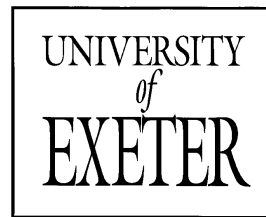


Performance and Development Review Evaluation Project

The 2004 survey of staff



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1. Executive Summary

The Performance and Development Review (PDR) was designed to facilitate employee development and to enable alignment between the goals of individuals, the goals of their School or Division, and the goals of the University. Now approaching the third year of its implementation, the PDR is a permanent feature of University procedure: Individual staff members meet annually with a reviewer to discuss progress and set work goals.

However, to ensure that the PDR is useful and effective as a means of setting goals, staff feedback on the PDR process is crucial. For this reason, the University's Personnel and Staff Development Division commissioned a project to obtain an overview of staff views about the PDR which could inform the future development of the PDR.

At the invitation of Tash Khan-Davis, Head of Training and Development, the Evaluation Project was conducted by a group of researchers at the School of Psychology. The project was led by Lucy O' Sullivan, a Masters student whose research focuses on group processes and organisational goal-setting. The project took place over two phases. In Phase 1, extensive face-to-face interviews were conducted with seventeen senior members of staff from the range of Schools and Divisions of the University. The aim of this phase was to gain a thorough understanding of how the implementation of the PDR occurred across the University, and to identify key issues on which to base the development of the staff questionnaire used in Phase 2 of the project.

The results of Phase 2, which constituted a survey of staff views about the PDR, form the basis of this report. All staff received a copy of the questionnaire and were encouraged to complete it after their annual PDR meeting. Results of the staff survey indicate that about half of respondents hold broadly positive attitudes towards the PDR. In line with this, only a small proportion of respondents reported having found the PDR process stressful. However, there was lack of consensus in respondents' views about the usefulness of the PDR for achieving work goals, with only 25% indicating that the PDR has been helpful in helping them to achieve their goals over the past year. In terms of the broader impact of the PDR on relationships in the workplace, the findings indicate that respondents do not consider the PDR to be a means of promoting co-operative practices at work.

The findings also indicate that respondents perceive there to be a link between the PDR and decisions about contribution-based rewards (CBR). Furthermore, responses to open-ended questions suggest that this link is considered to be problematic by many respondents, both academics and non-academics alike. Noting the substantial time commitment that the PDR entails, respondents also expressed the view that the PDR has not been worthwhile given the amount of effort invested in it.

The questionnaire also contained a range of scales designed to identify the factors that contributed to (and predicted) positive perceptions of the utility of the PDR for individuals' work. Of these, three were particularly important: (a) consultation about the PDR *before* one's review meeting, (b) experiences of a review meeting which reflected collaborative dialogue, and (c) identification with the University (which contributed to feelings of trust in management).

In addition, responses to open-ended questions offered considerable insight into staff views about the benefits of the PDR (both for individuals and for Schools and Divisions), the problems associated with the PDR, and suggested improvements for the development of the PDR in the future.

While, on the whole, staff who responded to the survey reported finding the PDR process (and the dialogues that it facilitates) useful for their work, several emergent issues can be taken forward to inform the long-term use of the PDR. On the basis of the collected findings, it is recommended that in order to enhance staff engagement with the PDR process (and thus to improve its effectiveness), the University needs to address two particular issues.

First, further clarification is necessary with respect to the relationship between the PDR and decisions about contribution-based rewards (CBR). Clarification on this issue may go some way to reducing staff cynicism about (a) the PDR itself and (b) the use of the information staff provide on their PDR forms. More broadly, addressing these concerns about the PDR will also serve to communicate to staff the precise function of PDR within the broader plans of the University, and thus to build up trust in management.

Second, a key finding to emerge from the Evaluation Project is that there is concern amongst staff regarding the University's commitment to acting on issues raised by staff in the course of these (and similar) feedback exercises. For this reason, there is a particular need for the University to acknowledge the findings outlined in this report and to use the findings as the basis for the future development of the PDR. Again, this will help to build on the three key predictors of evaluations of the utility of the PDR – consultation, collaboration, and trust.

In addition to the present report, which will be available to all staff via a secure link on the Personnel and Staff Development Division website, a feedback summary detailing the main findings of the staff questionnaire will be sent to all members of staff. In addition, staff will be able to respond to the findings via Heads of Schools and Divisions, and Lucy O' Sullivan will be available via email until November 19th 2004¹, should staff wish to offer comments or seek clarification on the findings. These strategies are intended to ensure that the Evaluation Project has provided a valid, comprehensive, and useful overview of staff's views about the PDR and one that accorded with employees' own experiences.

¹ The email address for Lucy O' Sullivan appears on Page 1 of this report.

2. Background

The PDR was developed to facilitate alignment between the goals of individuals, the goals of their School or Division, and the goals of the University. With a particular emphasis on *alignment* of goals, the PDR represents a significant culture change in the University's approach to performance management. More specifically, this change is articulated in the University's Human Resources strategy, which espouses a move towards a "high-performance, high-reward" culture.

Given that the PDR affects employees across the University, it was very important that the Personnel and Staff Development Division should provide a means through which staff could offer their views about the PDR process. On the basis of the data collected in an evaluation of the PDR, the University should be in a position to incorporate suggestions from staff into future changes to the PDR process.

In order to address possible concerns amongst staff regarding anonymity and confidentiality – as well as to ensure that the evaluation would provide independent feedback about the PDR – the evaluation was conducted by a group of researchers in the School of Psychology, and thus data collection and collation adhered to strict ethical standards.

3. The PDR Evaluation Project

In Phase 1 of the project, which took place between September and November 2003, interviews were conducted with senior members of staff from different Schools and Divisions. The aim of this phase was to identify key issues relating to the development and implementation of the PDR. On the basis of the outcomes of this phase, the questionnaire for Phase 2 of the project was devised to address the range of issues likely to pertain to the implementation of the PDR across the University. Drafts of the Phase 2 questionnaire (i.e., the staff questionnaire) were piloted with a small cross-section of staff to ensure that the instrument was comprehensive and would allow staff to express their views about the PDR.

The staff questionnaire asked staff about the following three aspects of the PDR:

- a) Overall opinions about the **implementation** of the PDR in Schools and Divisions
- b) Views about the **effectiveness** of the PDR for setting work goals
- c) Views about possible **improvements** to the PDR process in the future

In addition to specific questions relating to these topics, the questionnaire included a section in which staff could raise those issues that they felt were most relevant to understanding the impact of the PDR. The questionnaire also informed staff that they would receive feedback on the findings of the Evaluation Project and would be able to comment on these findings in advance of the next iteration of the PDR.

4. Survey context and process

As outlined above, the development of the Phase 2 staff questionnaire was informed by extensive earlier research – both qualitative and quantitative – with a sample of senior staff members and with a cross-section of staff from different staff groups. After piloting, the questionnaire was finalised by the research team (see Appendix A), and in order to ensure that all staff received a copy of the questionnaire, its distribution was co-ordinated by the Personnel and Staff Development Division.

The distribution of the questionnaire was timed to occur in advance of the second iteration of the PDR. Staff were invited to complete the questionnaire after their review meeting and then to return to it to the School of Psychology via internal mail. The questionnaire was accompanied by an information sheet (see Appendix B). This outlined the background to the Evaluation Project, what staff could expect in participating, as well as information relating to the anonymity and confidentiality of the responses provided.

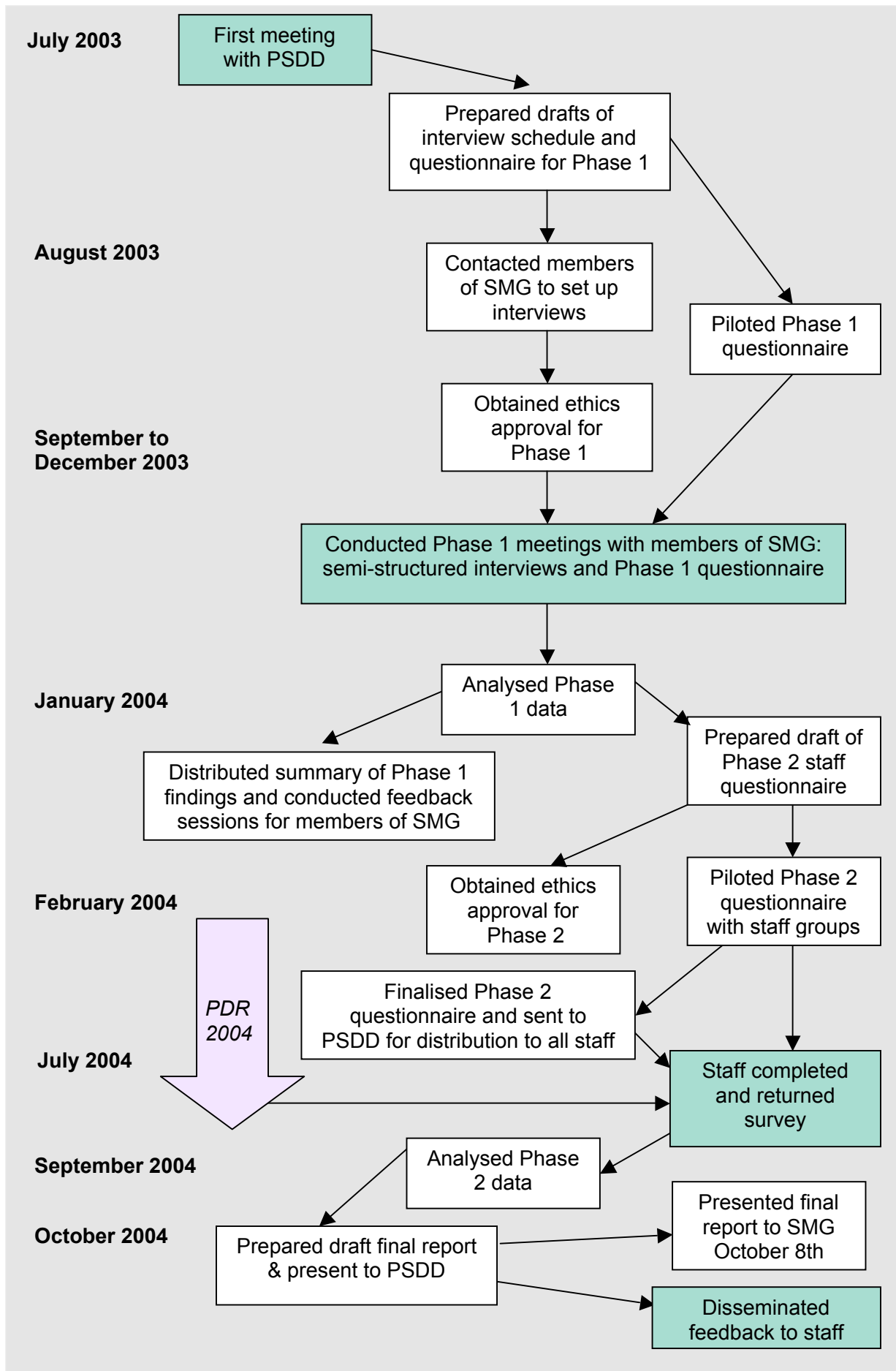
To encourage participation, key members of staff in all Schools and Divisions were contacted via email by the Head of Training and Development and by the lead researcher (see Appendix C), who both emphasised the importance of the Evaluation Project in providing staff with an opportunity to express their views about the PDR.

Ethical approval for the project was obtained from the Ethics Committee in the School of Psychology, and the contact details of an independent expert were provided on the information sheet for participants who had queries regarding the use of the questionnaire data.

The diagram overleaf provides a schematic representation of the PDR Evaluation Project, up to and including the Phase 2 survey of staff².

² While for purposes of brevity the outcomes of Phase 1 are not presented in this report, the representation on page 7 includes details of this phase to give an overview of the earlier development of the Evaluation Project; in the representation “PSDD” denotes Personnel and Staff Development Division.

A. Schematic Representation of the Survey Process



5. The questionnaire

As mentioned above, the survey instrument was developed on the basis of the Phase 1 interviews with senior members of staff across the University. The findings from this phase identified key issues relating to the development and implementation of the PDR. The outcomes of Phase 1 also highlighted several factors likely to be relevant to developing an understanding of staff experiences of the PDR process.

In addition, the research team also conducted extensive pilot research by consulting with a small cross-section of University staff during the development of the Phase 2 questionnaire. The final questionnaire addressed issues including (a) general attitudes to the PDR, (b) how the PDR was implemented in Schools and Division, and (c) staff experiences of their 2004 PDR meeting. In terms of the impact of the PDR, the questionnaire assessed views about the effectiveness of the PDR for (a) setting work goals, (b) achieving work goals, and (c) for encouraging co-operative work practices.

The questionnaire also included a range of scales designed to afford additional insight into the mechanics of staff attitudes towards the PDR. Specifically, there were measures of (a) perceptions of participation in the PDR process (b), identification with the organisation, and (c) trust in the organisation and in management.

Five open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide their views about the main benefits and problems associated with the PDR, as well as their suggestions with respect to possible improvements to the process.

The final section on the questionnaire requested demographic information that would provide a general profile of the PDR from the perspective of different staff groups.

The questionnaire is presented in full in Appendix A.

6. Sample

A. Response Rate

285 of the 1,883 employees who received a questionnaire completed the survey, a response rate of 15%. The response rate among different staff groups is indicated in the table below. The table also outlines the corresponding proportion of staff in these staff groups within the University.

	% of University staff	No. of respondents in sample	% of sample
Clerical	24	63	22.1
Technical	7.2	23	7.7
Academic-related	18.4	79	27.7
Academic	28.8	79	27.7
Research	12.4	20	7.0
Teaching Fellows	10.6	5	1.8
Staff group undisclosed		16	5.6

From this table it is clear that the proportion of respondents in different groups parallels the proportion of these groups in the University. Therefore, while the overall response rate is noticeably low, this pattern suggests that the profile of the sample in terms of the different staff groups is broadly representative of staff in the organisation as a whole.

It is noticeable, however, that the proportion of academic-related staff in the sample was higher than the overall proportion of this group in the organisation. It is possible that this pattern may reflect slight differences between how staff are categorised for official purposes and how staff categorise themselves. Two staff groups (research staff and teaching fellows) were under-represented in the sample. The reasons for this are unclear, though it is worth noting that a significant minority of respondents (5.6%) did not indicate their staff group.

Quite a low proportion of staff completed and returned a questionnaire (a response rate of 15%). A further 6% of staff returned uncompleted questionnaires. This suggests that staff may not have anticipated any utility in participating in the Evaluation Project, and wished to register their views by returning blank questionnaires. While several factors may underlie the low response rate, the pattern overall suggests that the majority of staff were not motivated to engage with the Evaluation Project. Earlier discussions with staff representatives (from the range of different groups) during piloting suggest that low levels of participation may reflect (a) the time involved in completing both the PDR and the Evaluation questionnaire and (b) cynicism about the impact that participation would have.

Overall, it is also important to mention that the response rate may have been higher if the questionnaire had been shorter. In order to ensure that staff could provide their feedback on the range of issues relating the PDR, the questionnaire was comprehensive and lengthy. Following what was – for many respondents – a fairly time-consuming PDR process (both in terms of preparation and the meeting itself), it is possible that the request to complete the Evaluation questionnaire may have been an extra task that many staff were not in a position to complete. In addition, as will become clear, the emergent findings outlined in this report point to the possibility

that the low response rate may reflect a lack of understanding amongst staff as to the purpose of the PDR.

It is important to note that the findings outlined in this report are based on comprehensive completion of the questionnaire by respondents. This is exemplified by (1) the very small amount of missing data (i.e., most respondents answered all questions) and (2) the fact that 80% of the responding sample provided substantial responses to the open-ended questions. This suggests that the responding sample was quite an engaged group with respect to the PDR: as will become clear below, the views expressed can be seen to demonstrate some commitment to the PDR process. Therefore given that the sample appears – broadly – to have engaged with the PDR (and the Evaluation Project), any negative views cannot easily be dismissed as representing the perspective of a particularly disgruntled sub-sample.

B. Demographic information

The table below provides a general profile of the sample.

Demographic Variable	Categories	No. of respondents	% of sample
Gender	female	154	54
	male	121	42.5
	undisclosed	10	3.5
Location	Streatham campus	216	75.8
	St. Luke's campus	33	11.6
	other	15	5.4
	undisclosed	21	7.4
Nature of contract	permanent	206	72.3
	fixed-term	22	22.5
	secondment	3	1.1
	other	5	1.8
	undisclosed	9	3.2

A noteworthy feature of the information presented above is the small but significant proportion of respondents who did not provide demographic information. Although the questionnaire attempted to speak to possible concerns about anonymity and confidentiality, it seems likely that there were residual concerns about the use of the data provided by respondents.

C. PDR 2004

For a quarter of respondents, the 2004 PDR meeting took place in March, while for more than 50% the meeting had occurred between May and July. Approximately 30% of respondents indicated that they spent less than one hour preparing for their PDR meeting, with a large proportion of respondents (over 50%) spending between one and two hours in preparation for the meeting.

7. Quantitative Findings

This section details the key findings to emerge from the questionnaire. For purposes of convenience, the number of respondents in the different staff groups are presented again below.

<i>N</i>	<i>Overall</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
	285	63	23	79	79	20	5	16

All items on the questionnaire were scored on a 7-point scale (see also below), where a score of 1 indicates strong disagreement and a score of 7 indicates strong agreement. The midpoint of the scale is 4.

A. General attitudes to the PDR

To ascertain the general attitude of staff towards the PDR, we began the survey by asking two questions directly addressing this issue.

1 = very negative, 4 = neutral, 7 = very positive	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
Current overall attitude to the PDR	4.07	4.11	4.10	4.13	3.80	4.74	5.60	3.37

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
I was happy to take part in the PDR process	4.74	4.49	4.43	4.66	3.99	5.12	5.50	4.06

While the average score on both these questions suggest overall neutral attitudes to the PDR, one third of respondents expressed negative attitudes, around half expressed positive attitudes, and one fifth expressed a neutral attitude. This suggests there was some polarisation across the sample in terms of their attitudes to, and willingness to engage with, the PDR.

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
The PDR process was stressful for me	2.83	2.82	3.00	2.76	2.65	3.68	2.00	3.10

On average, respondents disagreed that the PDR was stressful. Indeed, less than a fifth of the sample indicated that they found the process stressful.

B. Satisfaction with the PDR

i. How the PDR was implemented in Schools and Divisions

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
I feel I was informed about the aims of the PDR	5.02	5.32	5.31	4.98	5.04	4.55	4.40	4.88
I feel I was given the opportunity to raise concerns about the PDR	4.62	5.15	4.82	4.76	4.20	4.55	4.40	3.81

Overall, respondents agreed that they were informed about the aims of the PDR as it occurred within their School or Division, with 70% scoring 5 or above. Furthermore, about half of respondents agreed that they were given opportunities to raise concerns about the PDR at the level of their School or Division, while a quarter disagreed with this question.

ii. The PDR review meeting

Four questions assessed respondents' satisfaction with the reviewer-reviewee match.

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
My PDR reviewer was someone who was in an appropriate position to review me	5.96	5.94	5.68	5.95	5.95	6.10	6.40	5.93
My PDR reviewer was someone who could provide meaningful feedback on my work/research activity	5.18	5.23	4.68	5.26	5.00	5.70	5.60	4.93
I feel my reviewer was sufficiently prepared for my PDR meeting	5.66	5.78	5.50	5.43	5.84	5.75	6.20	5.14
Overall, I was satisfied with the way I was matched to my PDR reviewer	5.72	5.86	5.27	5.65	5.74	5.70	6.40	5.54

Overall, the means suggest that respondents were satisfied with the reviewer-reviewee match. Indeed, for each of the above questions, around 80% of respondents agreed that the reviewer was (a) appropriate, (b) provided meaningful feedback, (c) was sufficiently prepared, and this culminated in (d) high levels of satisfaction with the match.

Three questions asked about satisfaction with the completed PDR form.

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
My final form was the result of two-way dialogue between me and my reviewer	5.57	6.01	5.23	5.27	5.45	6.10	6.00	5.07
Final form was a reflection of what happened in my review meeting	5.58	5.80	5.05	5.53	5.68	5.35	5.40	5.53
Final form was a reflection of what I wanted to get out of my review meeting	5.12	5.33	4.96	4.94	5.22	5.20	4.80	4.62

These means illustrate that respondents were generally satisfied that their completed PDR form accurately reflected the content and the aims of the PDR meeting. More than 70% of responses indicated agreement with each of these statements.

C. Staff views about the overall utility of the PDR in terms of goal setting

i. Perceived usefulness of the PDR review meeting

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
In terms of setting goals for my work, I feel that the guidelines for the PDR meeting were sufficiently flexible	4.83	5.19	4.64	4.80	4.65	4.80	5.60	4.53
I feel the PDR made it easy for me to set useful goals for my work	4.38	4.79	4.27	4.41	3.97	4.80	4.40	4.10

Overall, respondents found the PDR meeting and guidelines to be useful for setting work goals, with more than half of the sample agreeing with both questions. However, it is also worth noting that a significant proportion of responses indicated either disagreement (up to 25%) or attitudes that were neither negative nor positive (approximately 25%).

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
The PDR is an effective way of setting my goals and targets	4.42	4.89	4.18	4.60	3.77	4.90	5.40	3.85
The PDR process has helped me to achieve my work goals over the past year	3.03	3.73	3.89	2.89	2.58	3.50	6.00	2.00

While the average score suggests some general level of agreement that the PDR was an effective way of setting goals and targets, less than half of the respondents indicated agreement with this statement and a third expressed disagreement. This pattern suggests that respondents were divided on this question. A more negative pattern emerged in relation to the utility of the PDR process in helping to achieve goals over the past year. More than half of respondents disagreed with this statement with less than a quarter agreeing.

D. Staff views about the general impact of the PDR on working life

i. On relationships at work

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
The PDR gives me a sense that my supervisor/line manager is supportive of the work that I do	4.24	4.78	4.36	4.21	3.58	4.45	5.6	3.92
The PDR serves to promote a sense of common identity within my School/Division	3.02	3.52	3.23	2.90	2.62	2.95	3.4	2.77
The PDR encourages co-operative work practices within my School/Division	2.97	3.48	3.64	2.75	2.41	2.95	4.6	2.92

Half of the respondents agreed that the PDR process served to signal a supervisor's support for their work, while a third of respondents disagreed with this statement. A reverse pattern emerged on items assessing broader School- or Division- based relationships. More than half of respondents disagreed that the PDR (a) promoted a sense of common identity or (b) encouraged co-operative work practices within their School or Division. Moreover, less than a fifth of respondents expressed agreement with these two statements, while a quarter neither agreed nor disagreed.

ii. On aligning Individual, School/Division, and University goals

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
The PDR helps me to see how my work relates to what my School/Division aims to achieve	3.72	3.94	3.52	3.53	3.67	3.70	3.60	4.15
The PDR helps me to see how my work relates to what the University aims to achieve	3.53	3.92	3.33	3.26	3.52	3.55	3.60	3.46

Over 40% of respondents disagreed that the PDR helped in aligning goals, both at (a) the School/Division and (b) the University level. Furthermore, less than 20% of respondents agreed with these two statements.

iii. Overall assessment of the PDR

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
Staff received sufficient feedback about the PDR from the School/Division after the process was finished	3.05	3.74	3.00	2.75	2.59	3.39	3.75	3.07
The PDR was worth the amount of effort invested in it	3.57	3.84	3.50	3.55	3.03	4.25	4.60	4.17
The PDR serves the interests of management more than the interests of employees	4.87	4.52	4.77	4.52	5.38	5.15	3.80	5.46

With respect to the first statement, the findings indicate that staff perceived a need for improved follow-up on the PDR action points at a school or divisional level (e.g., in terms of training aims). More than half of respondents disagreed that staff received sufficient feedback about the PDR after the process was finished, with a third neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Similarly, almost half of respondents disagreed that the PDR was worth the amount of effort invested in it. However, a third of respondents agreed with this statement, suggesting that respondents differed in terms of their views about the overall value of the PDR. Over half of respondents agreed that the PDR serves the interests of management more than the interests of employees, with less than a fifth disagreeing with this statement.

E. What other factors are related to staff attitudes about the PDR?

i. Contribution-based rewards

The table below presents mean responses on three items that assessed respondents' views about the PDR with respect to performance-related pay.

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 7 = strongly agree	<i>Overall Mean</i>	Clerical	Technical	Academic-related	Academic	Research	Teaching Fellow	Staff group undisclosed
I believe there is a link between the PDR process and performance-related pay	5.57	4.58	5.18	5.44	5.57	4.58	5.20	4.69
When completing my PDR form, I was influenced by the issue of performance-related pay	3.00	3.25	2.77	3.57	3.00	2.79	4.40	2.87
I am clear about how the PDR will be used to evaluate my future performance	4.30	5.13	4.05	4.38	3.92	3.74	3.80	4.50

The mean score to the first statement above suggests that on average respondents believed there to be a link between the PDR and contribution-based rewards, with over 60% of the sample agreeing with this statement and less than 20% disagreeing. Nevertheless, while a quarter of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, half of respondents indicated that they were not influenced by the issue of contribution-based rewards when filling out their PDR form. Approximately half of respondents indicated that they were clear about how the PDR will be used to evaluate future performance, while one third of respondents reported feeling unclear with respect to this issue.

ii. Factors that are associated with more positive attitudes to the PDR

Based on previous research in the field of organisational goal-setting and performance management (e.g., see Haslam et al., 2003; Fletcher, 2001), and based on statistical examination of responses (using factor analysis), we constructed scales to measure three distinct variables which appeared to be implicated in outcomes relating to the PDR (i.e., the overall perceived utility of the PDR).

These scales were measures of (a) consultation prior to the implementation of the PDR, (b) collaboration during one's PDR meeting, and (c) identification with the University.

In addition, on the basis of previous research (e.g., Tyler & Kramer, 1996; Terry & Jimmieson, 2003) regarding the mechanisms through which the above variables impact on attitudes towards organisational interventions, we included measures of (d) appraised stress arising from the implementation of the PDR and (e) trust in management and organisational procedures.

The table below outlines a subset of the questionnaire items that related to these scales and of the overall scale reliability (α s; $N = 285$). The conventional criterion for satisfactory reliability is .70 (after Cronbach, 1990).

Scale	Example items	α
Prior consultation	Overall, I feel that I was informed about the aims of the PDR I feel I was given an opportunity to ask questions about the PDR	.85
Collaborative meeting	I feel my PDR meeting was collaborative My PDR reviewer was someone with whom I shared an understanding of what my PDR meeting should achieve I feel my PDR meeting allowed me a fair opportunity to talk about my achievements at work	.90
University identification	I feel strong ties with the University of Exeter The University of Exeter is important to me	.93
Perceived utility of the PDR	The PDR process is an effective way of setting my goals and targets The PDR process helps me to cope with the demands of my job The PDR process has helped me to achieve my work goals over the past year	.95
Appraised stress	In general, the PDR process was stressful for me Overall, I am anxious about how the PDR will be used to evaluate my future performance	.78
Trust in management	I trust my Head of School/Division to represent the interests of my School/Division at the University level I trust the University to act in the best interests of its employees	.85

Having created these scales we can examine the relationship of the first three factors above to the overall outcome (i.e., attitudes regarding the utility of the PDR).

The simplest way to conduct this analysis is to establish the statistical *correlation* between the various measures. Correlations can vary between -1.00 and $+1.00$. A positive correlation (between 0 and $+1$) indicates a positive relationship, such that a higher score on one variable is associated with a higher score on the other, and a negative correlation (between 0 and -1) indicates a negative relationship, such that a higher score on one variable is associated with a lower score on the other. The further a score is from 0, the stronger the relationship is, and a value above .30 is indicative of a moderately strong relationship (for more detail see Haslam & McGarty, 2003).

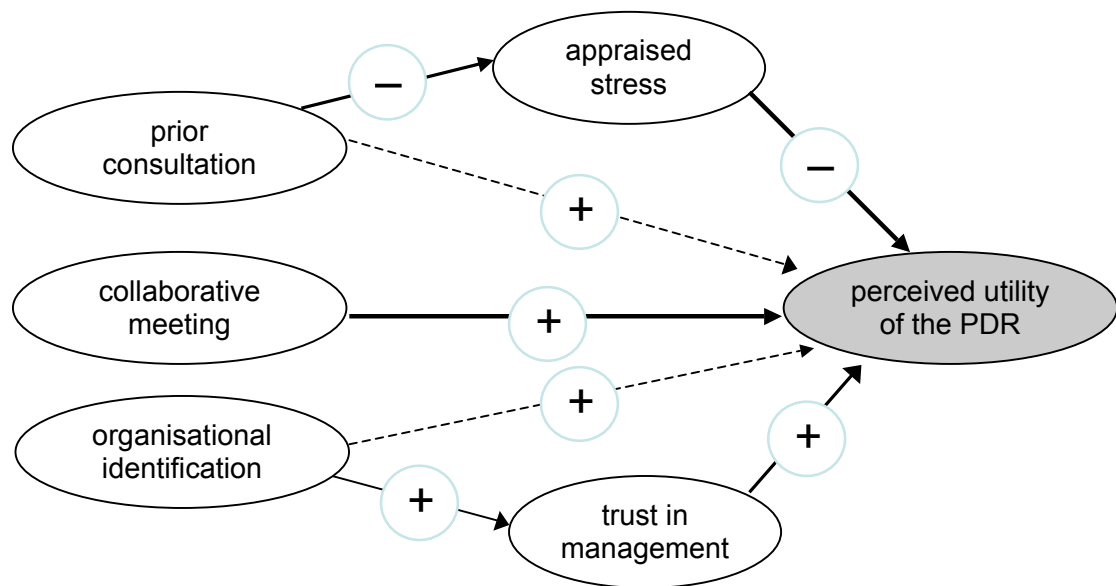
The correlation matrix for the above variables is presented below.

	prior consultation	collaborative meeting	University identification	appraised stress	trust in management	perceived utility of the PDR
prior consultation		.44	.21	-.50	.40	.39
collaborative meeting			.16	-.51	.55	.50
University identification				-.25	.31	.26
appraised stress					-.46	-.56
trust in management						.50

Looking at the shaded area of this table, it is clear that there are relationships between the five factors predicted to contribute to respondents' evaluations of the PDR, such that higher scores on four of these five factors (and lower scores on appraised stress) are associated with more positive attitudes to the PDR. All of these relationships are statistically significant.

Extending this analysis, we can examine these relationships further by controlling for the possible role of various background variables (e.g., respondents' staff group, and their level of identification with their workgroup) to see if these relationships hold. Moreover, if the proposed relationships do hold, we can attempt to position these variables (and the relationships between them) within a broader conceptual model. Conducting this analysis, the following model emerges.

In this model, the sign (+ or -) indicates whether a relationship is positive or negative and the thickness of the line indicates the strength of the relationship.



In the above model, we can see that positive attitudes to the PDR are predicted by prior consultation (β , a standardised measure of the unique relationship between these variables, = .39), collaborative meeting (β = .20) and identification with the University (β = .14). Beyond this, however, there is evidence that the impact of prior consultation (and to a lesser extent, collaboration) can be attributed to relationship with lower levels of appraised stress. In other words, if respondents reported having felt consulted about the PDR, they were less likely to have found it stressful, and this in turn was associated with more positive attitudes towards the process.

Significantly, the model also indicates that the positive relationship between organisational identification and perceived utility of the PDR can be interpreted in terms of the association between organisational identification and trust in management. Essentially, the pattern suggests that if respondents identified strongly with the organisation, they were more likely to trust the University management and its procedures and therefore to report having found the PDR process useful.

8. Qualitative Findings

In addition to the numerical information reported in Section 7, staff were also asked open-ended questions about their experiences of the PDR. Specifically, the questions asked for staff views about the benefits of the PDR (1) for individual respondents and (2) for the school or division of which they are a member, (3) the main problems associated with the PDR, and (4) suggested improvements to the PDR. A final question gave staff the opportunity to raise issues that they felt had not been covered elsewhere.

It is important to note that many respondents provided extensive comments to these four questions, thus providing very useful further insights into the issues raised by the quantitative findings. As mentioned earlier above, the substantial amount of information provided to these open-ended questions suggests respondents who were – broadly speaking – engaged with the PDR process and with the Evaluation Project.

A: Main benefits of the PDR for you

75% of respondents offered their views on this question. The table below outlines the main issues raised by both academic and non-academic staff. Responses have been categorised thematically and indicate the percentage of responses which reflected a particular theme.

<i>Non-academics (N = 125)</i>	<i>Academics (N = 80)</i>
<p>No benefits (25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None beyond usual annual goal-setting • Compliance with management requirements 	<p>No benefits (38%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No great benefit as it's not a motivator • None: a bureaucratic exercise
<p>Setting goals (34%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting relevant future targets • Gives focus to future plans • Gain manager's support for personal goals 	<p>Setting goals (30%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying and focussing research agenda • Prioritising goals for coming year
<p>Dialogue (18%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to have a constructive discussion • Chance to let off steam and seek support 	<p>Dialogue (19%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for a conversation • A good chat with a colleague
<p>Recognition of achievements (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting and listing achievements • Recognition from manager for achievements 	<p>Recognition of achievements (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction in listing achievements • Discovering that efforts are valued
<p>Feedback & reflection (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chance to seek feedback on work • Discuss role and clarify expectations 	<p>Feedback & reflection (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for feedback on/support for work agenda • Chance to take stock and seek feedback
<p>Training (10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training needs • Gain manager's support for training goals 	<p>Training (3%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training needs • Gain manager's support for training goals
<p>Financial benefits (2%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of future financial reward • Expectation of merit award 	<p>Financial benefits (3%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhaps receive a merit award

B: Main benefits of the PDR for your School/Division

68% of respondents offered their views here. It is worth noting that fewer academics than non-academics responded to this question.

<i>Non-academics (N = 115)</i>	<i>Academics (N = 72)</i>
<p>No benefits (17%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None that are apparent • School can tick a box to say PDR is completed 	<p>No benefits (14%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not improve on previous review system • None, beyond fulfilling university requirement
<p>Unknown (14%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know • No idea how the PDR has affected School 	<p>Unknown (26%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know, even though everyone completes it annually • It remains to be seen/as yet unclear how PDR is useful for the School
<p>Aligning individual and S/D goals (29%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting of individual goals in relation to school/division goals • Encourages goal congruence • Management planning • Ensures that staff are aware of their role within Division • Clarification of roles with respect to shared goals 	<p>Aligning individual and S/D goals (25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies how individual goals serve School goals • Specifies School aims and objectives • Helps to streamline staff roles within the School
<p>Overview of activities (11%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department can see progress since last review • General perspective on working practices • Provides picture of everyone's training needs • Identifies training gaps 	<p>Overview of activities (11%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring staff for the purposes of the RAE • Reviewers may get insight into life of School
<p>Staff participation and voice (10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps ensure that staff needs are heard • Means of encouraging staff to air ideas • Discussions give mutual support to staff • Provides feedback on individuals' ideas 	<p>Staff participation and dialogue (13%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets all staff groups involved • Opportunity to share support for activities by constructive discussion • Equal opportunity to talk about goals
<p>Recognition of achievements (4%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides understanding of staff achievements • Shows how individual achievements can help team working 	
<p>Collective vision (3%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works as a tool for encouraging teamwork • Provides a general collective focus 	<p>Collective focus (3%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps to convey collective direction

C: Main problems associated with the PDR

75% of respondents offered their views to this question.

<i>Non-academics (N = 126)</i>	<i>Academics (N = 79)</i>
<p>Lack of clarity regarding aim of the PDR (21%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion regarding nature of link with CBR • Link with CBR will be divisive and will undermine teamwork • Inadequate communication of aim of the PDR • Uncertainty surrounding the underlying purpose of the PDR • Perception that senior management do not subscribe to the PDR and are fulfilling university requirement <p>Time involved (19%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDR is a big time commitment, especially for reviewers • Staff unclear as to why PDR is important <p>Problems with setting goals (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDR does not have flexibility to allow all staff groups to set goals • Nature of certain jobs means setting annual goals is difficult • Diversity of tasks, staff groups, and goals makes comparison difficult • Represents a goal-centric view of performance and productivity, and therefore perhaps not a good basis for decisions about promotion <p>Lack of follow-through (18%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed PDR forms are filed without training requests being delivered upon • Lack of informal dialogue to ensure continuity • Highlighted issues remain unresolved • Lack of feedback from School/Division about action taken based on the PDR <p>Procedural problems: PDR form (12%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form is long and difficult to navigate • Difficult to understand the purpose of various sections on the PDR form • Form is not very amenable to electronic completion <p>Procedural problems: PDR reviewers (6%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to ensure consistency of approach across reviewers • Appropriateness of designated reviewer 	<p>Lack of clarity regarding aim of the PDR (37%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The link with pay may lead to conflict • Link with CBR will be divisive and will undermine teamwork • Perception that the PDR is a tool of management because its purpose is unclear • Concerns regarding how (and by whom) PDR information is used • Uncertainty as to exactly what staff are signing up to <p>Time involved (24%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considerable administrative burden ▪ Sense that the PDR is a bureaucratic exercise ▪ The PDR places a big time commitment on reviewers <p>Problems with setting goals (24%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulty of being required to set quantifiable goals across different roles ▪ Insufficient scope for different forms of performance ▪ Insufficient recognition that goals change over time ▪ Over-emphasis on individual goals and outputs ignores importance of teamwork ▪ Reflects a view of performance that only rewards individuals and which prevents a general increase in resources for all <p>Lack of follow-through (6%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of feedback from university and school regarding action taken after PDRs • Perception that the PDR is just a one-way process of form-filling <p>Procedural problems: PDR form (4%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form seems repetitive and therefore completion is an administrative burden <p>Procedural problems: PDR reviewers (4%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-constructive dialogue ▪ Ill-prepared reviewer

D: How could the PDR be improved in the future

64% of the sample responded to this question.

<i>Non-academics (N = 107)</i>	<i>Academics (N = 68)</i>
<p>Develop alternative goal-setting tool (13%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abolish the PDR Return to previous system of appraisal 	<p>Develop alternative goal-setting tool (18%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abolish the PDR Introduce different system for promotion
<p>Link with contribution-based reward (13%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove link with CBR Clarify link with CBR 	<p>Link with contribution-based reward (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove link with CBR Clarify link with CBR
<p>Clarify purpose of the PDR (9%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify exactly why the PDR has been implemented Explain to staff how the PDR benefits their work 	<p>Clarify purpose of the PDR (18%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address concerns about motive of PDR by clarifying how the information is used More information on how the process works on a larger scale
<p>Setting goals (15%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow process that acknowledges different types of goals for different staff groups Allow scope for interim review of progress in less formal circumstances Develop the PDR so that staff can set work goals as well as individual goals 	<p>Setting goals (9%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow process that acknowledges different types of goals for different staff groups Allow scope for interim review of progress in less formal circumstances Encourage team awareness
<p>PDR meetings (12%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train reviewers to encourage and allow equal participation in review meeting Allow choice in terms of reviewer and venue 	<p>PDR meetings (9%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidelines on the role of reviewer (what sort of feedback reviewer should offer) Encourage a more informal PDR meeting Ensure useful match between reviewer and reviewee
<p>PDR form (11%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make PDR form simpler, shorter and less repetitive Allow scope for non target-related aims: general aims section 	<p>PDR form (13%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make PDR form more concise and more amenable to speedy completion Provide guidelines on how sections should be completed, especially for new staff
<p>Follow-through (10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased follow-through on goals set out in PDR, especially training goals Feedback from School/Division and University on action taken on matters arising 	<p>Follow-through (9%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage group meeting to share experiences about PDR benefits Provide regular interim follow-up
<p>No improvements (3%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PDR process requires no change 	<p>No improvements (2%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PDR process requires no change

9. Summary of findings

The results presented above indicate that, on the whole, staff who responded to the evaluation questionnaire were reasonably positive in their attitudes towards the PDR. In line with this, only a small proportion of respondents reported having found the experience stressful. In terms of the PDR process as it occurred in School or Division, many respondents held positive views in this respect. Specifically, the findings suggest that many respondents were satisfied with the way they were matched to their PDR reviewer and that the meeting was characterised by collaborative dialogue with respect to work goals and related career development issues. In this vein, the qualitative findings (see Section 8A above) suggest that a main benefit of the PDR process for many respondents was the fact that it provided an opportunity for open discussion about work and related issues with a supportive colleague, as well as the chance to record achievements.

However, it is also important to note that a significant minority of respondents felt that there were no substantive benefits of the PDR for their work. In terms of the specific problems associated with the PDR, there was some indication that staff did not receive sufficient feedback from their School or Division when the process was complete. This finding was also borne out in responses to the open-ended questions (see Section 8C), where both non-academic and academics indicated that there was a lack of feedback arising from the PDR, both with respect to goals and issues arising (e.g., training, resources).

In terms of the broader impact of the PDR, there was less consensus in respondents' attitudes regarding the overall utility of the PDR process as a tool for setting goals. Many respondents indicated that they have not found the PDR to be effective in this respect. Moreover, many respondents indicated that they were unclear as to the purpose of the PDR. Taken together, these findings suggest that negative evaluations of the utility of the PDR as a goal-setting tool may reflect (a) the considerable time involved in conducting the PDR given that its purpose was unclear and (b) difficulties in setting goals (e.g., team goals) given job and role diversity.

Significantly, respondents' views regarding the utility of the PDR in raising awareness about School, Divisional and University goals suggest that the PDR was not found to aid alignment between goals at these different levels. Moreover, the findings strongly indicate that the PDR is perceived not to promote team-based working dynamics such as co-operative work practices and developing a sense of common identity in Schools and Divisions.

The findings also indicate that – for this sample of respondents at least – the PDR is not perceived to have been worthwhile given the amount of time invested in it. Significantly, it also appears that the PDR is currently perceived to serve management interests more so than the interests of employees. Furthermore, the findings show that many respondents believe there to be a link between the PDR and contribution-based rewards. Interestingly, however, many respondents indicated that they were not influenced by the issue of contribution-based rewards when completing their PDR. This pattern may imply that respondents' positive attitudes to the PDR reflect the fact that it provided an opportunity to spend valuable time discussing their work. As such, it is possible that in context of the PDR meeting, the issue of contribution-based rewards was of secondary importance given the nature of the dialogue between reviewer and reviewee.

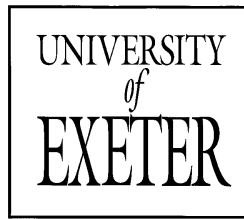
Overall, the main message to emerge from this body of findings is that while the PDR was found to be useful on several levels – specifically the opportunity for consultation and supportive mentoring that it provides – there remains the need for clarification with respect to (a) the underlying purpose of the PDR and (b) how information provided on PDR forms is used by management and by the University, specifically in relation to contribution-based rewards. The findings also suggest that it may be useful to extend the positive role of the PDR in enabling constructive dialogue to address *team issues* at work (e.g., group goal-setting, group reviews), but without increasing the administrative burden of the process as a whole. Finally, an improvement in *follow-through actions* to issues arising from PDR meetings would help to demonstrate the ongoing nature of the PDR cycle and may enhance staff satisfaction with the PDR process.

10. References

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11. Appendices

Appendix A. The questionnaire



SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

WHAT DO **YOU** THINK ABOUT THE PDR?

This questionnaire relates to the University's new appraisal scheme, the **Performance and Development Review (PDR)**. The questionnaire will ask you about the following three aspects of the PDR process:

- 1) Your overall opinions about the **implementation** of the PDR in your School/Division
- 2) Your views about the **effectiveness** of the PDR for setting work goals
- 3) Your views about possible **improvements** to the PDR process in the future

As you work through the sections of the questionnaire, bear in mind that the focus is on **your experiences** of the PDR process **as a reviewee** - there are no right or wrong answers.

- All your responses are **anonymous** and **confidential**.
- The questionnaire will take about **20 minutes** to complete. Please try to complete **all sections**, even if there appears to be some repetition in the questions we are asking.
- **At the end of the questionnaire**, we ask you to generate a self-identifying code. This is because to track changes in opinions over time, we need to be able to match this questionnaire with responses to later questionnaires, while still ensuring that your responses are **anonymous**.
- Your participation in this questionnaire is completely **voluntary**.

PLEASE NOW TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE TO BEGIN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

First, we would like to get some general information relating to your 2003 PDR meeting (if applicable) and your second recent PDR meeting.

	PDR 2003 (if applicable)	PDR 2004
1. In what month did you complete your PDR?		
2. How much time (approximately) did you spend preparing for your PDR meeting?		
3. For how long (approximately) did your PDR meeting last?		

4. How would you describe your **current overall attitude to the PDR?** (please circle)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 very negative neutral very positive

NOW PLEASE WORK THROUGH THE SECTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE, COMPLETING EACH SECTION BEFORE YOU MOVE ON TO THE NEXT

SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE PDR PROCESS

In this section, we would like to ask for your general views about aspects of the PDR process.

A. OVERALL OPINIONS ABOUT THE PDR

Here, we are interested in your general response to the PDR process. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by placing a number in each of the boxes below, where

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
= strongly disagree			= neither agree nor disagree			= strongly agree

Overall, I was happy to take part in the PDR process	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, I had a good understanding of the function of the PDR process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I feel that the PDR process provided a useful opportunity for me to discuss my work with a relevant colleague	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, the PDR process was useful for me in terms of my work	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, the PDR process was stressful for me	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, the PDR process was a positive experience for me	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I am clear about how the PDR will be used to evaluate my future performance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I am anxious about how the PDR will be used to evaluate my future performance	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am concerned that the PDR will have negative implications for me	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I feel that the PDR represents a positive culture change in the University's approach to performance management	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe there is a link between the PDR process and performance-related pay	<input type="checkbox"/>
When completing my PDR form, I was influenced by the issue of performance-related pay	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PDR

Thinking about how the PDR has taken place **within your School/Division**, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by putting a number in each of the boxes below, where

1 = strongly disagree	2	3	4 = neither agree nor disagree	5	6	7 = strongly agree
--------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	-----------------------

Overall, I feel I was informed about the aims of the PDR	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I was given an opportunity to ask questions about the PDR	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel was given an opportunity to raise concerns about the PDR	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, the implementation of the PDR in my School/Division was a consultative process	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, the implementation of the PDR in my School/Division was something that we did as a team	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff received sufficient feedback about the PDR from the School/Division after the process was finished	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. YOU AND YOUR RECENT PDR

Here, we are interested in your views about aspects of your **most recent** PDR meeting.

In terms of setting goals for my work, I think the guidelines for the PDR meeting were sufficiently flexible	<input type="checkbox"/>
In terms of setting goals for my work, I think the PDR provided me with a framework that was too narrow	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel the PDR limited the potential for me to be creative in setting my work goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I feel the PDR made it easy for me to set useful goals for my work	<input type="checkbox"/>
My PDR reviewer was someone...	
...who was part of my work/research team	<input type="checkbox"/>
...with whom I shared common goals in terms of work/research activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
...who had a good knowledge of my work/research activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
...who could provide meaningful feedback on my work/research activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
...who was senior to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
...who was in an appropriate position to review me	<input type="checkbox"/>
...with whom I shared an understanding of what my PDR meeting should achieve	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I was satisfied with the way that I was matched to my PDR reviewer	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I was sufficiently prepared for my PDR meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel my reviewer was sufficiently prepared for my PDR meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel my PDR meeting was collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel my ideas about my work/research activity were valued during my PDR meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel my PDR meeting allowed me a fair opportunity to talk about my achievements at work	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 = strongly disagree	2	3	4 = neither agree nor disagree	5	6	7 = strongly agree
--------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	-----------------------

I feel that my completed PDR form...						
...	...was the result of a two-way dialogue between me and my reviewer					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...was the product of effective collaboration between me and my reviewer					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...reflected my goals for my work/research activity					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...reflected my reviewer's goals for my work/research activity					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...reflected goals for my work/research which I share with my reviewer					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...was a reflection of what happened in my review meeting					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...was a reflection of what I wanted to get out of my review meeting					<input type="checkbox"/>

D. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PDR PROCESS

Here, we ask for your views **as a reviewee** about the effectiveness of the PDR as a *tool for setting work goals*. As before, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by placing a number in each of the boxes below.

On the whole, I feel the PDR process...						
...	...is an effective way of setting my goals and targets					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...is an effective way of identifying my training needs					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps me to structure my work more effectively					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps me to be more aware of what I am trying to achieve in my work					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...provides me with a sense of control over my work					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps me to cope with the demands of my job					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...provides me with a sense of support at work					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...gives me a sense that my supervisor/line manager is supportive of the work that I do					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...gives me a sense that my supervisor/line manager is interested in the work that I do					<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I feel the PDR process...						
...	...is a necessary feature of working life					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...places demands upon me that are unreasonable					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps me to see how my work relates to what my School/Division aims to achieve					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps me to see how my work relates to what the University aims to achieve					<input type="checkbox"/>
...	...helps staff members to understand the goals and targets of their School/Division					<input type="checkbox"/>

1 = strongly disagree	2	3	4 = neither agree nor disagree	5	6	7 = strongly agree
--------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	-----------------------

On the whole, I feel the PDR process...

...serves to promote a sense of common identity within my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
...serves to promote teamwork within my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
...encourages co-operative work practices within my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
...leads to conflict between individual employees	<input type="checkbox"/>
...leads to unhealthy competition between individual employees	<input type="checkbox"/>
...is a useful tool for managers	<input type="checkbox"/>
...is a useful tool for employees	<input type="checkbox"/>
...serves the interests of management more than the interests of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>
...gives employees a voice in the direction that their job is taking	<input type="checkbox"/>
...requires significant improvement for it to be effective as a means of setting work goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was worth the amount of effort invested in it	<input type="checkbox"/>

E. YOU AND YOUR GOALS

Here, we are interested in **your own self-assessed views** about whether *you have achieved* your work goals over the past year. As before, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by putting a number in each of the boxes below.

I feel that I have successfully achieved my work goals over the past year	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that my manager/supervisor is satisfied with my goal attainment over the past year	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that the PDR process has helped me to achieve my work goals over the past year	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that the process of identifying specific goals with my PDR reviewer has been useful in helping me to achieve these goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that the process of identifying specific goals with my PDR reviewer may have negative consequences for me in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that the PDR will be an important tool in helping me to achieve my goals in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please turn over to Section 2 on the next page

SECTION 2 – YOU AND YOUR JOB

In this section we ask for your general views about your work and decisions that relate to your work.

As before, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by putting a number in each of the boxes below, where

1 = strongly disagree	2	3	4 = neither agree nor disagree	5	6	7 = strongly agree
--------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	-----------------------

I am satisfied with my School/Division's approach to decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>
As long as I am provided with relevant information about my work, I don't need to be involved in decision-making in my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, I need clear guidance with my work, not more participation	<input type="checkbox"/>
I trust my supervisor/line manager to act with my best interests at heart	<input type="checkbox"/>
I trust my supervisor/line manager to give me relevant feedback about my work	<input type="checkbox"/>
When it comes to decisions that affect my work, I trust my supervisor/line manager to involve me as much or as little as is necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
When it comes to decision-making in my School/Division, I am satisfied that staff participation makes a real difference	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that appraisal is a necessary part of my career development	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for me to feel that my work is recognised	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for me to feel that my work is valued	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important to me that I know how my work fits with the overall goals of my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good understanding of how my work fits with the overall goals of my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important to me that I know how my work fits with the overall goals of the University	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good understanding of how my work fits into the overall goals of the University	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, I enjoy my job	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, I am satisfied with my job	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I could, I would leave my job	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I could, I would change jobs within the University	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3

Here, we are interested in how you feel about **your School/Division** and the **University of Exeter**.

A. YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL/DIVISION

Thinking about your School/Division, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by placing a number in each of the boxes below.

I feel strong ties with the members of this School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
I identify with the members of this School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
This School/Division is important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 = strongly disagree	2	3	4 = neither agree nor disagree	5	6	7 = strongly agree
--------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------	---	---	-----------------------

In this School/Division, it feels like everyone is playing on the same team	<input type="checkbox"/>
In this School/Division, there are many different groups but they get along well together	<input type="checkbox"/>
In this School/Division, it feels as if everyone is pulling in different directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, staff members in this School/Division get along well with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>
In this School/Division, we have a shared vision of what we want to achieve together	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. YOU AND THE UNIVERSITY

As before, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by putting number in each of the boxes below.

I feel strong ties with the University of Exeter	<input type="checkbox"/>
I identify with the University of Exeter	<input type="checkbox"/>
The University of Exeter is important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the University of Exeter, it feels like everyone is playing on the same team	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the University of Exeter, there are many different groups but they get along well together	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the University of Exeter, it feels as if everyone is pulling in different directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that the University has appropriate structures to allow effective communication within the University	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that there is effective communication between the different Schools and Divisions in the University	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that the senior management of the University communicate effectively with staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that the senior management of the University are in touch with the everyday working lives of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, I trust my Head of School/Division to represent the interests of my School/Division at the University level	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, I am satisfied that my Head of School/Division acts in the best interests of my School/Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
In general, the University is run in a top-down way	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that the University makes good use of my knowledge, skills and abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that the University helps me to achieve my potential	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that the University is committed to supporting employees' career development	<input type="checkbox"/>
I trust the University to act in the best interests of its employees	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please turn to Section 4 on the next page

SECTION 4 – FURTHER COMMENTS

In this section, you have the opportunity to identify the issues that *you* feel are most relevant to the impact of the PDR.

1. In your view, what have been the **main benefits** of the PDR for **you**?

2. In your view, what have been the **main benefits** of the PDR for **your School/Division**?

3. What do you consider have been the **main problems** associated with the PDR?

4. In your opinion, **how could the PDR be improved** in the future?

5. If there is **anything further you would like to add**, or if you feel there are important issues relating to the PDR that have not been covered in this questionnaire, please provide your comments here.

SECTION 5 – DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Finally, this section asks for general background information about you personally. This information will be summarised to describe the sample of staff who participate in the project (e.g. % female, average age of respondents). *The information will not be used to identify any individual, School or Division.*

❖ **Please tick the box to indicate your response or write your response in the space provided. If you would prefer not to answer a particular question, please leave it blank.**

1. What is your gender?

male female

2. What is your age?

under 30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61 or above

3. What is your first language? English other (please specify)

4. What is the **highest** educational level that you have **completed**?

primary school lower secondary school higher secondary school further, non-university education university education

5. How many years have you worked for the University of Exeter? _____

6. How many years have you been in your **current post** at the University of Exeter? _____

The following job information will allow us to identify issues that are important to different groups. In order to identify important patterns with respect to people’s experiences of the PDR process from the perspective of staff in different sectors of the University, it is important to be able to analyse the results at a **group level**.

This information is NOT being collected for the purposes of identification of individual respondents. As with all your responses, the information will only be reported in a summary form – **no individual or School/Division information will be identifiable**. Please refer back to the participant information sheet if you would like further information about anonymity and confidentiality.

7. Please indicate the **School/Division** of which you are a member:

8. Please indicate the **staff group** to which you belong and write your **grade/level** on the dotted line.

Clerical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manual/Craft	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching Fellow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic-related	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please turn over to the next page

9. Please indicate your type of **work contract** by ticking the appropriate box below.

- Permanent
- Fixed-term
- Secondment
- Other (please specify)

10. Please indicate your primary **work location** by ticking the appropriate box below.

- Streatham campus
- St. Luke's Campus
- Other (please specify)

11. If you were a **reviewer** for PDR meetings, how many reviews did you conduct?

❖ **Finally, please answer the following two questions by circling the appropriate number.**

How would you describe your attitude to completing this questionnaire?

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---------|---|---|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| very negative | | | neutral | | | very positive |

How would you describe your attitude to being asked to provide feedback on the PDR?

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---------|---|---|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| very negative | | | neutral | | | very positive |



To enable us to match responses over time, while ensuring complete anonymity, please complete your Code Identifier by following the instructions below:

- _____ a) What is the second letter in your mother's first name? E.g., Helen Smith
- _____ b) What is the first letter of your mother's maiden name, i.e., her family name before she was married? E.g., Helen Smith
- _____ c) What is the third letter in your father's first name? E.g., Robert Jones
- _____ d) What date (in the month) were you born? E.g., February 12th

Use of Questionnaire Information for Research Purposes:

The information collected in this questionnaire will be summarised, along with the responses of all other staff, and will be used to obtain a picture of University employees' experiences of the PDR. This summary will be distributed to all staff. However, as researchers we would also like to use your questionnaire data for research investigating the issue of employee involvement in aspects of organisational development and to publish these summarised results in academic journals.

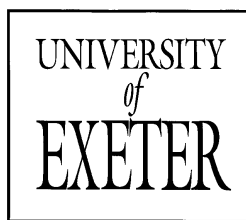
If you **do not** want your data to be used for research purposes beyond the summary that will provided to University staff, please place a "X" in this box.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Please put your COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE in the addressed envelope provided and return it via INTERNAL MAIL to Lucy O'Sullivan in the School of Psychology

Feel free to DETACH the information sheet on the front page of this booklet to keep for your own records.

Appendix B. Information for University staff



SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Evaluation of the Performance and Development Review (PDR)

INFORMATION SHEET

1. Purpose of the project: This project relates to the University's new appraisal scheme, the Performance and Development Review (PDR). In the PDR, staff members meet individually with a reviewer to set annual goals for their work and to identify any skill development or training needs.

The PDR is now a permanent feature of University procedure. However, to ensure that it is useful and effective for the users (i.e., University staff), it is crucial for the University's Personnel and Staff Development Division to seek feedback from **all staff** on what is working well and what needs to be improved.

To ensure anonymity, confidentiality and independent feedback, a group of researchers in the School of Psychology are conducting this evaluation. All data collection and analysis will be carried out by the research team, led by Lucy O'Sullivan. All staff will receive a summary of the findings from the evaluation and have a chance to comment before the start of the next academic year. These comments, along with the key findings, will form the basis of a report to the Personnel and Staff Development Division.

- 2. Why have you been asked to participate?** In order to obtain an accurate account of staff's experiences of the PDR, it is important that the University hears the views of as many members of staff as possible. Your participation is therefore very important.
- 3. What will participation involve?** You are being invited to complete the attached questionnaire, which covers a range of aspects of the PDR, including your experiences of the PDR as well as your suggestions for how it may be improved in the future. In an earlier stage of the project, interviews were conducted with a small sample of senior staff to identify key issues on which to base the development of this questionnaire. There is also space at the end for you to raise those issues *you* feel are most relevant to gaining an understanding of the impact of the PDR.
- 4. What are the potential benefits of taking part?** Participation in the project gives staff a voice to express their views about the PDR and their level of satisfaction with it. As this feedback will inform the future development of the PDR, staff have the opportunity to make a contribution to positive change within the University.

- 5. Potential risks and ethical considerations.** We are interested in hearing your genuine views about the PDR, but are aware that you may have concerns about anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses. We will exercise best practice in our handling of the data (see Section 6 below). This project has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee.
- 6. Anonymity and confidentiality.** Your involvement in this project and the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential in line with professional ethical standards for data storage. All questionnaires will use an identification code, not your name. Any information that you provide will be used solely for the purposes of the project and in accordance with the ethical standards of confidentiality that govern psychologists.
- Any published report of this project will not identify you. The University will not see the raw data, and you will not be recognisable from any summary information that is made public. In addition, direct comparisons will not be drawn between Schools or Divisions or between individuals.
- 7. Withdrawal/Premature Completion.** Your participation in this project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

If at any stage you would like further information about the project, please contact me,
Lucy O' Sullivan, at L.K.O'Sullivan@ex.ac.uk

If you would like to speak to someone not involved in this project, please contact
Dr. Louise Pendry, Chair of Ethics Committee, School of Psychology, University of Exeter:
L.F.Pendry@ex.ac.uk



Lucy O'Sullivan, Dr. Anne O'Brien,
& Professor Alex Haslam
School of Psychology
Washington Singer Laboratories
University of Exeter

Appendix C. Email correspondence sent to University staff

"Dear All,

February 2004

Please find attached a copy of the PDR evaluation questionnaire which has been designed and piloted by the School of Psychology following a round of discussions with you before Christmas.

As mentioned in Lucy O'Sullivan's memo of 19th January 2004, staff will be encouraged to fill in their individual questionnaire as soon as they have completed their forthcoming PDR. Reviewers in all Schools and Divisions will be responsible for ensuring that each Reviewee receives a questionnaire after he or she has finished the review meeting.

The Personnel and Staff Development Division will distribute sufficient quantities of the questionnaires and related instructions to all Schools and Divisions before the week beginning February 16th. Please could you ensure that Reviewers are asked to give out the questionnaire immediately after the review meeting. I would be grateful if you could stress to them that this is not an evaluation of the Reviewer but of the PDR process as a whole.

Please find also a brief note from Lucy about the evaluation exercise.

Regards

Tash Khan-Davis

Dear all,

February 2004

My name is Lucy O' Sullivan and I am a Masters student in the School of Psychology, working with Dr. Anne O'Brien and Professor Alex Haslam. My research interests include the role of employee involvement in aspects of organisational development.

As part of my research, I am looking into staff's views about the Performance and Development Review (PDR), which is the tool for individual goal-setting recently introduced by the University. The Personnel & Staff Development Division is keen to receive feedback from staff on their experiences of the PDR and has asked me to coordinate this evaluation exercise. Personnel have indicated their commitment to working with you on incorporating this feedback to help make the PDR process as effective for you as possible. Below is an outline of my role within the project.

1. I have developed the questionnaire, based on discussions with senior staff members across the University, and in line with my research questions. I have also piloted it with a cross-section of staff.
2. I am responsible for the collection and analysis of all data, to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of responses, and independence of feedback.
3. I will collate the findings from the evaluation and all staff will receive a summary and will have the opportunity to comment on this before the final report is drawn up.
4. I will submit a final report to Personnel, outlining staff views and experiences of the PDR.

In order to obtain an accurate basis on which to inform the future use of the PDR, the questionnaire itself is comprehensive. Your input is greatly appreciated, and I realise that this is an additional investment of your time. However, I hope that this will be time well spent, given the commitment from the University that the information you provide will have a meaningful impact on the PDR in the future.

If at any stage you have questions about the project or the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me at l.k.o'sullivan@ex.ac.uk.

Kind regards,
Lucy O' Sullivan