



CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF APPRAISAL APPRAISEE PREPARATION FORM

Use this form to prepare for your forthcoming CDSA meeting. The questions below are intended to help you identify and think through any *issues* that you would like to discuss with your appraiser. You may wish this form to be part of the CDSA meeting record

A. REVIEW SINCE LAST APPRAISAL

1. If you agreed objectives with your appraiser at your last CDSA meeting, how successful have you been in meeting these? Refer to specific objectives/work projects.

All the listed objectives have been met. Specifically, I have:

- been promoted to Grade 7 (though I did not apply for the extra increment recommended in my previous CDSA)
- completed work on the A211 e-book project
- participated in the A211 e-tuition pilot and run one of the two groups
- participated in the e-tuition First Class working group
- worked as an academic assistant at the last A103 summer school
- contributed to Equal Opportunities Committee discussions and helped to identify Senda initiatives on individual courses
- developed knowledge of the curriculum and university policy
- attended training on: ICT, rights clearance, budgets, and mentoring (I could not attend an Academic Assistant course, since there was not one available at the time).

2. In general what have been your main achievements over the last CDSA period?

The achievements are listed under the courses concerned.

A103

In 2003 I was given A103 to manage in addition to A211, A432, and A420 (I dropped AA303). I managed the course well despite the fact that for long periods it lacked a dedicated Chair. In addition to my normal duties as course manager (which are heavy, given the size of the CT and the number of students and tutors), I managed a number of substantial changes to the course, which had to be implemented with little or no advance warning. These included:

- Demise of Summer School. Shortly after I took on A103, it was decided that the course's summer school would end with the 2003 presentation. I implemented all the changes to the course that this required and organised and helped run the last school, which was held on three different sites.
- Dual Presentation. In 2003-4 the University decided that A103 would in future be presented twice a year -- the first course in Arts to be so presented. I played a major role in organizing and implementing the necessary changes, thereby helping establish the course managerial procedures for dual presentation. I also contributed to the dual presentation working group and to Courses Unit discussions on the matter.
- E-tuition. In 2004 I co-authored a Faculty Board paper proposing the introduction of electronic tuition on A103. This was approved and as a result it was decided that the course would be presented in both paper and electronic form (under the code AZX103) -- making four presentations a year in total. Again I was heavily involved in implementing this innovation, which required, among other things, a lengthy approval process for the new course specification.

- Autumn start. In 2005 a problem arose with tuition arrangements for the first TMA of the autumn presentation. I negotiated with the CT Chair, Exams, Student Services, and Regional staff and arranged to move the course start date to the middle of October -- thereby resolving the problem.

A432 and A420

Since my last CDSA these two courses have ceased presentation. I helped to wrap up the courses and conducted the final tutor de-briefing sessions.

A211

This is a major second-level philosophy course, which is still in presentation. The course has had some trying times, but continues to be popular with students. In addition to my routine course managerial duties, I have:

- Contributed to drawing up and implementing the course retention plan
- Organised Rolling Review activities
- Help brief new CT chairs
- acted as an AL on the course (2003) as part of a pilot for on-line tuition, and compiled a report for the Faculty
- authored the course Taster Pack (2005-6) (to the course team's satisfaction!) and oversaw its production and distribution.

In addition, I have also continued to work on my PhD thesis on philosophical aspects of communication, under the supervision of Professor Jenny Saul at the University of Sheffield.

3. In general, in which areas of your work do constraints or difficulties arise? What might be done about them.

Having worked with Carol Green in the past few months, I have realized how useful it is to work with an assigned assistant with a detailed knowledge of my course. It would be great to be able to continue with Carol and to have her as a dedicated assistant in the future.

Otherwise, I actually enjoy difficulties and challenges; I find them stimulating! In fact what I most enjoy is having the freedom to use my initiative to solve problems and find effective solutions.

4. Which parts of your current job do you:-

(a) most enjoy?

I enjoy many aspects of my job -- in particular:

- Identifying targets for projects and preparing and monitoring action plans—as when I managed the introduction of dual presentation on A103.
- Working with colleagues in other areas of the University -- Student Services, Exams, LTS, Marketing and Communications -- and using my initiative to solve problems and ensure effective support for students—as when I resolved the autumn start problem on A103 this year.
- Proactively implementing changes, identifying potential problems and solutions—as when I took A103 through the changes mentioned in section (2) above.

In short, I enjoy coordinating and managing projects – especially when it involves challenges, new initiatives, team-working, and crisis management.

(b) least enjoy?

Things that frustrate me include:

- the apparent lack of joined-up thinking between different areas of the University
- generic initiatives that do not take account of the distinctive features of particular courses
- projects, such as the retention plan, that are not adequately financed.

5. What training and development activities have you undertaken since the last CDSA, and how do you think these have helped your work performance/development.

Since my last CDSA I have attended:

- Moodle training course (July 2006)
- Outlook 2002 Fundamentals & Best Practice (30/01/2006)
- Diversity and Inclusion (08/12/2005)
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- Diversity Toolkit: Arts (01/09/2004)
- CQC 6 A New Way of Working: Designing Courses - May 04 (27/05/2004)
- CQC 5 How do we make courses more accessible? - May 04 (25/05/2004)
- CQC 4 Online Conferencing and lyceum - May 04 (20/05/2004)
- CQC 3 Choosing Media - May 04 (18/05/2004)
- CQC 2 Students and Media - May 04 (13/05/2004)
- CQC 1 ICT Use in Courses: Why and How - May 04 (11/05/2004)
- Effective Recruitment & Selection 18/03/2004
- ICT Skills Dev Prog for CM - Word Part 2 (Arts) (27/02/2004)

I have also attended an interdisciplinary conference on mental illness at the University of Birmingham.

B. LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT APPRAISAL PERIOD

1. Please identify any areas in which you feel you could further develop your skills/knowledge/experience in order to meet your objectives and development needs.

It would certainly help to have a production course of my own. I do already have a lot of experience in course production. In an earlier, academic post I authored and produced my own University-approved and accredited courses, and in my current post I am heavily involved in the production of individual course components, such as audiovisual materials. I have also authored a taster pack for an OU philosophy course. However, I feel it would be rewarding to have the experience of producing an entire OU course of my own.

2. How might these additional skills/knowledge be developed? (For example, working with others, projects, structured meetings, seminars, workshops, courses etc.)

This is something I should like to discuss in the meeting.

3. Are there any additional responsibilities you would like to take on or areas of work you would like to become involved in over the next 12 months? Do you have any plans for future career/development?

Over the next 12 months, I am looking forward to contributing to the Arts Faculty Committee.

I am also very keen to progress to a Grade 8 job.

When I have submitted my PhD, I would also like to pursue a Certificate in Administration.

4. What other actions might be taken by the appraiser, others or the department more generally to help you to achieve your job performance and/or development goals over the coming year/two years?

I would welcome any advice on how best I could prepare myself for a Grade 8 job.