

Staff appraisals – Developing the organisation and the individual

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Staff appraisals

ADVICE AND GUIDELINES

A staff appraisal is a prepared discussion between an employee and his or her line manager aiming to develop both the organisation and the individual. The appraisal is to address the entire work situation. It is to take a long-term approach with feed-back, evaluation and planning. In the staff appraisal, both the manager and the employee are responsible for constructively sharing their experiences. The appraisal is to take as its starting point the organisation's focus, strategy, goals, circumstances, conditions and skills requirements as well as the employee's work situation, performance and future plans. Job satisfaction, issues of cooperation and working relationships can also be discussed along with general aspects of leadership. The appraisal is to lead to an individual plan of action which is compiled or updated for the employee. Each manager's experiences, lessons and plans from the staff appraisals can usefully be integrated into the relevant department/division/unit's change and development work.

The aim of the staff appraisal is to create favourable conditions for a well-functioning organisation which contributes to the strategic goals of Lund University. Staff appraisals generate participation and influence in organisational planning. Lund University wishes to stimulate high motivation among its employees who, together with management, continuously communicate and plan the organisation's goals and strategies as well as the tasks of their own working group. The staff appraisal is also part of systematic work environment management and is to be an annual, structured work-related dialogue between the line manager and the employee, which provides an opportunity to plan the forthcoming year and a transparent and foreseeable evaluation of the previous year.

During the staff appraisal, the general aims of the organisation and the individual's goals are to be clarified and the skills requirements, which are connected to the organisation's goals, are to be mapped. The manager and the employee are to follow up results and work performance, clarify goals and expectations, discuss development and training needs, the employee's work situation, allocation of responsibilities and cooperation. It is also important to ensure continuous follow-up between the annual appraisals, for example on the occasion of a salary review but also at other times.

Both the manager and the employee contribute to the development of the organisation, which is why they are both responsible for the content and quality of the appraisal and for preparing for it. The appraisal is to take the previous year's appraisal as its starting point. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that the staff appraisals are carried out and the employee is to contribute. The goal is for staff appraisals to be held in the entire University and that in a few years all staff appraisals will be of the same high level. For some managers and employees alike, the 2013/2014 staff appraisal will be the first and it may therefore take a simpler form. The most important thing is that the appraisal is carried out and that both the manager and the employee lay a solid foundation for subsequent years. The material will be developed as we all become better at implementing staff appraisals.

The head of department* is responsible for ensuring that the appraisals are held. This does not mean that the head of department conducts all these appraisals him/herself but that it should be established who will carry out the staff appraisals in each division. The person who holds the staff appraisal is to be the salary-setting manager, who is familiar with and can influence the employee's work situation. In order to ensure good quality in the staff appraisals, each manager should have a reasonable number of appraisals to carry out and the opportunity to set aside the necessary time. The manager who conducts the staff appraisal is to be the manager with the authority to decide on what is agreed and the financial resources to implement the decision. For doctoral students, the staff appraisal is to be conducted by someone other than the supervisor.

Whether you are a head of department or equivalent, or an employee, you can read more here on how to conduct a structured staff appraisal. The following is intended to function as a tool; the most important thing is that structured staff appraisals are carried out.

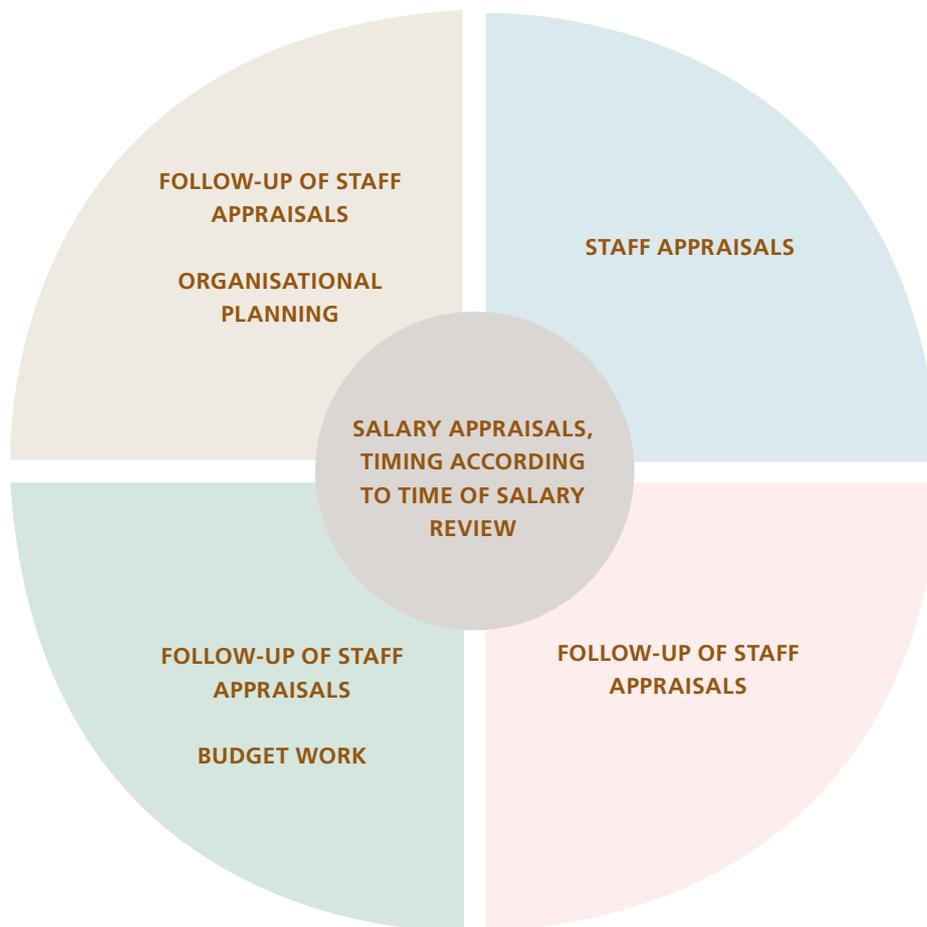
ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

***Head of department or equivalent:** Ensures that the conditions for staff appraisals are in place and that the appraisals are carried out.

Manager (line manager): Carries out the staff appraisal and provides feedback to the head of department or equivalent.

Employee: Responsible for participating in the staff appraisal.

Annual cycle



Plan your staff appraisal in four steps

The steps are:

1. Organise
2. Prepare
3. Implement
4. Follow up

Step 1: Organise

Organising staff appraisals is a management responsibility which means that there are a number of activities to plan before the implementation of the appraisals. The aim is to create favourable conditions for the staff appraisals and the following should be discussed within the department/division/unit:

- Timetable
 - The staff appraisal is to be held with all employees at least once per year.
 - Set up a joint timetable for the department/division/unit well in advance of the budget work.
- Establish which manager will hold a staff appraisal with which employee/s.
 - Discuss authority and resources if the staff appraisals are delegated, as well as the consequences of this.
- Training/support for those who are to conduct the appraisals.
- Specific issues that are important to the department/division/unit can be raised at workplace meetings for example, and should be highlighted in all staff appraisals.
- How the follow-up of the staff appraisals of the whole organisation is to be done.
 - Measures for joint plans, for example in systematic work environment management and joint further professional development activities.
- Agree on how employees who are on sick leave, parental leave or other authorised leave of absence are to be offered a staff appraisal.

Step 2: Prepare

Both the manager and the employee are responsible for preparing the staff appraisal, with the aim of achieving high quality in the appraisal itself.

MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITY:

- To inform employees about the appraisals in good time, for example at a workplace meeting, providing a timetable and the issues to be covered. Focus on issues that you as a manager or leader consider to be priorities. Ask the employees for suggestions and inform the managers in advance of other issues that the employees see as important for the appraisals.
- Book a time and a neutral venue for the appraisals and set aside sufficient time for each appraisal.
- Follow up the goals of the previous year and the professional development plans in order to be able to provide feedback to each employee on the results of the previous year's staff appraisal.
- Think about which goals are important for the year ahead, both for each individual employee and for the entire organisation.
- Think about what kind of professional development could be suitable for each employee in the year ahead due to, for example, new or changed work duties and increased responsibility.
- Where necessary, gather information from other principals such as project managers and research supervisors in order to get a holistic picture of the employee's duties and work situation.

EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITY:

- Follow up the previous year's appraisal and go through the goals and professional development plans that were established on that occasion.
- Prepare a description of your work situation.
- Prepare your own goals and duties and identify needs for concrete activities and development in order to achieve the goals and be able to carry out the duties.

Step 3: Implement

Compare with step 1 for consistency.

The appraisal is based on mutual trust and both parties have a joint responsibility for the appraisal. Arrange for the time needed to go through all the steps (see the three time perspectives below). The appraisal is to be documented and signed by both parties. See attachments 1 and 2 for templates.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND DURING THE APPRAISAL:

- Telephones switched off.
- Don't forget the agreed issues.
- Issues that have nothing to do with the appraisal are to be raised in another context.
- Listen actively. Ask counter-questions for clarification.
- Respect each other's views or experiences.
- Do not promise anything that cannot be delivered.
- Treat the staff appraisal as a confidential conversation and reach an agreement if an issue needs to be taken further.

Conclude the staff appraisal with a joint evaluation of how it went, what went well and what can be improved on the next occasion.

CONDUCT YOUR STAFF APPRAISALS FROM THREE TIME PERSPECTIVES:

- Looking back
- Current situation
- Looking forward

A) Looking back

The aim of looking back is to follow up and give feedback on what has happened since the previous staff appraisal by jointly reviewing the previous year's goals and professional development plan.

- Evaluate the activities that were to be implemented according to the previous year's staff appraisal.
- Follow up the goals from the previous year as well as any factors that have affected opportunities to achieve these goals.
- The employee's view of the previous year.
- Constructive feedback on the year's work performance.
- Evaluate the interaction between manager and employee.

B) Current situation

The aim is to check the state of the employee's current work situation.

- Work duties: Main duties, own work performance, are the employee's skills being used? Desired changes.
- Participation in the workplace: Internal meetings, seminars, workplace meetings, active participation, changes.
- Work situation: Atmosphere at work, stress, worry, equal treatment.
- Physical work environment: Equipment, premises, aids.
- Cooperation with others: Colleagues and students.
- Conditions: Resources, authority, time, opportunity for influence.
- Personal responsibility: Commitment, initiative, assumption of responsibility, attitude.

C) Looking forward

The aim is for you and your employee to establish a common vision of the employee's work duties and how they are to be prioritised, of goals and areas for development.

DOCUMENTATION OF THE STAFF APPRAISAL

On the basis of the completed staff appraisal, the individual goals are to be established and a professional development plan is to be drawn up (see appendices 1 and 2). These will form the basis for the next staff appraisal. The appraisal is to be documented to facilitate follow-up and to clarify what the manager and the employee agreed upon. In case of a change of manager, the document is helpful to avoid misunderstandings regarding the employee's goals and development.

Remember that the documentation from a staff appraisal is to be considered as an official document and sensitive information is not to be recorded here. If sensitive information emerges in a staff appraisal, it is to be documented in a form other than the attached templates for staff appraisals (see appendices 1 and 2). It is appropriate to deal with issues of a private nature, rehabilitation issues, negligence etc. in a separate discussion with the employee; the documentation is then produced in a way more suited to that purpose, for example in an agreement on tests, a written reprimand, etc. In case of uncertainty, please contact the human resources manager at your faculty.

Both the manager and the employee sign the document as a confirmation that both acknowledge what has been discussed and agreed.

ON INDIVIDUAL GOALS (APPENDIX 1)

The organisation's goals are broken down and provide a basis for the goals of the individual. It is good to have had a previous discussion of organisational goals in the working group and for the employees to be familiar with the organisation's planning. The goals are to be concrete and possible to implement and follow up.

ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (APPENDIX 2)

Skills

- Consist of knowledge, ability and willingness to act.
- Are formed in the interplay between different individuals and their values.
- Are further developed through personal reflection, experience and enthusiasm for learning.

In a broad sense, skills can be defined as the ability to manage the various demands that are made in a particular situation in a given organisation. Your skills are developed when you are driven by curiosity, a feeling that the task is meaningful and the motivation to learn. Professional development goals can refer both to the skills that are needed to carry out the work duties that the employee has, and to the professional development that enables the employee to aim for career development.

Step 4: Follow up

Identify whether any common issues have arisen that should be raised with the department/division/unit and should result in measures for the whole organisation.

A follow-up of agreed activities should be done in a continuous manner during the year as this is a part of the strategic skills plan, and also to check that the development is proceeding according to the established plan. Both the manager and the employee are responsible for implementing the activities described in the plan from the staff appraisal. Plan and implement common work environment measures according to the development plan for systematic work environment management.

VIEWS ON THE APPRAISAL

The manager and the employee are to evaluate the appraisal together. This can usefully be done at the following appraisal as time is often needed to reflect before evaluating. The aim is to develop and improve the form and implementation of the staff appraisals.

- Evaluate the aim and content and provide suggestions for improvements.
- Organisation of the staff appraisals for the unit/division/department.

Individual goals

GOALS	COMMENTS	WHEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	FOLLOW-UP

This plan is to be followed up at the next staff appraisal and salary review.

Date _____

Employee _____

Manager _____

Professional development plan – short-term

Make a note of the development needs and the proposed measures that you identified during the appraisal and that you agreed upon. Clarify how this document will be kept for the next appraisal.

WHAT IS TO BE DEVELOPED? IN THE SHORT TERM (1 YEAR)	HOW IS THIS TO HAPPEN?	WHEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	FOLLOW-UP
GOAL OF THE DEVELOPMENT				

Continued on next page!

Professional development plan – long term

Make a note of the development needs and proposed measures that you identified during the appraisal and that you agreed upon. Clarify how this document is to be filed until the next appraisal.

WHAT IS TO BE DEVELOPED? IN THE LONG TERM (3 YEARS)	HOW IS THIS TO HAPPEN?	WHEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	FOLLOW-UP

GOAL OF THE DEVELOPMENT

This plan is to be followed up at the next staff appraisal.

Date _____

Employee _____

Manager _____

Staff appraisals

The staff appraisal is an appraisal in which the employee and the line manager meet to take shared responsibility for developing both the organisation and the individual. The staff appraisal is to be conducted for all employees at Lund University. This formal requirement is not to be considered as an imposition or a burden; instead, the staff appraisal is to be seen as a positive opportunity for the employee and the manager to meet and discuss important issues. Issues that are related to the positive development of both the individual and the organisation and that over the long term will make our University into a better workplace for all our employees.

Nils Danielsen

Pro Vice-Chancellor with particular responsibility for academic human resources