



UK COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS AND COMPUTING

Personal Development Plan

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Author:	Head of People and Culture
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Responsible Committee:	College Management Team (CMT)
Approved by & date:	College Management Team (CMT) – 23 October 2026
External reference points:	Equality Act 2010; Advance HE Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (PSF 2023)
Linked policies:	PC 5.4 Annual Performance Management and Appraisal Policy and Procedure; PC 5.5 Learning and Development Policy
Audience:	Staff

1. Introduction and Background

Addressing gaps between employees' current skills or abilities and those required for their job roles will provide a clearer sense of expectations. It will also help identify milestones along the way to achieving specific objectives.

To support UK College of Business and Computing's (UKCBC's) objectives, personal development plans (PDPs) are necessary to address the learning needs identified. This approach enables the College to integrate learning and development activities with its strategic goals. Learning and development should not be seen as a separate activity, but as an essential part of achieving the College's objectives.

PDPs are a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect on their own learning, performance, and achievements. They are also used to plan for personal and professional development. The process involves critical reflection and careful planning. It also includes implementing and evaluating development activities.

In practice, PDPs will enable line managers to explain to employees the College's learning and development needs. They will also outline the plans and resources in place to meet these needs. PDPs help show how the learning needs link to achieving specific objectives. They clarify how the impact of learning will be evaluated. Moreover, PDPs enable line managers to proactively demonstrate how the evaluation of investment in people is used to inform strategies for improving the College's performance, in line with our vision. They can also include learning and training that is beneficial to employees for potential future job roles.

2. Next Steps

It is crucial that all learning needs identified during the annual performance reviews, and appraisals process are prioritised in line with the College's objectives. Departmental heads will need to address the high priority learning needs quickly during the first quarter of the Academic Year.

The People and Culture Department will coach and support line managers in implementing the PDPs in practice for employees. This support will ensure that line managers are fully involved in planning the learning activities. They will also be able to address the identified learning needs effectively. Additionally, line managers will be able to evaluate the learning outcomes.

3. How to Manage the PDP Process

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that a PDP is in place for each of their employee. Prior to the performance reviews, and appraisals meeting, the objectives discussed at the last annual performance reviews and appraisals should be revisited. These objectives will form the basis of the discussion. It is therefore necessary to have a copy of the last annual performance reviews and appraisals form available. This allows for cross referencing during the meeting.

The purpose of the PDP is to look:

- back at what has been accomplished since the last annual performance reviews and appraisals
- forward at what needs to be done.

During the discussion, the line manager and employee should agree on comments regarding progress to date. They should also identify further areas for development in relation to each of the objectives. These comments should be recorded on the annual performance reviews and appraisals form.

The form must be signed by both parties to verify that the comments accurately reflect the discussion. Once the form has been completed and signed, the line manager should upload the form unto Cezanne.

4. Evaluation of Learning Needs

All learning and development activity should be evaluated to ensure that the objectives are met. This also helps to avoid the continued use of an inappropriate course or supplier.

This is extremely important and consists of a:

- pre evaluation – this includes discussion and agreement prior to the learning
- post evaluation – this includes discussion immediately after the learning.

On an annual basis, the Head of People and Culture will look at each employee's learning needs to ensure that they are:

- meeting individual, departmental and the College's learning and development objectives
- being used in the Campus
- beneficial
- of the right content and where they are not, will be reviewing that particular learning need.

See Appendices B and C.

5. Guidance for Personal Development Plans

5.1 What is a Personal Development Plan

PDPs can vary considerably in focus. They may concentrate purely on the development needed to perform better in the current job. They may also extend to development required for the next career step. In some cases, PDPs take a much more holistic approach. This approach encourages an individual to consider their personal effectiveness. It also considers a correspondingly wider range of development needs.

A PDP approach clearly places the development responsibility in the employee's court. It aligns well with other business processes. These processes devolve responsibility and expect the commitment of individuals to positive change.

PDPs are used to:

- record learning and development needs
- plan how to meet learning and development needs
- reflect on learning and development experiences
- reflect on and plan personal, career and/or professional development.

At the end of your PDP activity, you will have an opportunity to reflect on your learning and development objectives. You will also identify any action you need to take in order to achieve these objectives. For the purpose of this guidance, it is worth examining each of the three words in turn. The first word is 'personal'. The second and third words are 'development' and 'plan'.

5.1.1 Personal

This is your plan. It relates specifically and only to you. It will enable you to tailor your own development needs in line with your work objectives, departmental work plan, and/or your particular needs.

5.1.2 Development

This is about you recognising the need to improve in particular areas of your personal and professional life. It may involve developing existing skills. It could also involve acquiring new skills. You might gain specialist knowledge in a specific area or acquire a broad knowledge of another area. It is also about finding space to develop your career and creating space within your career to develop yourself.

5.1.3 Plan

It is a plan incorporating the what, where, when, why, and how of your personal development. The plan should contain specific goals. It should also include milestones so that you can measure your progress as you go along.

PDP enables you to take charge of your own learning. It focuses on improving your professional practice and developing your career. The objectives you identify should be firmly rooted in your current role, as well as your intended future role and aspirations.

6. Tools for Personal Development Plans

The tools below are designed to get you thinking about your role and how you would like to develop.

6.1 PESTLE Analysis

A PESTLE analysis is intended to get you thinking about your position in a broad spectrum. It does this by examining the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental influences on your role.

- What external influence(s) are there on my role?

- How does this impact on the organisation?
- How do they impact on you?

It is also noted that the PESTLE analysis will be more relevant to some roles than others. Therefore, where it is less apparent, there is no need to worry about it.

6.2 SWOT Analysis

A personal SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) should, in particular, get you thinking about your personal role. It helps you reflect on your position within your department and the College.

- Try doing a SWOT analysis for yourself and your department and then comparing them.
- What does this comparison suggest?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you have? Do these suggest a direction that your career might take with or without further development?
- Do you have strengths that are not otherwise evident in your department?
- Are there perhaps weaknesses within your department, which could mean opportunities for you personally?
- Are there areas of strengths within your department, which you could capitalise on?
- Do developments at the departmental level have the potential to threaten your current role? If so, what can you do to counter that threat?

6.3 A Brief Statement of your Anticipated Development Need

This is intended to map your professional ambitions, as well as your intended progress on the organisation.

- An aim could be to have completed a professional qualification, or a proportion of it.
- Perhaps you would like to have achieved a promotion within your department, including temporary ones. You might also consider an internal secondment outside of your department. Alternatively, you may want to take steps towards refocusing your career.

6.4 Building your Personal Development Plan

The initial PDP should cover a period of at least six months. More typically, it will span a year to eighteen months. You will therefore need to think very carefully about what your priorities are. You should build a plan that is both workable and realistic. Consider what you need to do and what you can realistically achieve. If there are tensions between these two, try discussing them with your line manager.

6.5 Revising your Personal Development Plans

Your PDP is a working document. You should use it throughout your employment with the College. It enables you to measure your progress. As you achieve objectives, you can tick them off on the plan. You can then consider replacing them with new objectives to support your continuing development.

Your role may change during your employment with the College. It will be beneficial to revise your PDP to ensure that it remains relevant. Changes within the College could also have an impact on your role. You may find that you need to refocus your plans. If your role changes within the College, revising your development plan may be helpful. In some cases, starting a new PDP might be appropriate. This will allow you to evaluate the skills you need to succeed in your new role.

Where you have an ongoing continuous professional development (CPD) plan in place, such as those from the Higher Education Academy (HEA), the Postgraduate Certificates in Academic Practice (PGCAP), the Chartered College of Teaching or the Advance Higher Education Fellowships for professional memberships and qualifications, their CPD plan can be incorporated into your PDP.

Remember your PDP is a working document that you should keep up to date so that it remains relevant.

Appendix A – Personal Development Plan

The form should be completed and signed by both the employee and the line manager to confirm the PDP process has taken place.

Employee Name: _____

Department: _____

What I need to develop for the year <i>(Leadership and Academic Management to build skills in leading teams, managing departmental projects, and strategic planning within the College.)</i>	Learning Needs and Role Relevance <i>(How do the learning needs relate to my role?)</i>	Actions and Development Activities <i>(What I need to do in order to achieve my objectives e.g., coaching, mentoring. How will my learning be put into practice?)</i>	Timeline and Progress <i>(Date for Completion and Progress Update)</i>
Objective 1:			
Objective 2:			
Objective 3:			

Once completed, the line manager should upload a copy of the form on the employee's Cezanne's learning record.

Employee's Signature:

Date:

Line Manager's Signature:

Date:

Appendix B – Pre Evaluation Form

To be completed by the employee

Name: _____

Department: _____

Date of Application: _____

Date of Training: _____

Course Provider: _____

Duration of Training: _____

What skills, knowledge or competency gap do you need to fill and how do you feel this training could help?

How would you implement this training in practice?

Once completed, the line manager should upload the form on the employee's Cezanne's learning record.

Employee's Signature:

Date:

Appendix C – Post Evaluation Form

To be completed by the employee

Name:

Department:

Date of Application:

Date of Training:

Course Provider:

Duration of Training:

Please answer the following questions.

1. Did the training achieve your aims?

Yes No

2. Did the training meet your learning objectives?

Yes No

3. What were the most valuable aspects of the training?

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4. How will the training out change the way you work?

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5. How will you feedback to your line manager and colleagues?

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6. Would you recommend this training to a colleague?

Yes No

6. Any other comments

Once completed, the line manager should upload the form on the employee's Cezanne's learning record.

Date:

Employee's Signature:

Version History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes	Approved by
1.0	April 2026	Head of People and Culture	Previously approved version.	College Management Team (CMT) – April 2026
1.1	23 October 2026	Head of People and Culture	Updated following organisational restructure: role titles, internal consistency corrections, cross references, front sheet and footer updated for approval. Front sheet completed and body text style corrected, in line with GA 3.1 (26 October 2026).	College Management Team (CMT)