Preparation for good appraisal meetings – a checklist for staff

Well before the meeting
- What do you want to get out of the appraisal?
- What contribution do you want to make to the process?

Your job
- Are you clear about its purpose and how it fits into the work of the department and organisation?
- Are its boundaries and your responsibilities clear – any uncertainties, or overlaps/underlaps with others?
- Do you have a copy of your job description to make sure it is still up to date?
- Are you clear about what objectives/targets you agreed to meet and what you might like to aim for next?

Your work and working relationships
- What helps and hinders you? How, practically, could your manager give you more support or remove obstacles? How does the way he or she organises his/her work impact on yours?
- What issues of resourcing, communication, feedback and guidance, change, etc would be right to raise at the appraisal meeting? Should these have been discussed before?
- Do you want more job interest? What could the manager do, in reality, to help?
- Do you want more (or less) authority, responsibility, discretion? How can you show/prove that you are ready for more of these things?

In the run-up to the meeting
- What do you want to get out of it?
- Are you ready to listen, to acknowledge feedback and to commit to actions?
- Are you ready to respond positively to questions from the manager such as: ‘What are three things you’ve done really well this year, and that you’re really proud of – and what are three things you’d do differently if you had another chance or more time?’; ‘What can I do or do differently to help you to do your job well/better?’ and ‘How could you develop the job/role to make a bigger contribution to the organisation?’ Make sure you have examples and evidence to demonstrate your achievements.
- Be prepared to give positive constructive feedback to your manager about what they do that helps or hinders your performance. (For example: Helps – your manager has an open door policy and is always ready to answer questions and give guidance. Hinders – your manager is so busy that he/she tends to delegate work at the last minute, which disrupts your work planning and causes you unnecessary stress.)