

Human Resources

Professional Services Review (PSR) Implementation Guidelines (Revised)

This document has been developed to support the PSR Implementation Policy and outlines the guidelines which support the decision making and execution of the PSR process. Line managers should use these guidelines to assist, where necessary, in their communications with staff. Staff in the realignment group should refer to the guidelines as part of their formal consultation process.

The guidelines aim to set out the elements of the process to ensure consistency and fairness in all aspects of the PSR implementation.

Realignment Group & Eligibility

A realignment group is defined by the function that individuals included within it undertake. For example an HR or finance related activity, wherever it is based. The PSR is for the University's professional services staff (both centrally and within Colleges) only at this current time.

Eligibility for staff to be included in the realignment group is as follows:

- confirmed as undertaking the identified function as a significant part (at least 50%) of your role
- core funded and on the University's business plan i.e. not working in an externally funded capacity

All staff meeting these criteria will be included; whether they work full or part time or on permanent or fixed term contracts.

Step 1 – Initiating Roles & Structure

All proposed roles will be subject to the HERA process to ensure grading is consistent with the level of responsibility and duties within the job description. The University's values are now embedded in all job descriptions as standard. Sufficient budget allocations must be agreed before confirmation of roles, grades and structure can be communicated to the realignment group.

At least one workshop should be held with staff to obtain their input into the proposed new structure and to develop the required new ways of working.

Key Tasks in Step 1:

- Identify the realignment group and invite to a workshop/s to help develop proposals
- Decide structure and establish number of roles; whether full or part time and estimated grades
- Obtain budgetary agreement and sign off by liaising with Finance and PSPU

Step 2 – Consultation on Roles & Structure

It is important to consider any recruitment activity which may be underway prior to the commencement of the consultation period. As a guide, any recruitment being undertaken (or due to be undertaken) within a period of one month prior to Step 3 below, should be suspended whilst consultation takes place and the realignment group is confirmed.

Job descriptions, once drawn up, should be sent to the HR Recruitment Team for the HERA process to be undertaken.

The consultation period must be a minimum of one month's duration. Staff who are absent during this period, e.g. maternity leave or sick leave, should receive appropriate communications in line with colleagues and afforded the same opportunity to provide feedback to line manager(s) or designated HR/PSR champion.

Support can be provided to any member of staff by line manager(s), trades union representatives, HR or a designated HR/PSR champion.

Where practicable, amendments may be made to aspects of the process to address suggestions and feedback from staff within the realignment group; as part of the formal consultation process.

Key Tasks in Step 2:

- Identify any recruitment activity which may impact on Step 3
- Draw up detailed job descriptions and arrange HERA grading
- Develop a timeline plan in conjunction with HR/PSR champion
- Consult with the realignment group staff and encourage feedback
- Ensure staff know where they can obtain support and information

Step 3 – Realignment of Roles & Structures

This step sees the roll out of the application process, having considered feedback from staff during the consultation period.

Communicate 'application windows' to staff within the realignment group and ensure any adjustments are discussed with those individuals who may have annual leave commitments, for example, during the proposed window/s. Adjustments may include extending an application window for an individual or proceeding with the interview process for all other staff involved, but suspending decision making until an individual has returned, had their interview, and an assessment of all candidates undertaken before confirming the outcome.

Applications are made on a shortened application sheet where applicants are required to give evidence of how they meet the essential criteria. Values questions will form part of the interview/panel conversation process under PSR and will now form part of the University's standard interview documentation for all its internal and external recruitment.

Once the 'application window' has closed, shortlisting must take place within 2 working days, so that applicants are notified without delay. An interview schedule can then be drawn up and notifications sent to successful candidates of their requirement to attend for interview/panel conversation.

Interviews are held where a role does not directly align to an applicant's current role (less than 50%), or is a new role, or where there is a competitive scenario.

A panel conversation is held only where there is a non-competitive scenario and where there is a direct alignment to an applicant's current role.

Key Tasks in Step 3:

- Communicate any changes following consultation
- Design the application process and establish panel members; to include at least one PSR champion
- Involve HR in order to facilitate appropriate support and coaching
- Decide which applicants should be invited to an interview and which to a panel conversation

Step 4 – Displacement, Redeployment and External Recruitment

In the event that a member of staff is displaced due to realignment, and they have exhausted the application process, they will be eligible to apply for any roles as part of the University's redeployment pool. For individuals displaced in a PSR phase, there is a special agreement that they may apply for roles above their current grade in order to provide as many opportunities as possible.

Swansea University does not seek to make any employee redundant as part of the realignment model.

If a member of staff is displaced into the redeployment pool, their designated HR Officer will work closely with them to source suitable opportunities, including any unfilled roles from the PSR process, and provide appropriate support and encouragement whilst they are undertaking this process.

Where roles are unfilled in the realignment process, these roles will fall into the University's redeployment pool and should remain in this pool for at least one week before being advertised externally.

Interviews scheduled for these unfilled roles must follow the same procedure as for the realignment process i.e. using the same values questions and, where possible, the original panel. There must be at least one PSR champion on interview panels held for PSR roles.

Salary protection is in place for individuals who are displaced to a role at a lower grade than their current grade as part of the PSR process. The protected salary will be capped and protected for four years (during this time no annual increment or pay rise will be added) from the point of acceptance of the new post. Line managers will work with the member of staff to support in developing their role, where this is possible, to be re-graded by the end of the protection period. If, after four years, the member of staff has not gained a post at a higher grade, or, the post has not been developed into a higher grade, the member of staff will be put onto the highest discretionary point of the assigned grade (add link to pay spine). Notification should be made to Finance to ensure this is aligned correctly to budget and payroll records; as well as HR systems.

Key Tasks in Step 4:

- Identify staff who may have been displaced due to the PSR process
- Consider any unfilled roles in PSR for which they are suitable

- Ensure HR Officer involvement if a member of staff is displaced to the redeployment pool
- Manage any further recruitment activity in line with the process outlined in the main PSR process
- Where salary protection is to be activated, timely communication with the Finance department is to be carried out to ensure a seamless transition with payroll.

Following the realignment, the line manager and member of staff appointed to a new role should conduct a Professional Development Review. The PDR objectives should align with the new role and should reflect the development needs of the member of staff.

Progress against the objectives should be measured regularly during the year following the realignment.

Following feedback from colleagues who have experienced the PSR process, the position has been simplified as follows.

Under the PSR process interviews are held where a role does not directly align to an applicant's current role (less than 50%) or is a new role or where there is a competitive scenario.

Where there is no competition for a role, a 'light touch' approach will be adopted by slotting the person into that role following a short Panel Conversation with the head of section and the HR change manager to ensure that the member of staff understands and accepts the revised role description and fully recognises and adopts the professional services values.

Steps following Appointment

There are two outcomes arising from PSR process interviews. Candidates will be either 'not appointed' or, 'appointed'.

Following the realignment, the line manager and members of staff appointed to new roles should conduct a Professional Development Review. The PDR objectives should align with the new role and should reflect any development needs of the member of staff arising from changes in role and expectations. Progress against the objectives will be measured regularly during the year following the realignment by the Director of the Unit/Function. The Registrar or institutional PSR lead may request an update on progress, from the Director, against any development needs identified during the realignment process

Members of staff promoted through the PSR process will not be subject to a probationary period, (unless still subject to a pre-existing probation period), but should within the first month in their new role have a PDR meeting during which objectives will be set in line with the new role.

Existing Probation arrangements

Members of staff previously appointed through PSR process interviews are no longer subject to probation, (unless still subject to a pre-existing probation period). Probation objectives for the staff affected will be replaced with PDR objectives. This should be phased in by agreement between individual managers and staff.