



College of  
Policing

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# Professional development review user guide

Version 1.0

# Introduction

The professional development review (PDR) is:

- a series of conversations between you and your line manager that focus on your professional development
- a way for you to take control of your professional development and plan for career progression
- the place where formal recognition of your good work is held
- a chance to show your commitment to continuing professional development (CPD)
- the way to demonstrate personal responsibility toward your own development
- a performance assessment and review conducted by your line manager.

The national standards for a PDR are set by the College of Policing. The key information is summarised here, although more detailed information can be found in 'Professional development review – Guidance on reviewing and assessing performance (College of Policing, 2016)'.

## The PDR model

Your force PDR should meet the following standards:

- your PDR must be based on or aligned to the behaviours and values information found in the competency and values framework (CVF)
- your line manager must be trained to the national policing standard for assessment before conducting a performance assessment
- you must complete your PDR by the date set by the chief constable
- your force must consider linking the PDR appraisal date to your incremental date.

The main requirement of any PDR mechanism is to provide consistent, valid and ethical evaluation as part of an open and fair process. PDR is a requirement for all officers up to and including chief superintendent. Pay progression based on appraisal grading is applicable to all officers up to and including chief inspector.

# The PDR

The PDR should be a cycle of discussion, planning and activity between you and your line manager, typically underpinned by at least an initial, interim and end of year meeting. Your role is to undertake and provide evidence for this activity. Your line manager's role is to use the national assessment structure to decide on the level of your performance.

All assessments must be made against common standards, although line managers should provide additional support to the following:

- individuals new to service, rank or role
- excelling performers
- low-performing individuals
- individuals seeking promotion, temporary promotion, transfer or other career development opportunities.

## PDR meetings

### Initial and interim meetings

Ideally, the initial meeting between you and your line manager would:

- take place in the period before the PDR cycle begins
- involve closing down the previous PDR
- include a discussion around the evidence expected for your performance
- provide time to discuss your continuing professional development (CPD) objectives.

Ongoing and ad hoc meetings or discussions with your line manager about your progress are strongly encouraged. Any relevant information or evidence can then be recorded.

Your force will have an agreed schedule for the frequency of further review meetings, but the minimum requirement is for a meeting at the mid-year point. At the mid-year meeting you and your line manager should:

- agree the evidence to be used in the assessment
- review your progress

- amend or update objectives
- put supportive measures in place if required.

## End of year meeting and grading

The end of year meeting will cover two separate areas:

- where interim meetings have been held, the assessment of that period
- the overall end of year assessment and grading.

The minimum standard three grades are:

<b>Unsatisfactory contribution</b>	<b>Satisfactory contribution</b>	<b>Highly effective contribution</b>
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Your force may have a grading mechanism better adapted to their PDR process – one that provides a more nuanced approach or one that is better suited to the needs of your force.

Your line manager will use the national assessment standards to assess your overall performance. In determining your end of year grade, your line manager will look to the recorded evidence of:

- role-related development
- competency and values framework (CVF)
- continuing professional development (CPD)
- attainment or otherwise of objectives
- response to development plans (if appropriate)
- personal observation.

The 'no surprises' criterion applies to PDR. If your performance is unsatisfactory, you must be made aware of this before the end of year review. Short-term or minor issues will generally be addressed through an informal development plan but, where appropriate, officers will be supported through formal UPP or incapability procedures for police staff.

## PDR evidence

The evidence of performance is based on:

- role profiles and CVF behaviours
- CPD
- attaining objectives
- Assessment and Recognition of Competence (ARC), if relevant.

## What is good evidence?

Being competent in our role involves delivering our work in a complex and blended way, using a variety of positive behaviours and personal qualities. For this reason, the best source of good evidence for PDRs are the situations, incidents, events, tasks or duties we resolved or completed over the last year that most effectively demonstrate our:

- professional competencies
- professional behaviours
- personal qualities.

Policing can be an environment full of evidence-rich opportunities that prove our effectiveness and allow us to meet multiple objectives. Evidence-rich opportunities provide for a number of assessment and personal qualities to be demonstrated together.

The type of evidence-rich opportunities you are able to draw on will depend on your role and the expectations and standards around it. For example, an officer might attend a domestic disturbance and demonstrate the following:

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Behaviours</b>
<b>Conducting a risk assessment</b>	Public service
<b>Interviewing a witness</b>	Service delivery
<b>First aid</b>	Professionalism
<b>Conducting a search</b>	Decision making
<b>Managing conflict</b>	Working with others
<b>Conducting an arrest</b>	

## Interviewing a suspect

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Each of the above actions can be linked to an in-force assessment standard for the role the officer has. By referencing the evidence produced from the incident – whether physically recorded or on a digital platform – the officer is able to meet multiple standards for their role.

The evidence for our PDR comes from the type of work we do. In order to successfully evidence your PDR, it is worth taking the time to think of any evidence-rich contexts during the previous year. By looking at your outputs or performance during this period, you may be able to find recorded evidence or media of your performance, whether physical or digital. You might then be able to reflect on your work and link it to multiple standards, expectations or performance measures.

## Role profiles and personal qualities

As a minimum, you will be assessed against the core functions of your role, although your force may require additional evidence for specialised police roles. It is good practice to keep a copy of all documents relating to expectations of your role.

The CVF competencies and behaviours are broadly matched to work levels. Officers and staff must provide evidence against these, generally in the form of a short statement and reference to supporting materials such as:

- letters of thanks
- incident logs
- case files.

Supporting material can also come from sources such as:

- a third party
- peer groups
- other supervisors
- external stakeholders, including members of the public.

Your line manager will, of course, make a professional judgement on the value and ethical origins of any unsolicited comments, particularly where highly supportive or negative bias is apparent.

## Continuing professional development

CPD is a range of learning activities through which all policing professionals maintain or enhance their performance; in policing it is demonstrated as their capacity to practice legally, safely, ethically, and effectively.

The College has developed a CPD model based on reflective practice, a continuous learning strategy which involves four stages: self-awareness, planning, action and reflection. Beyond taking personal responsibility for your own development and ensuring that your CPD activities are based on the value of their output – for example, the difference it makes to you and your practice – there are no further demands in terms of hours spent or number of points accumulated.

More detailed information on CPD – including resources to plan and record your CPD and to help develop your reflective practice – is available under the Professional Development Programme banner on the College of Policing website. If you have signed up as a member of the College of Policing, you will also have access to further CPD opportunities, including the facility to upload and store your CPD evidence.

## Attaining objectives

Typically, the evidence you are required to submit during PDR will be to demonstrate that you have met your objectives for the year. Your CPD objectives should be blended or varied enough to enable your chosen activities to meet personal, role-based and force priorities. It could be that your PDR and CPD objectives are identical or aligned, particularly if they are identified through collaboration with your line manager. For this reason and others, it is desirable to run your professional development cycle in conjunction with the PDR year.

## Assessment and recognition of competence

The ARC process requires an assessment of competence of officers in the core role relevant to their rank. At present, the foundation threshold assessment is aimed at constables moving from pay point 3 to pay point 4. If you are an officer involved in the ARC process, we recommend you read the 'ARC Candidate Guide (College of Policing, 2016)'. For a discussion of ARC in a PDR context, see 'Professional development review – Guidance on reviewing and assessing performance (College of Policing, 2016)'.

Although the evidence for the ARC process is likely to be from the same source, the PDR is not the main vehicle by which an assessment of competence will be made. In order to

successfully complete the ARC assessment, you must gain a satisfactory grade or above in your PDR and meet the ARC assessment of competency.