Inspiration for Questions for the Dialogue

This question guide contains a number of questions you can ask in the staff performance and development review. This does not mean you have to use them. This does not mean you have to ask every question. And this does not mean you should ask the questions exactly the way they are worded here. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the dialogue is about what is most important for the staff member. Therefore, it may be important to explore some areas more than others. The need for specific questions about an area may vary. You need to assess that in the situation. Through this exploration, you can identify together whether there are conditions affecting the current situation and that will also affect development opportunities. The questions you ask may also depend on whether you are a manager for technical and administrative staff or for academic staff.

In order for the conversation to be authentic and present, it is also important that you approach the conversation based on how you communicate on a daily basis. Therefore, do not use language that you would not otherwise use. This lacks credibility and does not instill confidence. Use the question guide for inspiration on how you can learn more about the staff member’s current situation, what matters to them, and how together you can create space and conditions for their learning and development. With inspiration from the question guide, remember to have an eye for the staff member’s experience of the current situation, but also make sure to ask about conditions in the past that may be affecting the current situation. Finally, you must also make sure that the dialogue has a future perspective, so that together you focus on development and forward-looking agreements.

The question guide is divided according to the four needs that your staff member scored prior to the dialogue. Although the four needs are separate they also overlap, and questions on one need can easily address and be asked about the staff member’s experience with another need. These questions can also identify any connection between the staff member’s experience of their current situation on all four needs and the effect on the staff member’s development potential.
Mastery

Questions on the current situation

- How do you feel about you having the skills needed to complete your tasks?
- Do you find that your professional and personal skills, knowledge and experience are sufficiently incorporated in your work tasks/your work life?
- Are you challenged in your work life? Too much? Too little? About right?
- How can you make the best use of your strengths in your work? What development potential do you have?
- Do you find that your tasks and functions contribute to solving the core task? How?

Questions that look back

- What tasks have been most stimulating for you in the past year? Which ones have been most challenging?
- What have you done to maintain and develop your teaching and supervision skills, including your PBL competencies (cf. Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy) (for academic teaching staff)?
- What have you done to develop and maintain your research skills (for academic research staff)?
- What have you done to comply with the five administrative principles through your work and develop these competencies (for technical and administrative staff)?

Questions for the future

- What does it take for you to feel that you can master your tasks (better)?
- How can we create appropriate challenges together that strengthen the application and development of your competencies?
- Are there new tasks or work areas you'd like to work on in the future? Do you lack the competencies to handle these tasks? Or will it be a better use of your existing competencies?
- What competence development activities do you think can enable you to better complete your tasks?
- What can we do together to ensure that there is progression in your teaching, supervision and PBL competencies (cf. Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy), such that you develop your research competencies or your administrative competencies within the fundamental administrative principles?
Meaning

Questions on the current situation

- What gives meaning and content to your work?
- How do you feel about your work-life balance?
- Is it clear to you when you are making progress in your work and what the goal of your tasks is?
- How do you see yourself as part of the department’s research profile, as teaching staff or as administrative staff?
- How do you feel you live up to the organisation’s values, organisation and direction?

Questions that look back

- What have you done to create a meaningful work life in the past year?
- What have you done to balance work and private life?
- How have you handled it when you are given tasks that take up your energy?
- What have you done if you find that your dreams for your work life and the framework of the organisation do not match?
- What have you done to have high job satisfaction?

Questions for the future

- What is a good work life for you and where would you like to go in your work life?
- When we look at your work tasks in light of your current life situation, are changes needed?
- What do you dream your future work life looks like in, say, two or five years?
- How can we strengthen your experience of your work life as meaningful?
- What do you need from me (as your manager) to maintain or develop job satisfaction and energy in your work?
Belonging

Questions on the current situation

- How are you thriving at work in general?
- How do you feel about collaboration with your closest colleagues?
- How do you generally feel about collaboration in the unit/the department?
- What are your working relationships like outside the unit/department?
- How do you feel about receiving the support you believe you need from your manager to feel valued and included in the team/unit/department?

Questions that look back

- What have you done to have a good working relationship with your closest colleagues?
- What have you done to seek out new relationships?

Questions for the future

- How do you want to experience professional community and collaboration in the workplace?
- How do you want to be part of the social community at work?
- What working relationships could be strengthened to make your work easier or better?
- Are there any areas where you want to contribute more or less to the workplace community in the future?
- What can your manager do to help develop the collaborative culture at work? What can your colleagues do? What can you do yourself?
Autonomy

Questions on the current situation

- How do you experience being acknowledged, respected and accommodated as who you are by your colleagues and your manager?
- In what situations do you feel you can be yourself and are there other situations where you cannot?
- How do you feel about your colleagues and manager seeing your potential?
- How do you feel about your potential being understood and used in your work?
- How do you feel about the impact you can have on your work life so that you can develop your potential?

Questions that look back

- How have you handled situations where you felt like you couldn't be yourself?
- How do you feel about your colleagues and manager showing you respect and acknowledging you?
- How do you feel about your colleagues and manager not showing you respect and not acknowledging you?
- What does a good colleague look like to you? How would you like to be treated by good colleagues?
- How are you a good colleague to others? How do you show this to your colleagues?

Questions for the future

- How do you want to feel respected, acknowledged and understood in your work life?
- How do you want to develop your ambitions and potential in your work life?
- How can we strengthen your being able to influence your work conditions?