Capability Policy
Capability Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 The University recognises that its employees are its most important asset and that its success depends on effective contributions from all employees.

1.2 Capability refers to an employee's ability to perform the work expected of them to the standard required. The majority of University employees meet and often exceed the standards and demands of their respective roles, however performance problems can and do arise.

1.3 Where instances of underperformance are identified the employee will be provided with an opportunity to make improvements, and given the appropriate support required to do so.

1.4 Performance issues are most effectively managed as early as possible and should, wherever possible and appropriate, be dealt with informally in the first instance with the aim of resolving the issue at this stage.

1.5 The University will treat all employees fairly and equitably within the application of this policy and associated procedure.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of the Capability Policy is to:

- Help and encourage employees to improve performance and achieve the required standards
- Ensure that the required standards of work performance are maintained
- Provide a framework through a capability procedure for dealing with issues of under-performance in a fair and consistent manner.

2.2. This policy differs from the Disciplinary, Sickness Absence and other policies as its primary focus is that of improving performance to the standard required.

2.3. Where unsatisfactory performance issues are as a result of misconduct e.g. lateness, negligence or lack of due care and attention by employees, or failure to follow reasonable instructions the case may be considered as one of unsatisfactory conduct under the Disciplinary Policy.
3. **Scope**

This policy and procedure applies to all University staff including full and part-time employees, temporary and contract workers. For employees in their probation period, guidance for managing performance can be found in the University Probation Procedures.

With regard to academic staff, as defined in the University Statutes, due regard will be given to academic freedom as specified in the University Statutes. Further details are outlined in the Capability Procedure.

The policy and procedure are compliant with the ACAS Code of Practice and employment legislation.

4. **Responsibilities**

**4.1 Managers are responsible for:**
- Ensuring employees are aware of University practices and procedures and for applying the policy and the associated Capability Procedure in a fair and consistent manner
- Developing a culture where employees are supported and assisted in achieving the required standards of performance.
- Through normal performance management meetings including one-to-ones, supervision and PDRs, addressing and resolving work performance issues promptly
- Giving honest and constructive feedback on performance
- Regularly ensuring the training and development needs of their employees are identified and met so that they can meet their objectives and any objectives set
- Making employees aware of and addressing performance issues at the earliest opportunity
- Notifying the relevant HR Manager/Advisor of capability issues as they arise
- Taking ownership of the application of the Capability Procedure for any of their employees

**4.2 Employees are responsible for:**
- Ensuring their performance meets the requirements of their role and any objectives set
- Advising their manager at the earliest opportunity of any issues, in or out of work, affecting or likely to affect their performance
- Fully engaging with their managers when dealing with issues relating to their own performance
- Keeping their professional knowledge up to date, through work or independently
4.3 **HR is responsible for:**
- Providing training, advice and support to managers dealing with matters of unsatisfactory performance
- Providing advice/support to an employee whose performance is giving cause for concern

5. **Performance and Development review (PDR) Process**

5.1 The PDR process is a system for regularly reviewing and recording the performance, potential and development needs of an employee. The PDR will ensure that employees are clear about what is expected of them and how they will be supported. The process is two-way and provides an opportunity to help identify and reveal problems which may be restricting progress and causing under-performance.

5.2 The PDR process is a continuous process and not limited to a formal review once a year. It is essential that identified work performance problems are addressed as they arise rather than waiting for the annual review.

6. **Ill Health and Attendance**

6.1 An individual’s capability to carry out their role to the required standard may be affected by their health and their attendance record. Managers must bear in mind the provisions of the Equality Act, in particular the obligation to make reasonable adjustments when dealing with employees with a disability. The procedure for managing long term periods of sickness absence is set out in the [Sickness Absence Policy](#). Managing repeated short term absence is also covered in the Sickness Absence Policy.

**Associated Documents**

- [Capability Procedure](#)
- [Improvement Action Plan Template](#)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area lead</th>
<th>Ranjna Cutforth, Emily Thomas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td>Staff Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval date</td>
<td>15 May 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>15 May 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>