

What is a PRDP?

A PRDP is an annual conversation that focuses on the previous year's work, plans and objectives for the forthcoming year and includes the preparation of an individual development plan. It should:

- Celebrate achievements
- Enhance performance
- Help staff to develop careers
- Identify individual development plans

Effective PRDP conversations are supported by [Imperial Expectations](#).

The conversation in a PRDP is broader in focus than in more regular one-to-ones. Time should be specifically allocated to cover a review of the previous year and to discuss and agree specific aims and objectives for the next year, which should include details of personal and career development and aspirations.

Conditions for successful PRDPs

PRDPs work best when:

- Both appraiser (normally the person who oversees, directs, or approves the work of the appraisee) and appraisee are committed to the process, plan for the meeting, and use it constructively.
- They build on good communication and regular feedback.
- They operate as a quality conversation with the emphasis on the conversation rather than diligently completing a form, and are referred to throughout the year as a means of checking progress.

Maximising the PRDP process

Before the PRDP meeting:

- Following agreement of an appropriate time and confidential location for the PRDP, both parties should look at the previous year's PRDP or probation paperwork, as appropriate, and take time to gather their thoughts and views.

During the PRDP meeting:

- Allocate the available time (normally in the region of an hour) across the three parts of the PRDP and decide who will record the key points from the meeting.
- Review the last year's work - both appraiser and appraisee have valid perspectives to offer.
- Where differences of opinion occur these need to be explored in the spirit of both parties understanding what occurred and reaching agreement about development and next steps.
- Focus on the forthcoming year - the appraiser may offer information about the direction the team or department is going, the strategic objectives, and any challenges or changes that they know about.
- Identify personal (individual) development plans.

After the PRDP meeting:

- The paperwork needs to be completed and copies made, local administration or HR should be informed that the meeting has taken place. Both parties have an ongoing responsibility to take forward agreed actions.

Challenges to effective PRDPs

No feedback has been given during the course of the year:

- Lack of regular feedback makes PRDPs more difficult and may well be a symptom of wider problems in the relationship or nature of the job. Such lack of feedback should be discussed in the PRDP with agreement to rectify this in the forthcoming year.
- Feedback in the PRDP will need to be balanced and of an amount that is useful to the appraisee. The appraisee needs to be able to absorb the feedback. It should not be an excuse for the appraiser to get everything off their chest.

Unresolved performance issues have not been addressed before the PRDP:

- Performance issues should not be saved up for an annual PRDP but raised and explored as swiftly as possible, as soon as they arise.
- Both parties are responsible for tackling differences of opinion promptly and constructively.
- If necessary, the appraiser should schedule a separate and earlier meeting to discuss and resolve the specific performance issues, and use the PRDP to discuss the breadth of the appraisee's job, of which the performance issue is likely to be only one aspect.
- If the performance issues are overwhelming they should be addressed and the PRDP postponed.

Differences of opinion between appraiser and appraisee cannot be resolved:

- An exploration of the different perspectives can be useful as a first step to resolving the situation.
- Asking for more information and each party aiming to understand the other more fully are useful techniques in this situation.
- If the issue is relatively insignificant, agree to record the differences and move on.
- If the issue is significant and the exploration has not generated resolution it may be necessary to involve a third party – possibly the appraiser's line manager.
- If the relationship is working well and there have been regular one-to-ones and exchange of feedback it reduces the likelihood that immovable differences will emerge during the PRDP.

Relationship to pay/promotion:

- Clearly there is a relationship between the actions discussed in an appraisal and the judgements made concerning pay and promotion. However, these are separate processes and the two activities should not be conducted concurrently.

Understanding the paperwork

- PRDP forms are *prompts*, to shape and support meaningful conversations. Completed PRDPs should be reviewed at various times through the year.
- The various sample forms reflect the general differences in roles and responsibilities.
- The forms include an achievement scale to help quantify and describe progress in support of the conversation. These achievement scales are *not compulsory*.