designed to be user friendly and the form created to follow a logical format to capture the conversation between the member of staff and their line manager. There are guidance notes to support the scheme that detail the Appraisal process, how it works and the associated documentation. Training is available to the member of staff and the line manager. This is provided to ensure that the process is consistently applied, transparent and non-discriminatory.

All areas of the University should follow the standardised framework and approach to Appraisal so that there is equity and consistency in how the scheme is applied. This does not prevent any specific feedback or additional information being sought from an individual by the line manager if such information is particularly relevant to local circumstances and would be helpful to meaningful analysis of a dialogue about the individual’s performance.

Feedback on the effectiveness of the appraisal scheme will be sought on a regular basis to ensure that the scheme and associated paperwork is creating a framework that achieves the aims of this policy.

Data Protection:

Employers can be subject to significant fines under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for failure to follow the data protection principles and data breach requirements. Organisations may also be subject to direct claims for compensation by individuals who have suffered damage as a result of a breach of the GDPR.