Personal Development Plan: Guidance notes

“Personal development planning enables individuals to take charge of their own learning. Learning becomes a proactive as well as reactive process, designed and prioritised to support immediate development needs as well as longer term ambitions.”

A Personal Development Plan (PDP) enables learners to identify key areas of learning and development activity that will enable them to either acquire new or develop existing skills and behavioural attributes for the following purposes:

- enhance performance in their current role
- address anticipated changes in their current role
- address career aspirations towards a future role

Prior to completing the Personal Development Plan (scroll down to next page(s) for a template to complete), the learner should undertake a skills analysis activity to determine their learning and development needs and identify development objectives to meet those needs.

We recommend that the personal development planning process should be undertaken initially by the learner followed by discussion and agreement with their manager.

It is recommended that this process should take place annually and ideally should form part of the Staff Development and Review (Appraisal) process. However, it can be equally valuable when undertaken as a stand-alone activity.

The personal development planning process should ideally begin at the point at which the learner is new to their role and undertaking their induction. The process can then continue throughout their employment at the University.

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1 AUA Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice (Higher Education Administration and Management (OUVA))

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Personal Development Plan: Key to terminology used in template

**Development Objectives** are objectives that you have identified to enable you to meet the learning and development needs identified at the skills analysis stage.

**Priority** identifies whether your development objective is:
- *critical* to your *current role*
- *beneficial* but non-critical to your *current role*
- *critical* to your progressing in to *future role*
- *beneficial* but non-critical to progressing in to *future role*

**Activities** can constitute any learning or development activity that will enable you to achieve your development objectives e.g. formal training, on-the-job training, work-shadowing another colleague etc.

**Support/Resources** describe what you need to help you achieve your development objectives. Typically this would involve support from your manager, department or colleague to enable you to undertake a learning or development activity such as allowing you time away from your role or funding from your department.

**Target** and **Actual dates** state when you intend to achieve your development objectives followed by the date you actually achieve them. Data in these columns is particularly useful when you review your PDP as it will enable you to identify any factors that may have prevented you from achieving your development objectives on the target date and build in contingencies to prevent this from occurring in the future.

**Review date** states when you will review progress on your Personal Development Plan. Assuming that you undergo the personal development process annually, we recommend that you review your PDP every six months therefore enabling you to:
- Assess your progress
- Reflect on your learning
- Identify whether your development objectives need to be amended
- Identify factors that may have prevented you from achieving your development objectives
- Build in contingencies to enable you (where possible) to meet your agreed target date in the future

*Scroll down to next page(s) for Personal Development Plan template*
Personal Development Plan: Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are my development objectives?</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>What activities do I need to undertake to achieve my objectives?</th>
<th>What support/resources do I need to achieve my objectives</th>
<th>Target date for achieving my objectives</th>
<th>Actual date of achieving my objectives</th>
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Review Date: