

# Nomination for Merit Award or Contribution Points

## Who is this document for?

Line Managers can submit individuals and/or teams for consideration for a merit award or contribution points using one of the forms included here.

- Form A is for Line Managers to submit an individual nomination and is also used for individuals to submit personal nominations for Merit Awards.
- Form B is for Line Managers to submit teams for Merit Awards and is also used for teams to submit their own nominations for Merit Awards.
- Form C is for Line Managers to nominate individuals for Contribution Points.

Individuals may submit a personal application for a Merit Award using Form A.

Some examples of nominations are included at the end of this introductory section.

## What to do

### Merit Awards

1. If you have identified a staff member, staff members or a team that has performed exceptionally during the past year (i.e. since the last PDR) use form A or B to describe why you believe their performance should be considered for a merit award.
2. The first part of the form is all about the person or team being nominated, the reason(s) you are nominating them and what evidence you have to support the nomination (eg testimonials, service outputs, targets met etc). This latter section should indicate why this evidence warrants consideration. The summary guidance below describes the sort of things that make performance exceptional.
3. Once completed please sign and date the form and pass it to your Assistant Director<sup>1</sup> who will collate and prioritise nominations across the Division.

### Contribution Points

1. If you have identified a staff member who has consistently exceeded the performance required for their job during the past year (i.e. since the last full PDR) and has previously received a Merit Award then use the form C to describe why you believe their performance should be considered for a Contribution Point.
2. The second part of form C asks you to list any evidence or notes to support your proposal, against key areas of the staff member/team's role. Suitable evidence might include testimonials from customers or colleagues, outputs like reports and online materials, or statistical records. Your notes might include your own observations on achievements or contextual information (eg the particular timing or circumstances involved).
3. Once completed please sign and date the form and pass it to your Assistant Director (or as directed) who will collate and prioritise nominations across the Division.

## Summary guidance

(for full document see: [www.admin.ex.ac.uk/personnel/~docs/Rewarding\\_Performance\\_June07\\_Final.pdf](http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/personnel/~docs/Rewarding_Performance_June07_Final.pdf))

The italicised parts of the extracts below are intended to help guide managers in their decisions and are not part of the original document.

### Merit Awards

- Employees (other than individuals engaged solely on a fees or claims basis, including the Temporary Staff Bank, and Heads of Professional Services) become eligible for consideration for a Merit Award after 12 months continuous service with the University, subject to remaining in the employment of the University on the date payments are made.

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<sup>1</sup> Seek advice from your Assistant Director as a different path for nominations may be used in some Divisions.

- Merit Awards are subject to statutory deductions but are not pensionable and are not recurrent.
- Merit Awards recognise *exceptional performance* over the review period by individuals and teams.
- To be eligible for consideration for a Merit Award, employees must have participated in the PDR process during the review period.
- Merit Awards should be a minimum of £500 (pro-rata for part-time staff) up to a maximum of 10% of salary.
- Where teams are rewarded the level of award should normally be the same for each member of the team.

### Definition of exceptional performance

Performance is determined in relation to:

- What an individual or team does (outputs)
- How an individual or team achieves this (behaviour)
- Influencing factors (organisational, personal, group)

Exceptional performance usually involves more than one of the following:

- Exceeding the standards expected in all key areas of work
- Employing effective behaviours consistently in all situations
- Performance BEYOND PDR objectives during the review period
- Employing effective working strategies in response to changes in capacity, working practice, workloads and other influencing factors
- Exceeding the standards expected in a new area or areas of work
- Consistently exceeding all key work targets

### Contribution points

- Staff will be considered for a contribution point provided they have been at or above the top progression point of their grade for at least 6 months and they are not 'protected' at a rate of pay above the pay for the grade of their role.
- In order to be considered for contribution points - staff should be *sustaining the higher level of performance expected of a fully competent and experienced professional in the grade for their role*. Therefore, for an employee who is at the top of the normal progression range or within the contribution range to be eligible for a contribution point, *they must have received a merit award in the previous year*. Staff who are paid in the contribution range will normally be considered for a further contribution point (up to the top contribution point for the grade) every other year.
- Contribution points should be used to reward individuals whose *contribution, on a sustained basis, exceeds that normally expected in their role in terms of high levels of outcomes*. Substantive changes in the job responsibilities of support staff should normally fall within the ambit of job evaluation but contribution points may also be used to reward *staff who have taken on significant additional responsibilities without a change in grade*.
- Decisions on contribution points must be 'evidence-based' and relate to the business aims of the Service or School. The reason for each decision must be recorded within the School/Service. (ie there should be a 'business case' for each decision.)
- Contribution Points will be effective from 1 August. (For decisions made in the autumn term, the award will be effective from the preceding 1 August.)

### The Award Panel

- Recommendations on Merit Awards and Contribution Points will be made by Panels within Schools and Services. In Services, the Head of Service, another senior member(s) of the Service and the relevant Personnel Manager will form the Panel.
- To ensure that trade union representatives are assured about the fairness of the decision-making process, trade union representatives will be entitled to attend meetings of Merit Award

Panels on a selective basis to audit the process. They will also be entitled to receive lists annually of awards made. Exceptionally, Chairs of Panels may be asked able to explain their decisions to trade union representatives.

- Recommendations of the Award Panels for the Professional Services will be reviewed by the Registrar and Secretary and the Director of Personnel and Staff Development. The purpose of the review is for the senior management of the University to be satisfied that the process applied by the Service reflects the priorities of the Institutional Strategy and Business Plan and meets the University's standards and principles for Merit Awards and Contribution Points. This review will also consider any concerns raised by trade union representatives.
- The role of the Award Panel is to:
  - determine which staff have demonstrated exceptional performance beyond PDR objectives over the review period, for Merit Awards, or over a longer period for Contribution Points.
  - ensure that the reason for each decision is evidence-based and is recorded.
  - ensure that the University's standards on equal opportunities are given full consideration when decisions are made about the allocation of Merit Awards and Contribution Points. In particular, staff employed on part-time and fixed-term contracts, externally funded staff and staff on probation should be given equal consideration. Significant variations in the allocation of Merit Awards between groups of staff should be fully explained and justified.

## Example nominations for Merit Awards

### Individual nomination

Why is this staff member being nominated for a Merit Award? Please give examples of exceptional performance they have delivered in 2007/08	The XX project was an outstanding success with a number of key outputs that have significantly improved this important service. Z took on a difficult role in the overall project being responsible for the vital areas of aa, bb and cc. She put in many extra hours, alongside her existing job, to make it all work. At the same time she ensured that - by substantial re-organisation and prioritisation - her normal duties and responsibilities were not detrimentally affected. Z has since also been instrumental in suggesting improvements in methodology and working practice.
What is the supporting evidence?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Testimonials from customers and colleagues - see the attached emails</li> <li>2. Feedback at meetings - see meeting notes attached</li> <li>3. Output - see Project report (&lt;web address&gt;)</li> <li>4. Personal statement:  As Z's Team Leader I have witnessed first hand the outstanding contributions she has made to the XX project and the creative and intelligent ways she managed her own time and tasks to ensure that her existing commitments could be met. This, coupled with the professional way she has consistently dealt with demanding customers throughout the difficult project phases, has prompted me to nominate Z for a Merit Award.</li> </ol>

### Team Nomination

Why is this team being nominated for a Merit Award? Please give examples of exceptional performance they have delivered in 2007/08	The Z Team are a new team and in the last year they have worked hard to gel as a team. The results have been exceptional in a number of key areas, making dramatic service improvements that have reaped all kinds of benefits to both the team and the division as a whole. The Service in general has benefited through the good PR this has generated.
What is the supporting evidence?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New style customer information (see attached)</li> <li>2. Improved list of services (&lt;web address&gt;)</li> <li>3. Testimonial from Senior Management (attached)</li> <li>4. Notes from team meetings - contributions from team members about positive team work (attached)</li> <li>5. Memo from Registrar regarding improvements (attached)</li> </ol>

## Example nomination for Contribution Points

Please list the specific areas where performance has consistently exceeded that required	
Key job responsibility/duty	Supporting evidence/comments
To devise and deliver....	This has been achieved to an exceptionally high standard across a much broader range than originally designated. This work has been taken up centrally for use by the whole of PS.
To work with....	Z has continued to collaborate effectively and with excellent benefit with this division. Furthermore Z has developed a wider network which has proven invaluable in other areas of Z's work.
To represent Academic Services on....	Z has been an highly effective ambassador for AS and has communicated important or significant items across the service consistently and rigorously.
Offer guidance on....	Z's has continued to develop expertise in this area and has, over the past year, reinforced her position as an authoritative, approachable and efficient source of advice and guidance.
Professional development	Z has maintained consistently high standards of performance through background research, skills updating and rigorous continued professional development of which she has a thorough record.

**Form A****Individual nomination – Merit Award**

Period covered	
Name of staff member	
Job title	
Date of PDR	
Grade and scale point of staff member	

Why is this staff member being nominated for a Merit Award? Please give examples of exceptional performance they have delivered in 2007/08	
What is the supporting evidence?	

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Position: .....

Assistant Director: ☐ Approve nomination ☐ Reject nomination Initial: .....

**Form B****Team nomination for Merit Award**

Period covered	
Name of staff members	
Name of team	
Date all PDRs completed	
Why is this team being nominated for a Merit Award? Please give examples of exceptional performance they have delivered in 2007/08	
What is the supporting evidence?	

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Position: .....

Assistant Director: ☐ Approve nomination ☐ Reject nomination Initial: .....

**Form C****Individual Nomination for Contribution Points**

Period covered	
Name of staff member	
Job title	
Date of last Merit Award	
Grade and scale point of staff member	

Please list the specific areas where performance has consistently exceeded that required	
Key job responsibility/duty	Supporting evidence/comments

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Position: .....

Assistant Director: ☐ Approve nomination ☐ Reject nomination Initial: .....