Personal Development Planning Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Deputy Chief Executive
Relevant to:	All LJMU Staff and Students
Approved by:	Academic Board, 29th June 2015
Responsibility for Document Review:	As above and/or Director of the Teaching and Learning Academy
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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Curriculum Design Guide

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Personal Tutoring Policy
- Programme handbook
- Student Handbook

Personal Development Planning

PDP is '*PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken by a learner to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development. It is an inclusive process, open to all learners, in all higher education provision settings, and at all levels.'* Quality Assurance Agency (2012) Quality Code Chapter B3 Learning and Teaching

PDP is intended to help students:

- become more effective, independent and confident self-directed learners;
- understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context;
- improve their general skills for study and career management;
- articulate their personal goals and evaluate progress towards their achievement;
- develop a positive attitude to learning throughout life.

The ideas that underpin these conceptions mean that PDP is:

- a structured process that is integral to higher level learning;
- concerned with learning in an holistic sense (both academic and non-academic);
- something that an individual does with guidance and support: the latter perhaps decreasing as personal capability is developed so that it becomes self-sustaining;
- a process that involves self-reflection, the creation of personal records, planning and monitoring progress towards the achievement of personal objectives.

The minimum expectations for PDP at LJMU are:

- that it should support students' academic development and acquisition of appropriate study skills as well as students' vocational/employability-related development
- that it should promote students' wider engagement with and external to the programme of study, for example through participation in voluntary activities, internships, course representation
- the programme's approach to PDP in terms of where and how it is supported must be clearly communicated to students and included in the Programme Guide
- that for all programmes Personal Development Planning (PDP) is introduced as part of induction/ transition at every level;
- that every student must have an opportunity to review his/her progress at least twice an academic year in line with LJMU's Personal Tutoring Policy. The first such opportunity must be within the first six weeks of the start of the year / programme;
- that all students registered on a LJMU HE award must be provided with opportunities for PDP at each stage of their programme but that these opportunities may be differentiated to take account of changing needs and expectations at each level;
- that opportunities for PDP must be provided for students at all levels; for levels 3, 4 and 5 these must be within the curriculum supplemented with direction to additional support, where needed. For levels 6, 7 and 8 these opportunities may be within or without the curriculum.

Further Guidance

By definition PDP is a personal endeavour but there are ways in which the curriculum, and opportunities outside of it, can prompt and support this important activity. PDP can be undertaken in different ways but what is important is that there is a consistent understanding of, and integrated approach to, PDP within Programme teams and in how other staff are called on to support aspects of PDP, for example, in relation to skills and study support and work-based learning placements.

Consideration should be given to how existing or developing approaches to PDP might be utilised to assist students in increasing their self-awareness, setting goals, identifying aspirations beyond graduation and articulating their strengths and weaknesses to themselves and to others. The emphasis here is on providing opportunities for students to be able to reflect on their learning, how they learn best and how they might adapt their learning styles and approaches in different situations. By providing a rich and varied teaching, learning and assessment environment, appropriate to the subject content, programme teams will be helping students develop their future capabilities, as well as implementing good curriculum design.

Central to PDP is that it supports students to record, reflect on, and work towards the achievement of their aims and goals. PDP processes help students to reflect on their personal development; to evidence their skills development; and can help students to develop as individuals. It is a requirement that all programmes (that last for an academic year or longer) provide at least two review meetings a year. Usually programmes provide more than simply an opportunity to review progress and PDP is part of a wider programme focus. That focus could be on careers development, employability, professional practice, citizenship or the global community.

The focus of PDP may differ at each level. PDP at level 3 and 4 could focus on the transition into Higher Education; PDP at level 5 could focus on the experiences of learning gained through work related learning or broader engagement activities and the focus at level 6 could be on synthesising learning and development into achieving the student's future aspirations.

Allied to PDP within the curriculum will be the individual review meetings that students have with their Personal Tutor which may be used to discuss with students how they are performing academically and how they might enrich their development and make the most of their time at University. Personal Tutors, especially, must be familiar with the structure of the programme and how PDP and other opportunities for students' wider development and engagement are supported. For example, at what stage in the programme are work-based learning placements or field trips undertaken; what other opportunities are there for students to get more involved in their programmes of study or wider University life: course representation; peer mentoring; staff/student partnership projects.

Supporting PDP

Aside from the programme team and those staff with particular modular responsibility, provision of PDP will draw on the support of a number of staff with particular expertise. Faculty staff might include Skills Support Officers/Student Development Co-ordinators, placement/work-based learning support staff and learning technologists. In addition, Employability and Careers Advisers from the Careers Team may be involved. Specialist support in advice, guidance and study support can also be accessed through Student Advice and Wellbeing Services and the Academic Skills Team.

Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)
LJMU, in common with many other institutions, has introduced the Higher Education Achievement Report which has relevance to Personal Development Planning processes and the role of the Personal Tutor. Students will graduate with a HEAR which provides information on their programme of study; their academic achievement; as well as wider achievements. As

such it may be useful as a basis for reviewing progress and planning future development. Students may also use this information as a reference point when putting together applications for placements, jobs or further study.

Recording PDP
Appropriate to the programme and discipline context, different mechanisms may be used to record PDP. There is provision within Canvas to develop an e-portfolio. The e portfolio may be used to support students as they gather evidence and reflect on their academic and wider experiences and their personal and skills development.

PDP and postgraduate study

Many students are likely to have been introduced to PDP either during an undergraduate course or as part of a professional review activity in the workplace. At postgraduate level PDP should be designed to build upon the skills and self knowledge that a student already has in order to help to develop and refine a student's personal, academic and career goals. The same minimum requirements for PDP, outlined above, apply to LJMU postgraduate programmes of at least a year's duration.

What is the role of PDP in supporting Career Development and Employability?

In terms of supporting career development and employability skills, PDP can continue to be used as a supporting process to help students reflect and action plan for their future, underpinned by the online CareerSmart resources: Explore, Experience and Engage. Additionally, by emphasising that work related learning, career development, employability and PDP is taken seriously programme teams can help establish a culture of engagement with CareerSmart.

PDP sessions could refer students to the opportunities in the curriculum where they may be able to develop and evidence employability skills and attributes. . The onus is on the student to make the most of their opportunities. It is important, however, that students are advised of opportunities and encouraged to engage in PDP and CareerSmart, beyond the initial stage (CareerSmart: Explore). Equally students are likely to have extra curricular opportunities that they can use to help with their personal development e.g. volunteering, part time work, mentoring, family responsibilities etc and PDP sessions could remind students to think about how these are contributing to their development. .

CareerSmart: Explore

Students on undergraduate programmes of 240 credits or more are required to complete the online CareerSmart: Explore resource The development of self-awareness for career planning could be linked with other Personal Development activities. .

Students will have the opportunity when undertaking CareerSmart: Explore to reflect on the activities e.g. skills analysis, values audit and make notes on the associated template.

Please note:
- Completion of the online resources is consistent and agreed across the University.
- It has been adopted across all relevant undergraduate programmes and is included in an identified Level 4 module.
- The assessment task can be an additional assessment component to the usual three assessment items per 24 credit module.
- Completion of the CareerSmart: Explore assessment task is exempt from the requirement that all summative items must be attempted. Therefore, it will be an assessment task related to the self-awareness learning outcome but will not be **the only** assessment task associated with the learning outcome.

- Franchise programmes which share the module with the internal version of the programme will be expected to undertake an assessment task related to self-awareness but will not have access to the World of Work Careers Centre aspect of the assessment.

Further information

Personal Development Planning: Guidance for institutional policy and practice in higher education
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/PDP-publication.aspx

Higher Education Academy resources
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/ourwork/employability/PDP_and_employability

Series 2, number 7 *Personal development planning and employability* (2009)

Kumar A. (2005) *Personal Development Planning and the Progress File*, a comprehensive resource guide on PDP with links to other articles.
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/subjects/hlst/guide_personal_development_planning_and_the_progress_file

Cottrell S.(2003) *Skills for Success: The Personal Development Planning Handbook* (2003) Palgrave Macmillan http://www.palgrave.com/skills4study/pdp/index.asp - on line adaptation of the book.

Cottrell S. (2008) *The Study Skills Handbook 3rd ed* Palgrave Macmillan

Kumar A. (2007) *Personal, Academic and Career Development in Higher Education SOARing to Success* Routledge

QAA Scotland, Effective Learning Framework: Using focused learner questions in personal development planning to support effective learning, (2007)

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/SCOTLAND/DEVELOPMENTANDENHANCEMENT/Pages/Personal-development-planning-Scotland.aspx

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Effective-Learning-Framework-Using-focused-learner-questions-in-personal-development-planning-to-support-effective-learning.aspx

The Centre for Recording Achievement http://www.recordingachievement.org is a national network organisation and a registered educational charity. It seeks to 'promote the awareness of recording achievement and action planning processes as an important element in improving learning and progression throughout the world of education, training and employment.'

Careers Team information www.ljmu.ac.uk/careers