



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

# **People Management Handbook**

Workforce Development Team 2025

# | Contents

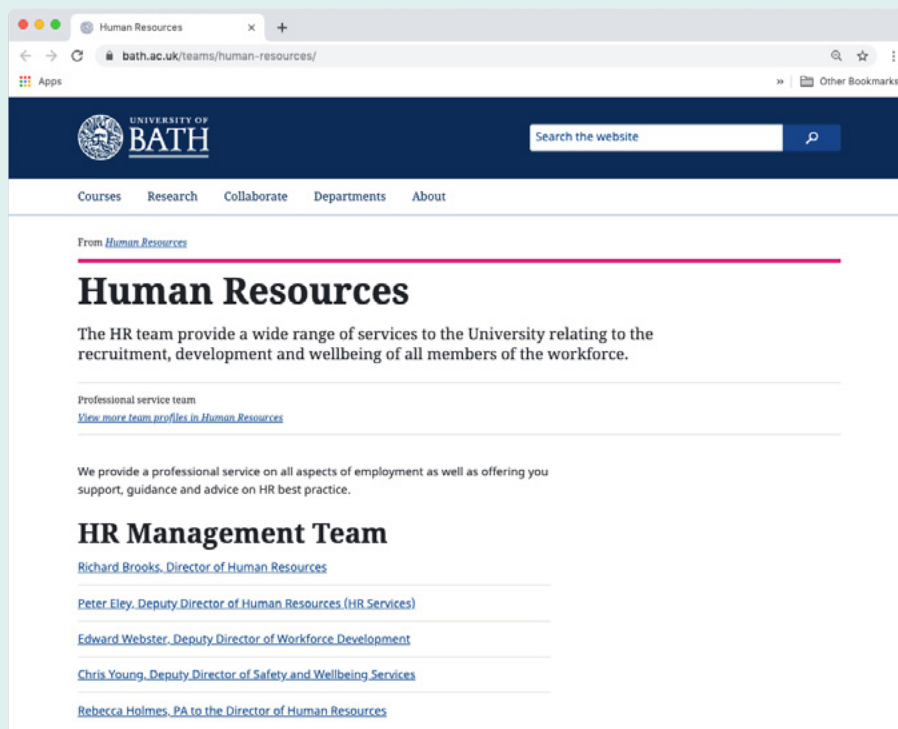
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Developing your management practice</b>	<b>4</b>
Great relationships	4
Reflective practice	5
People Management Curriculum	6
<b>Fostering an outstanding and inclusive community</b>	<b>7</b>
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	7
Safety, Health & Employee Wellbeing	8
Hybrid working	9
<b>The Employee Lifecycle</b>	<b>10</b>
Recruitment & Selection	10
Induction	11
Probation	11
Performance Management	12

# | Introduction

This handbook sets out the University of Bath's expectations of managers and provides tools and signposting to further resources to help support you in your role.

For further help, please contact your relevant HR Advisor in the first instance:

[Human Resources \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://bath.ac.uk)



# Developing your management practice

## Great relationships

Great relationships are the foundation of successful teams and organisations and are critical in your role as a manager. Better working relationships equal more inclusive teams, more engaged teams, increased performance and productivity, better collaboration, improved health and wellbeing, and lower employee turnover.

In order to develop great relationships we believe you need to develop your:

**1. Self-awareness**

This means having a clear understanding of how you feel and how your behaviour affects those around you as well as understanding your own strengths, weaknesses and values.

**2. Self-regulation**

This means having the skills to manage your emotions and express them productively and to make decisions in line with your values – people who are able to self-regulate don't verbally attack others, stereotype people or make rushed decisions.

**3. Empathy**

This means having the ability to put yourself in others' situations, to listen, to know and understand your colleagues as individuals.

**4. Communication**

This means knowing how to listen first, how to communicate clearly and effectively, how to manage difficult conversations with confidence, and how to give and receive feedback.

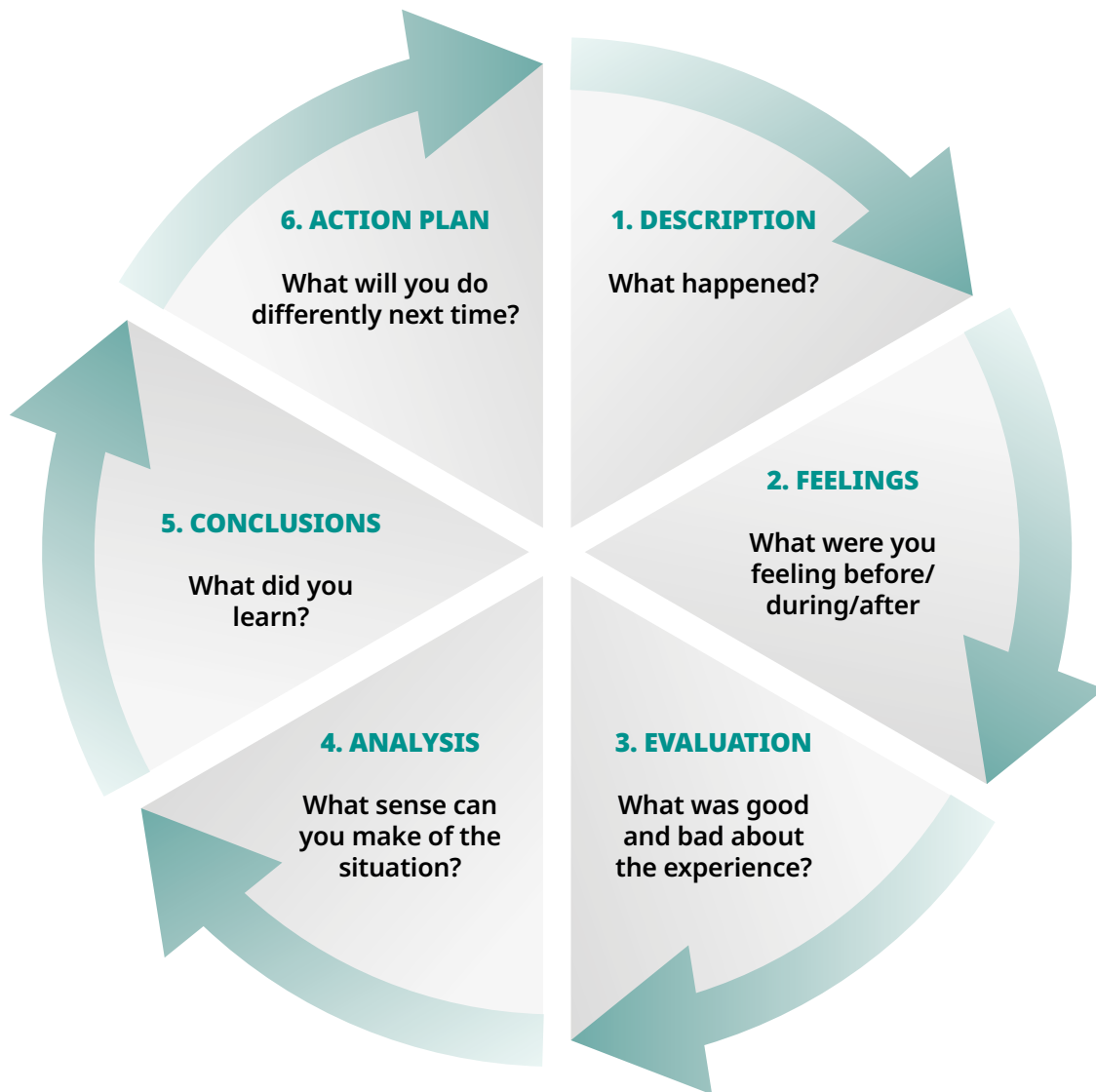
The People Management Curriculum (see more information below) has lots of resources to help you develop these skills, as does the Development Toolkit, and the Wellbeing resources (see more information in the Safety, Health & Employee Wellbeing section).

[People Management Curriculum \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/people-management-curriculum/)

[The Development Toolkit - an online learning and development resource for staff \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/development-toolkit/)

## Reflective practice

A good place to start is to develop a reflective practice as a manager, which helps to develop your self-awareness, to solve problems and to learn from experience. Try to schedule in time to reflect on key events or conversations. Gibbs Reflective Cycle is a great tool to help with this:



Gibbs G (1988). Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods.

## People Management Curriculum

The Management Curriculum is made up of a set of bite-sized modules designed to allow you to take ownership of your own development as a manager by identifying your strengths and areas for improvement, and then engaging in practice based learning so that you can embed behavioural change.

Some elements of the curriculum are e-learning, some are large scale webinars, some are smaller scale workshops, and some are tailored 1:1 support. All are evidence based, delivered online and supported by technology. The curriculum is based around management behaviours which were developed in collaboration with managers from across all grades and job families. They are practical but align with the management literature and help to describe how we expect managers at the University of Bath to behave in order to create a safe, supportive and productive environment in which everyone can flourish.

Use the accompanying self-assessment tool to reflect on your own areas of strength as well as the areas in which you would like to develop further and then create your bespoke professional development plan.

[People Management Curriculum \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/people-management-curriculum/)

# Fostering an outstanding and inclusive community

Our University Strategy sets out the vision of an outstanding and inclusive community which recognises the unique value of each individual. As a manager, you are key to fostering this community, and it should be at the heart of your practice.

## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to a manager's role. We value, promote and celebrate inclusion, challenging discrimination and putting equality, diversity and belonging at the heart of everything we do. We aim to be an inclusive university, where difference is celebrated, respected and encouraged.

### How does ED&I affect you?

1. It's illegal not to be  
The Equality Act 2010 states that we are all responsible for eliminating discrimination, providing equality of opportunity and fostering good relationships between people.
2. It's your business  
Diversity of thought, approaches, ideas, experiences, heritage, products and skills are essential to innovation and collaboration and to creating high performing teams
3. It is the right things to do  
We are all diverse, we all deserve the opportunity to thrive and to be the best version of ourselves. Inclusive practices benefit everyone.

### Tips for inclusive practice:

- Inclusion is largely about self-reflection
- Treat others fairly, respectfully and kindly in all you do
- Don't expect everyone to be like you or adhere to your social norms – be flexible, open, tolerant of difference and non-judgemental
- Foster a growth mindset, eager to learn from others points of view, lived experiences and backgrounds

You can learn more about how to create an inclusive culture for your team and access further resources including the mandatory training on unconscious bias via the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion hub which hosts ED&I Training, Toolkit, Policies, support and guidance, Partnerships, Teams and Signposting, Events and News webpages.

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://bath.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion)

## Safety, Health & Employee Wellbeing

At the University of Bath, we recognise that staff in management or supervisory positions, are accountable for the health and safety of the people, activities, and projects that they supervise. Managers also play an important role in supporting wellbeing in the workplace as good standards of health, safety and wellbeing are an integral part of good management.

Managers' health and safety responsibilities are outlined in the University Health and Safety Policy available at:

[Health and Safety Policy \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://bath.ac.uk/health-and-safety-policy)

In summary, the general Health and Safety role of a line manager is to:

- Manage and minimise risk
- Ensure competence within the team
- Support the wellbeing of team members

Increasingly, it is recognised that managers have a central role to play in ensuring positive mental health and wellbeing for employees in the workplace. Discussing stress and wellbeing can be difficult to initiate with colleagues so we have drawn together some tools to support you. This support is vital especially during times of change and uncertainty in the workplace.

**Understand your role as a manager** and the six key areas of work design to prevent work-place stress:

[What are the Management Standards? - Stress - HSE](#)

**Raise awareness around mental health** by having open discussions with colleagues:

[Use the Workplace Wellbeing Wheel \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

**Reflect on the actions that every manager can take** to make sure stress doesn't get in the way of success:

[Work-related stress and wellbeing policy \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

[Well-being at work \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

**Practice having wellbeing conversations with colleagues** to prevent work-related stress:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/assets/docs/stress-talking-toolkit.pdf>

**Familiarise yourself with the support services** available:

[Support services for staff \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

[Role of a Staff Wellbeing Champion \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)



## Hybrid working

The University has adopted a hybrid way of working which aims to:

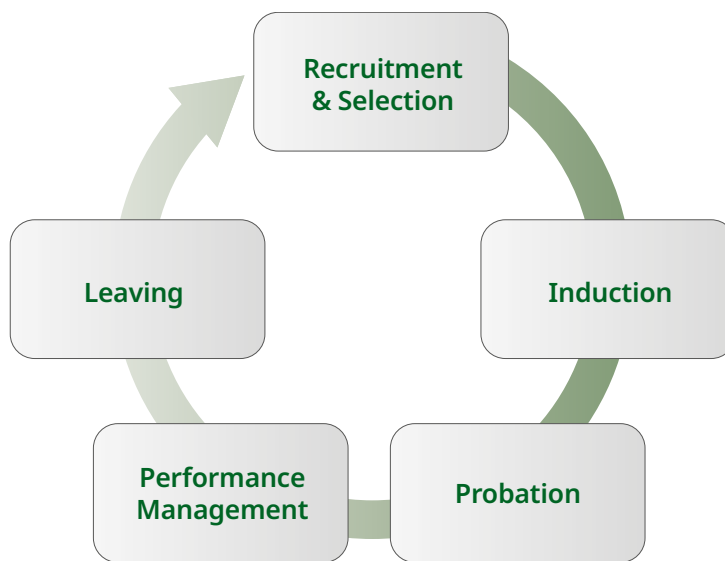
- enable a thriving and caring University campus community, in which every staff member is able to work as successfully as possible in a safe and secure way.
- develop ways of working to deliver our strategy as successfully as possible for the benefit of all students and staff.
- support sustainable and productive staff working practices that make maximum use of our learning from the pandemic.
- adopt a flexible framework, from which we will learn and iterate.

There are lots of resources available to help you as a manager, including training, IT support and wellbeing guidance:

[Future ways of working for Professional Services staff \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/future-ways-of-working-for-professional-services-staff/)

# The Employee Lifecycle

This section covers the key stages of the employee lifecycle, your responsibilities as a manager, and where to go to find further resources.



## Recruitment & Selection

**Recruitment** is the process where an organisation looks for new members of staff. It typically involves approval for the job and assessing criteria via the person specification, assessing equality and diversity needs and advertising the job through appropriate routes to market such as social media and online.

**Selection** is the process where an organisation narrows the candidates via shortlisting, assessment (often referred to as interview) and the job offer.

Further training is available on recruitment and selection and is required if you are to chair a recruitment panel, and more details on the recruitment process are available on the HR Recruitment webpage:

[Recruitment and selection for panel members \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/recruitment/)  
[HR Recruitment \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/recruitment/)

## Induction

The purpose of induction is to help someone settle into their role so they can perform their job effectively. Induction is not a one-off meeting or training event. It is a process that starts from the moment the employee receives their employment contract and can last for up to 12 months. All new staff need to be introduced to the University, to the department in which they work, and to their job.

### Introduction to the University

- Human Resources have a joining us page which covers all the basics.
- New joiners are automatically invited to an orientation workshop called Introduction to the University of Bath

[Human Resources \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/human-resources/joining-us/)  
[Introduction to the University of Bath](https://www.bath.ac.uk/human-resources/joining-us/introduction-to-the-university-of-bath/)

### Introduction to the Department

As a manager, it is your role to oversee the induction and to make sure staff:

- Understand how the department fits within the University
- Know who the key people
- Understand how and where their job fits

Human Resources have prepared a webpage on Induction with tips and links to useful documents such as Induction guidance for managers and also a helpful checklist, which all managers should use to prepare the induction programme.

[Joining information for new staff \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/human-resources/joining-us/)

## Probation

Probation is a process of managing expectations and performance to integrate all new joiners (with the exception of Senior Lecturers, Readers and Professors) into the University. The period of probation will be set out in the contract of each member of staff and will be managed as per the Probation policy and procedure. The University may extend the probationary period of a probationer at its discretion in line with this policy and procedure.

It is the manager's responsibility to set standards and have regular reviews with the probationer. The probationary period should allow both the probationer and their line manager to assess objectively whether or not the probationer is suitable for the role. The University believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new staff will perform effectively in their employment.

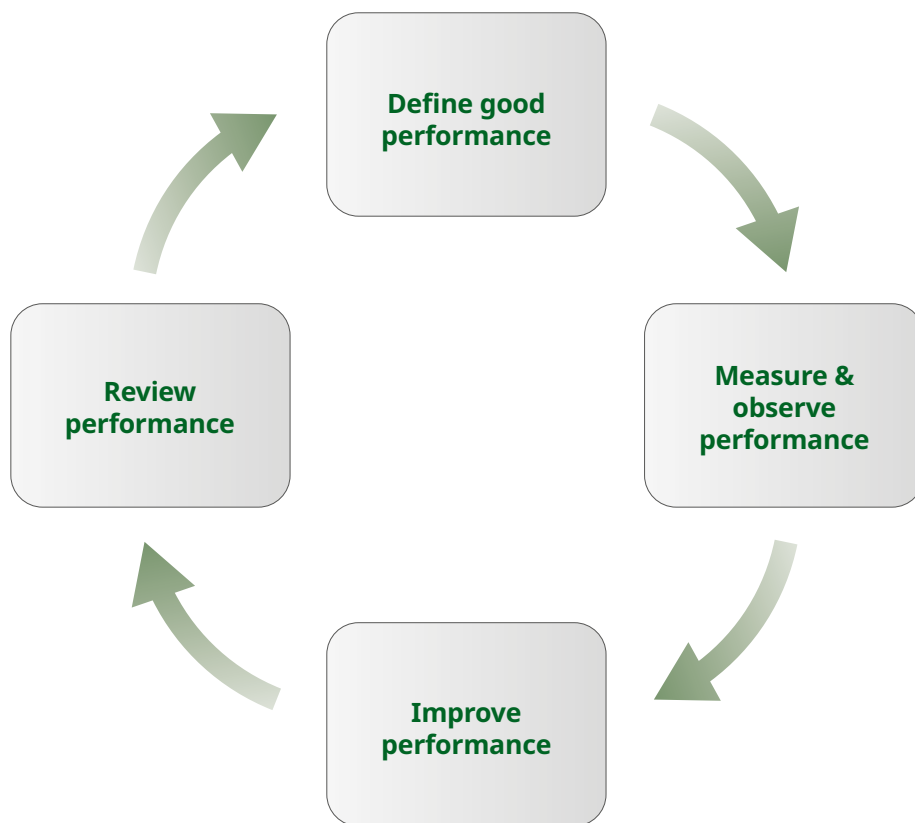
[Probation \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/human-resources/probation/)  
[Probation policy and procedure \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/human-resources/probation-policy-and-procedure/)

## Performance Management

Performance management is a process of enabling individuals to meet the performance requirements of their roles and fulfil their potential. The University's capability policy & procedure outlines the University's approach to performance management, how performance is managed, and what is expected of managers and staff.

[Capability policy and procedure \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/capability-policy-and-procedure)

Performance management is an ongoing process that involves 4 key stages:



The Staff Development Performance Review (SDPR) is an annual conversation that happens at the end of a continuous process of performance management throughout the year. The SDPR form is not the purpose. The purpose is to enable a meaningful conversation to take place between the staff member and their manager to talk about performance, wellbeing, and the staff member's development goals and needs.

Training is required before you conduct an SDPR and further resources are also available:

[SDPR and Career Conversation \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/sdpr-and-career-conversation)

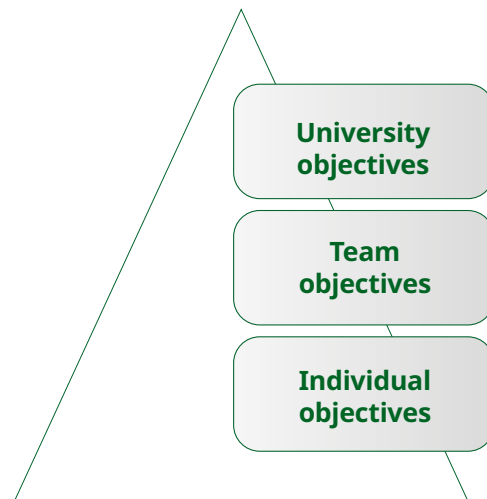
[SDPR: Conducting an effective review \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/sdpr-conducting-an-effective-review)

The SDPR is an annual process, however, the conversations should be ongoing throughout the year. Regular conversations about performance, wellbeing, and development are beneficial because you can:

- Build relationships, trust and psychological safety
- Clearly communicate expectations for staff
- Ensure staff understand the department's objectives and the organisation's goals
- Set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant & time bound (SMART) objectives
- Provide developmental feedback and help people to meet their objectives
- Support staff with the right development to ensure they have capability to perform their role
- Motivate staff and keep them on track
- Manage absence
- Manage difficult situations & behaviours

## Objectives

In thinking about objectives, it is important to remember that your team's work sits within the bigger picture of the organisational objectives and vision, where each team member's work contributes to the whole.



You can find out more about the University's Strategy, Mission & Values here:

[The University of Bath Strategy 2021 to 2026](#)  
[Our University Strategy Chart with Mission \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

## Feedback

As a manager it is your responsibility to give specific and timely feedback to your team members. There are many models for giving feedback and whatever model you choose, it is important to remember that receiving feedback can be stressful for the person hearing it. So try to be supportive, positive and solutions-focused in your feedback.

Give the person time to speak about the situation and explore whether there is a developmental need - is there something you as manager can do to support the person's continuing development? It is always important to have a supportive conversation where you invite the person to say what they think:

A learning model for feedback is to ask the person to reflect on:

- What went well?
- What was tricky?
- What would you do differently?

Only when they have spoken do you then offer your feedback and observations:

- What I thought went well was...
- What I thought was tricky was...
- What I would do differently is...

For other resources and training on giving and receiving feedback take a look at the Management Curriculum:

[People Management Curriculum \(bath.ac.uk\)](http://bath.ac.uk)

## Managing capability

Capability is not necessarily a disciplinary matter. The difference is that capability means someone can't do something because they don't have the right skills or their situation may have changed. Disciplinary issues are often related to conduct issues or because someone chooses not to do something in a certain way.

Where capability is an issue, it may be because someone hasn't had the right training. Another cause might be because their line manager has set confusing or unrealistic objectives, or hasn't communicated and delegated clearly.

### CREATE A LEARNING DISCUSSION

As the line manager, it is important that you don't jump too quickly to conclusions. You may not know all the facts, so withhold judgment until you have had a learning discussion.

Learning discussions draw information from the person and invite them to talk about a situation, rather than telling them what you think.

They require you to use active listening skills and open questions.

Once you know all the facts you can move towards agreeing actions for the future.

Sometimes an individual's performance/capability may fall below the standards expected of a role and there is a University Capability Procedure:

[Capability Procedure \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/capability-procedure)

## **Developing your staff**

A key aspect of a manager's role is to ensure staff continue to develop their skills and knowledge in order to succeed. Learning and development opportunities can be a key driver of engagement as well as enabling staff to be more effective. As a guideline, we expect staff to spend around 10 days each year on professional development.

There are lots of development opportunities available to staff including online resources, conferences, training and coaching but remember that training courses are not the only solution to a development need – be prepared to think creatively about, for example, job shadowing, informal mentoring, and stretch projects.

[Staff learning and development \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/staff-learning-and-development)

[The Development Toolkit – an online learning and development resource for staff \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/the-development-toolkit)

## **Managing absence**

The University has a sickness & absence policy. It is vital for managers to know the policy so that you understand your responsibilities and can communicate clearly with your team members about periods of absence. We have referred to some of the main issues here, however, there is much more information on the Human Resources sickness absence web page.

It is the manager's responsibility to monitor their team's absence. It is important to treat all sickness with sensitivity and confidentiality. When dealing with sickness, it is helpful not to jump to conclusions or judgments but to assume that the person is genuinely sick and to do what you can to support them so that they can return to work.

## **Difficult Situations**

In addition to capability, you may encounter other difficult situations in your role as a manager such as grievances and disciplinaries and dignity and respect issues.

The University expects all staff to follow rules, policies and procedures at all times. Disciplinary procedures are necessary so that employees who breach the rules of conduct expected by the University are treated reasonably, consistently and fairly in every case.

[Difficult situations \(bath.ac.uk\)](https://www.bath.ac.uk/difficult-situations)