

PEOPLE FUNCTION POLICY

Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure

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1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Imperial College London is committed to developing and supporting staff to work effectively to meet the objectives of their roles. Line managers are best placed to offer one-to-one support and guidance to their staff in meeting their objectives and developing new skills to do so.
- 1.2 The university's Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure is designed to support managers and their staff when a member of staff's performance has fallen below the required standard, or when staff are unable to demonstrate the level of skill or capability required to undertake their role.
- 1.3 An individual's capability to do their job is defined in the Employment Rights Act 1996 by reference to their skills, qualifications, aptitude, health or any other physical or mental quality.
- 1.4 This policy provides a fair and consistent framework to improve a member of staff's unsatisfactory performance and capability concerns in a supportive manner.
- 1.5 All staff are expected to undertake their role in line with Imperial's Values and Behaviours. The [Values](#) are at the very centre of our work and guide our behaviour as a community, across all levels of the university. This policy aims to protect and promote our Values of Respect, Collaboration, Excellence, Integrity and Innovation.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure should be used to address matters of unsatisfactory performance.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all employees in the Learning and Teaching, Research and, Professional, Technical & Operational Services Job Families except those who are within their probation period, in which case the [Procedure for Managing the Probation Period](#) should be followed.
- 2.3 Academic staff are governed by the procedures set out in the Annexes to the Appendix to the Ordinances which are available on the university [Governance website](#).
- 2.4 Where there are concerns about performance and sickness absence, the People Partner, in consultation with the line manager, should decide which policy to follow i.e., the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure or the Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure.
- 2.5 Matters relating to misconduct i.e. inappropriate behaviours or actions that break workplace rules should be dealt with under the [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#).
- 2.6 Where the member of staff is an official of a trade union, the relevant full-time regional officer of that trade union should be informed of the commencement of the formal procedure under this Policy.
- 2.7 The People Partnering team, with support from the Employee Relations team (ER), as appropriate, can provide guidance and advice on the application of this policy and procedure. Key roles and responsibilities are set out in appendix A.

3 Equality and Diversity

- 3.1 The university is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Implementation of this policy must be clear and transparent and not subject to any unfair discriminatory practices.
- 3.2 If a member of staff requires any workplace adjustments to ensure equal access and opportunity at any stage of the procedure, the line manager should discuss necessary adjustments with the member of staff. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (EDIC) may also be contacted for advice.
- 3.3 This policy is inclusive and applies to all staff irrespective of any protected characteristic.

4 Disability

- 4.1 Where a line manager is aware that a member of staff has a disability, the line manager must make sure they have done all they reasonably can to support the member of staff, which includes the implementation of appropriate workplace adjustments. Further information is available on the [Disability Support webpage](#).
- 4.2 The [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre \(EDIC\)](#) can support with an assessment of workplace adjustments that might reasonably be put in place, in addition to any adjustments which have already been put in place.
- 4.3 Where this policy is being followed, the performance of the member of staff will be considered in light of any adjustments that have been implemented.

5 Confidentiality

- 5.1 All information relating to performance improvement will be treated confidentially. Information relating to the case will only be shared with those who have a legitimate requirement to see the documentation as part of resolving the matter or any consequent procedure and therefore the processing of data for contractual necessity (such as for the purpose of paying salaries).
- 5.2 It is expected that all parties involved will be sensitive to the nature of performance improvement proceedings, including matters discussed and any evidence provided. Breach of confidence may compromise the integrity of the procedure and may itself be subject to disciplinary action. This does not prevent individuals from seeking appropriate advice, support and information in relation to the case e.g. from their Trade Union.
- 5.3 If the university continues to investigate a matter as a duty of care or a legislative requirement then it may be necessary to share the information with appropriate external parties.

Recording and monitoring information

- 5.4 Written records will be kept by the People Function at each stage of the formal procedure. Staff may take their own written record of meetings, but recording devices, including use of mobile phones will not be permitted.
- 5.5 Any personal data collected or retained in relation to the Performance Improvement policy or procedure will be in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. Further information regarding how data will be processed is detailed in the university's [Privacy Notice for Staff](#).

6 Line Manager Responsibilities

- 6.1 Line managers are responsible for supporting and monitoring the performance and workload of their staff, ensuring that duties and responsibilities are reasonable. Workload should be considered in line with [Imperial's Workload Principles](#).
- 6.2 Line managers are expected to practice good people management skills, support their staff and minimise the need to address performance concerns. This will include:
 - Providing accurate job descriptions/person specifications and competency-based interviews that enables the appointment of the best candidate for job vacancies.
 - Ensuring the required standards of performance are set out as part of the workplace induction process and fully explain the duties and responsibilities in the employee's job description and how they are expected to deliver these.
 - Providing relevant and adequate training to support staff to undertake their role.
 - Managing the probation period to develop the member of staff and identify and resolve problems at an early stage.
 - Providing feedback in an objective, timely and structured manner.
 - Holding regular 1-2-1 and team meetings.
 - Undertaking an [Annual Review Conversation \(ARC\)](#) with their staff.

6.3 Managers are expected to raise any concerns they have with a member of staff's performance as soon as they arise, and they should attempt to resolve them informally in the first instance.

7 Performance Improvement Procedure

7.1 The full procedure for improving poor performance is set out in Appendix B.

7.2 **Stage 1** is the informal process for improving performance. The aim is to resolve the issues and improve performance promptly without the need to instigate the formal procedures. In most cases it is recommended managers start at Stage 1. The line manager may seek advice from the People Partnering team before initiating the informal stages and at any point during the informal procedure.

7.3 **Stage 2** sets out the first step of the formal process for improving performance, which is a first formal improvement meeting. The formal process will usually be started when performance continues to be unsatisfactory following the informal procedure but may be started if the initial level of underperformance is sufficiently serious to proceed straight to formal action. Following the first formal improvement meeting, a first formal improvement notice along with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be issued.

7.4 **Stage 3** of the procedure involves a second formal improvement meeting. This will be arranged if there has been insufficient improvement within the designated timescale following the first formal improvement meeting. A final formal improvement notice along with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be issued.

7.5 **Stage 4** of the procedure is a Formal Performance Review Hearing which is arranged if the lack of ability to perform the role continues. Following the hearing, the member of staff may be dismissed due to their poor performance.

7.6 Before initiating any formal stage of the procedure, line managers should seek advice from a member of the People Partnering team.

8 Complaints and Resolution

8.1 If a member of staff raises a complaint during the Performance Improvement Procedure, the People Function representative will review the complaint, discuss the matter with the member of staff and/or their representative, and will decide how the complaint should be considered.

8.2 Where the complaint constitutes a response to the performance concerns raised by the line manager, the member of staff's comments will be considered as part of the Performance Improvement Procedure.

8.3 If the complaint is unrelated to the substance of the Performance Improvement Procedure, the People Function representative may advise that the appropriate course of action is for the case to be reviewed separately under the Resolution Policy and Procedure. In such cases, the performance improvement procedure will usually continue simultaneously with the Resolution procedure.

9 Support

- People Partnering team (Provide support and guidance for stages 1-3)
- Employee Relations (ER) Team (Support the People Partnering Team and support stage 4)
- People and Organisational Development (provide training for managers/leaders)
- Occupational Health Service (for support with active health/medical conditions)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (EDIC) (for support with implementing workplace adjustments)
- Joint Trade Union Representatives
- Confidential Care
- Flexible Working Policy (For staff wanting to request flexible working)
- Special Leave Policy (for different types of leave)

10 Related Policy and Guidance

- Supporting disabled staff effectively: Guidance for managers
- Workplace Adjustments
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Resolution Policy and Procedure
- Probation procedures
- Charter and Statutes
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

11 Appendix A – Key Roles and Responsibilities

Individual responsible	Role/Responsibility
Informal performance improvement procedure (Stage 1):	
Line Manager	<p>Managers are expected to raise any performance concerns they have with a member of staff as soon as concerns arise. If a performance concern arises, they should arrange to discuss this with their member of staff with the aim of resolving it informally in the first instance.</p>
Member of staff	<p>Members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with their job description and understand what is required of them in their role.</p> <p>If members of staff are unsure of the required standards and expectations, they should discuss these with their line manager at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Members of staff should inform their line manager as soon as possible of any factors that may impact on their ability to undertake their duties so that the necessary support can be implemented as appropriate.</p> <p>Staff are expected to achieve and maintain the required work standard and keep up to date with mandatory training requirements as appropriate.</p>
People Partnering team	<p>Discuss and consider with managers the concerns regarding a member of staff's performance and support them through the informal procedure.</p> <p>Request support and guidance from ER as required.</p> <p>Signpost to other support available for e.g. courses run by POD, EDIC for workplace adjustments etc</p>
Formal performance improvement procedure (Stage 2, 3 & 4):	
People Partnering Team (Stage 2&3)	<p>A People Partner will support the line manager with procedural advice throughout stages 2&3. They will attend formal meetings and will provide advice and guidance on policy and procedures in addition to administrative support for arranging the meetings and sending correspondence throughout the process. They will seek guidance from ER as required.</p>
Employee Relations (Stage 4)	<p>An ER representative will support the line manager with procedural advice. An ER representative will attend the formal hearing and will provide advice and guidance on policy and procedures in addition to administrative support for arranging the hearing and sending correspondence throughout the process.</p>

Line Manager	Draft and provide required documentation in advance of formal meetings/hearings. Carry out their designated role at any meetings/hearings. Confirm any action to individual as directed by the procedure, in line with timescales outlined in the policy. Continue to support the member of staff to improve performance.
Member of Staff	Prepare for and attend any meetings/hearings convened. Provide a written response to the documentation as necessary.
Work colleague	An individual may ask a work colleague to attend formal meetings/hearings with them to provide support.
<u>Trade Union Representative</u>	Offer support and assistance to individuals and attend formal meetings/hearings.

12 Appendix B – Performance Improvement Procedure

1. Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

- 1.1 Managers are expected to raise any concerns they have with a member of staff's performance as soon as they arise, and they should attempt to resolve them informally in the first instance before proceeding to the formal procedure.
- 1.2 The line manager should arrange an informal meeting to discuss their concerns and during the course of the meeting, they should discuss where the performance is not reaching expectations using specific examples and evidence.
- 1.3 During the informal discussion, the manager should ensure the member of staff understands the required standards of the role and provide them with an opportunity to explain their performance and raise any concerns they have about their job. The manager should review the support and guidance available and consider if additional training is required. The line manager should also provide an opportunity to discuss any relevant mitigating factors such as underlying health conditions or disability and consider if any existing adjustments should be reviewed or if new workplace adjustments should be considered.
- 1.4 If there are mitigating circumstances that have been impacting the member of staff's performance, a period of time should be agreed to allow these to be explored and remedial actions implemented with the manager's support e.g. if it has been identified that there has been insufficient training, time should be allowed for this to be completed.
- 1.5 If health concerns or a disability has been declared these should be explored, and appropriate support and adjustments considered or reviewed. Information for staff and line managers about considering and implementing workplace adjustments can be found on the EDIC webpage.
- 1.6 A review should be scheduled, usually between 1 and 3 months, to assess whether the guidance, support and/or workplace adjustments to address the mitigating factors has improved the performance to an acceptable standard.
- 1.7 If there are no mitigating circumstances, or any additional support required, or guidance and/or adjustments has not led to the required improvements, the manager should take the following action:
 - Set clear objectives to improve performance. The SMART objective method is recommended to help ensure goals are well designed and positively support progress.
 - Agree any other actions that will be taken to support the member of staff e.g. additional training, coaching, mentoring or workplace adjustments (if appropriate).
 - Agree a timescale for the improvement to be achieved, usually between 1 and 3 months depending on complexity of tasks, relevant knowledge, skills, experience, and requirement for training etc and set a date for review.
 - Confirm the discussion in writing. The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) template included at appendix C can be used to set out and record the objectives and expectations.
- 1.8 During the review period, progress will be reviewed regularly, usually through weekly one to one meetings, and feedback on progress will be given to the member of staff. Positive support and encouragement will be offered to the member of staff to help them meet the required standards of performance. The member of staff will also have the opportunity to comment on their progress.

1.9 At the end of the review period, the manager should confirm to the member of staff either that sufficient improvement has been made and the need to continue to sustain the standard expected of them or that sufficient improvement has not been made so Stage 2 (the formal procedure) of the policy will commence.

2. Stage 2 – First Formal Improvement Meeting

2.1 Stage 2 of the procedure should be followed where performance continues to be unsatisfactory following the informal procedure, or where the initial level of underperformance is sufficiently serious to proceed straight to formal action. A People Function representative will provide support and guidance throughout the formal procedure.

2.2 The member of staff will be invited to a first formal improvement meeting which will usually be chaired by the line manager and will be convened and conducted in accordance with the procedure for notification, representation and recording of formal meetings set out in appendix D. The member of staff has a right to trade union representation or be accompanied by a work colleague to all formal meetings.

2.3 The invite will include a report produced by the line manager outlining the concerns to date and the support/training provided so far to address the concerns e.g. through informal discussions, regular review and feedback, arranging necessary support and training. The invite will set out details of how the member of staff can provide written response in advance of the meeting.

2.4 At the first formal improvement meeting, the line manager should:

- Remind the member of staff of the prior informal discussions about their performance (if appropriate) and set out the actions that have been taken to support the member of staff's improvement so far.
- Explain how the member of staff is not meeting the standards required by providing specific examples to evidence their concerns.
- Give the member of staff the opportunity to comment on the issues raised, put forward any explanation or mitigating circumstances they may have for their performance and also give them the opportunity to ask any questions.
- Discuss whether there may be any additional training, workplace adjustments or support that will help the member of staff to achieve sustainable performance improvements.

2.5 The outcome of the meeting may be:

- A decision to take no further action;
- A decision to agree a timescale for an informal review (see Informal Review Meetings) of the member of staff's performance
- A decision to issue a first formal improvement notice including a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (see appendix C).

2.6 Where a first formal improvement notice and PIP is issued, written notification will be provided by the manager within 10 working days of the meeting.

2.7 The first formal improvement notice will:

- Set out the issues discussed at the meeting.
- Explain that a failure to reach the performance standards required may result in the issue of a final formal improvement notice.
- Set out that the notice will be placed on the member of staff's file for 12 months and will be disregarded after that period.
- Set out the right to appeal

2.8 The PIP will:

- Outline specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic work objectives with regular review periods.
- Set out any training and development activities designed to support the member of staff to achieve the required standards.
- Set out any other support identified to assist the individual in improving their performance.
- Set out an agreed timescale for the improvement to be achieved (the review period). This will depend on the complexity of tasks, relevant knowledge, skills, experience, and requirement for training.

2.9 During the review period, the line manager should ensure they maintain regular contact with their member of staff, usually through weekly one to one meetings, provide regular feedback, and review progress to indicate if the member of staff is on track to demonstrate the improvements required. The line manager should keep a written record of progress made and discussions during the review period.

2.10 If the member of staff's performance has improved sufficiently at the end of the review period, this will be acknowledged by the line manager and the member of staff advised in writing that no further formal action will be instigated at this stage. The improvement notice will usually remain live for 12 months, and the line manager should ensure that the member of staff understands that continued good performance is expected. Any further similar performance issues for the remainder of the improvement notice may need to be considered at Stage 3.

3. Stage 3 – Second Formal Improvement Meeting

3.1 If there has been insufficient improvement within the designated timescale following the first formal improvement meeting, or if further serious performance issues arise during the period of the formal improvement notice, a second formal improvement meeting will be convened.

3.2 The meeting will usually be chaired by the line manager and should be convened and conducted in accordance with the procedure for notification, representation and recording of formal meetings set out in appendix C.

3.3 The line manager will produce an updated report outlining the continuing concerns, the support/training that has been provided and where the member of staff continues to not meet the expectations of the role which the member of staff will have the opportunity to respond to in advance of the meeting.

3.4 At the second formal improvement meeting, the line manager will:

- Remind the member of staff of the prior discussions about their performance and set out the actions that have been taken to support the member of staff's improvement so far.
- Explain the outstanding performance issues and explain how the member of staff is not meeting the standards required by providing specific examples to evidence their concerns.

- Give the member of staff the opportunity to comment on the issues raised, put forward any explanation or mitigating circumstances they may have for their performance and give them the opportunity to ask any questions.
- Discuss whether there may be any additional training, adjustments or support that will help the member of staff to achieve sustainable performance improvements.

3.5 The outcome of the meeting may be:

- A decision to take no further action;
- A decision to agree a timescale for further informal review of the member of staff's performance;
- A decision to issue a final formal improvement notice along with a PIP.
- If appropriate and with the agreement of the member of staff, redeployment to alternative work on the same grade or a lower grade and pay where operationally feasible, may be considered at this stage.

3.6 If a final formal improvement notice is issued at the end of the second formal meeting, a written notification, including the PIP will be provided by the line manager within 10 working days of the meeting.

3.7 The final formal improvement notice will:

- Set out the issues discussed at the meeting.
- Set out that the final improvement notice will be placed on the member of staff's file for 12 months and will be removed after that period.
- Explain that a failure to reach the performance standards required may result in a formal performance review hearing which could lead to dismissal.
- Set out the right to appeal.

3.8 The PIP will:

- Outline specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic work objectives with regular review periods (See SMART objectives)
- Set out any training and development activities designed to support the member of staff to achieve the required standards
- Set out any other support identified to assist the individual in improving their performance
- Set out an agreed timescale for the improvement to be achieved (the review period)

3.9 If the member of staff's performance has improved sufficiently at the end of the PIP review period, this will be acknowledged by the manager and the member of staff advised in writing that no further action will be instigated. The improvement notice will usually remain live for 12 months, and the line manager should ensure that the member of staff understands that continued good performance is expected, and that any further similar performance issues for the remainder of the improvement notice may need to be considered at Stage 4.

4. Stage 4 – Formal Performance Review Hearing

4.1 If the lack of ability to perform a role continues, the line manager will advise the People Function representative to convene a Formal Performance Review Hearing in accordance with the procedure for notification, representation and recording of formal meetings as set out in appendix D.

- 4.2 The Hearing will usually be chaired by the line manager's manager, or an alternative manager not previously involved with the case. A member of the ER Team will attend to advise on policy and procedure.
- 4.3 The line manager will produce an updated report which the member of staff will have the opportunity to respond to in advance of the Hearing.
- 4.4 At the Hearing, the chair will:
 - Ask the line manager to describe the work standards expected of the member of staff and explain how the member of staff's work has fallen short of the standards required.
 - Ask the line manager to describe the measures that have been taken to support the member of staff to improve their performance.
 - Ask the member of staff or the representative to explain or present their case against any of the points raised.
- 4.5 After hearing all the evidence and representations the following outcomes are available:
 - Extend the PIP review period.
 - Possible adjustments to the role within the remit of the grade and the operational requirements.
 - Redeploy the member of staff to alternative work on the same grade or a lower grade and pay where operationally feasible, with the agreement of the member of staff.
 - Dismiss the member of staff, with appropriate notice, due to their poor performance.
- 4.6 Redeployment opportunities will have been reviewed at Stage 3. Where appropriate, and at the discretion of the Chair, redeployment may also be considered as a potential option at Stage 4 as an alternative to dismissal. At this stage, the possibility of redeployment allows for reassessment of whether circumstances have changed since the initial discussions at Stage 3. The [Redeployment Policy](#) provides information about the groups of staff that have priority in the redeployment process.
- 4.7 The chair will provide their written decision to the member of staff, their representative (if applicable) and to the line manager, usually within ten working days of the hearing.

5. Right to Appeal

- 5.1 A member of staff has the right to appeal against any formal action taken at stage 2, 3 or 4 of this procedure.
- 5.2 A member of staff wishing to appeal against any formal action taken against them should do so within ten working days of receipt of the written notice of the action being communicated to them. The member of staff should send this in writing to the Director, Employee Relations & Policy and specify the reason(s) for the appeal.
- 5.3 The reason(s) for appeal should be one (or all) of the following:
 - Procedural errors where there is evidence the process was incorrectly followed
 - New evidence has come to light that may change the outcome of the original decision
 - Fairness and reasonableness of the outcome.
- 5.4 Appeals against a formal improvement notice will be heard by a senior line manager with a member of the ER team, both of whom will have had no previous involvement in the case.

- 5.5 Appeals against dismissal will be heard by a panel consisting of three members of the university not previously involved in the case, with an ER representative present to provide procedural advice to the Appeal Panel.
- 5.6 A member of staff has a right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by either a Trade Union representative or work colleague.
- 5.7 If new evidence is introduced during an appeal hearing it may be referred back to the original chair in order that they may review the sanction. The appeal hearing may be reconvened if the member of staff does not accept any subsequent decision of the original chair.
- 5.8 Appeal hearings will be conducted in accordance with the following terms of reference:
 - To review whether the matter under consideration was adequately investigated and substantiated
 - To review whether the university's procedures were correctly and fairly implemented
 - To consider whether the formal action was reasonable in the circumstances known to management at the time of the meeting/hearing.
- 5.9 In the event that an appeal panel decides to reinstate a member of staff who has been dismissed, this will be done in a manner which maintains continuous service and without loss of pay (assessment will be made of any income received by the member of staff while not in university employment).
- 5.10 The university regards the appeal decision as final.

13 Appendix C – Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Template

PERSONAL DETAILS:				
Staff Name:	Job Title	Line Manager's Name:		
Plan Start Date:		Plan End Date: <i>(When will the Overall review of the plan be undertaken)</i>		

Aspect of Performance Under Review: <i>Enter a description of the nature of the underperformance</i>	Objective: List the agreed objectives linked to the aspect of performance that will be monitored.	Performance Measure: Agree the targets against which the employee will be measured. <i>How will you know when the expected standards of performance have been met?</i>	Timescale: Agree a reasonable timescale for improvement e.g. <i>review each week for four weeks</i>	Progress: Review how well the member of staff has performed against the agreed objective (completed, still in progress, not completed) and give reasons.
	Enter improvement objective 1	Detail SMART criteria for improvement objective 1	Detail when progress against improvement objective 1 will be reviewed	Detail the specific reasons / consequences if the member of staff does not achieve improvement objective 1
	Enter improvement objective 2	Detail SMART criteria for improvement objective 2	Detail when progress against Improvement objective 2 will be reviewed	Detail the specific reasons / consequences if the member of staff does not achieve improvement objective 2

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Identify any appropriate learning or development that will assist the individual in improving their performance.			
L&D Activity	Expected Effect / Outcome	Timescale	
Other Support identified to assist the individual in improving their performance			
COMMENTS BY MANAGER: To be completed at the end of the review meeting on (date)			
COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE: To be completed at the end of the review meeting on (date)			
Overall outcome if plan objectives are completed/not completed Consequences if PIP is not completed satisfactorily by the plan end date			
Date	Signed	Date	Signed

14 Appendix D - Notification, Representation and Recording of Formal Meetings/Hearings

1. Notification

All members of staff will receive five working days' written notification of any formal meeting convened under the Formal Action part of the Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure.

The notification will include:

- The date, time and venue of the meeting
- Details of all attendees at the meeting, including any witnesses.
- Copies of any documentation that will be considered at the meeting.
- A copy of the Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure.
- The potential outcome of the meeting, i.e., issue of a first formal or final formal improvement notice, or dismissal.

If a remote meeting is scheduled, a Microsoft Teams invite will be sent to the member of staff once attendance is confirmed.

Where a member of staff has a disability then arrangements for a formal meeting should include consideration of any requirements for reasonable adjustments.

If a member of staff has difficulty understanding written or spoken English then appropriate accommodations should be requested.

2. Representation

An People Function representative will be present at all formal meetings/hearings to provide procedural advice, along with a notetaker.

The member of staff has a right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

Under exceptional circumstances the chair of the meeting and the People Function representative will consider requests for accompaniment by a relative or friend; this individual must not be a legal representative. The name of any representative accompanying them to the meeting should be provided in suitable time before the meeting.

If the representative is unable to attend on a proposed date, then the member of staff may suggest an alternative date provided it is within 5 working days of the original date. This 5-day time limit may be extended by mutual agreement.

If a member of staff is persistently unable or unwilling to attend a formal meeting/hearing without good cause a decision will be made in their absence based on the evidence available.

3. Recording

The People Function representative will arrange for notes to be taken at all formal meetings to record the key points discussed. The notes will not be a verbatim record. Following the meeting, the notes will be provided to the member of staff to review and confirm they are an

accurate record of the meeting. A deadline to review and return the notes will be given which will usually be within three working days. If the notes are not agreed as an accurate record, an annotated version should be provided. If the chair of the meeting agrees the amended version is accurate, the changes will be agreed. If the chair does not agree, then both versions will be kept on record.

The covert recording of informal or formal meetings, e.g. by use of a mobile phone or other recording device will not be permitted.