

CIPD



Level 5 HR Consultant Partner

Essential Guide to the Professional Discussion

Issue 1.1

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Essential Guide for the Professional Discussion Level 5 HR Consultant Partner

Introduction

In this document you will find information on
the Professional Discussion:

Hints and tips

Example question and Answers (Appendix 1)

A full list of the Professional Discussion Components for Level 5 HR Consultant Partner (Appendix 2)

What is a Professional Discussion?

The professional discussion is a two-way discussion between you and an independent assessor, which will take place after the Consultative Project has been reviewed and marked. The Professional Discussion allows you the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm your competency across the necessary skills and behaviours as per the Level 5 HR Consultant /Partner standards.

The Professional Discussion is carried out via video conference and lasts up to 60 minutes. If there are any technical difficulties your independent assessor will call you and, if necessary, will conduct the Professional Discussion over the phone or via an alternate virtual platform such as MS Teams.

If you requested a maximum of three components to be assessed in the professional discussion instead of the consultative project, your assessor will add these questions to the end of the Professional Discussion and add up to 15 minutes extra time.

Preparing for the Professional Discussion

The Professional Discussion is an opportunity for you to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm your competency across the skills and behaviours required for the standard. As such, you should approach the Professional Discussion being ready to present information and examples to the assessor.

- Practice talking fluently for five to six minutes and provide qualitative detail on specific knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Practice displaying the skills and behaviour, show proof of their existence - for example: demonstrate active listening skills and show the independent assessor your undivided attention by using gestures and body language to show you are engaged.
- Show breadth of understanding, build or elaborate on evidence and try to generate as much additional evidence as possible to validate competence.
- Have the components from the Level 5 HR Consultant/Partner apprenticeship standards with you for reference.
- In preparation of the discussion prepare examples by using the skills and behaviour components
- You can take notes in with you but do not read your notes as a script use your active listening skills and structure, you're response to the question that has been asked
- The components are on skills and behaviours, make sure your examples describe what you do and the way you conduct yourself.

The Professional Discussion Assessment Environment

Before the day of the assessment make sure the software and hardware meet the virtual classroom's requirements you can do this by completing:

- Browser check
- Connectivity check
- Sound check
- Camera check
- Microphone check
- Connection speed check.
- Make sure a suitable room has been booked and the assessment will be uninterrupted.
- A comfortable headset with microphone is useful and often preferable, as it can help eliminate external noises.

The Professional Discussion Assessment Activity

The Professional Discussion is a formal assessment, so allow enough time before the assessment to prepare the technology and set up.

It will start with an introduction from the assessor who will, in turn, invite you to introduce yourself, describe your role and your organisation.

The assessor will cover confidentiality issues, ask for photographic ID and ask you to verify the apprenticeship standard you are being assessed against.

The assessor will outline when the 60 minutes will start and how it will be spent.

The assessor will ask whether you have any questions before they start.

The Professional Discussion is a two-way conversation between the assessor and yourself. If you're unsure of any question asked, you can always ask the Assessor to repeat or rephrase the question for you.

Don't assume that your Assessor knows what you do and how you do it, the Assessor will only grade you on what you tell them. This is your opportunity to showcase your skills and behaviours by providing them with examples and evidence.

The discussion will be semi-structured and consist of 10 clearly defined questions. Up to 3 additional questions may be asked to assess components transferred from the Consultative Project to the Professional Discussion.

Completing the Professional Discussion.

The independent assessor will manage the time and tell you when the assessment is over. They will not be able to give you any detail about your grades but can explain the next steps.

The assessor will make the judgement on the grade for this assessment when they complete their report. The assessor's decision is subject to moderation procedures by the CIPD, which may take 2 - 3 weeks to complete. The decision cannot be confirmed until this process is complete when you will be notified by email of your overall grade.

Appendix 1

Example Question 1 Component S6.2 Skills: Personal Development

Seeks feedback and acts on it to improve their performance and overall capability.

Question

Describe the different ways in which you receive feedback on your performance and how you apply this in context of your CPD?

The answer you give should include:

Provide examples of where you proactively seek feedback and from who and what you did with the feedback and how you changed/adapted to reflect it.

I recently led a change management project to do with Working from home, where I had to create focus groups from individuals around the organisation and chair the sessions gathering insight into such aspects as well being. After the sessions were concluded I contacted everyone and asked them how my performance I did leading the groups and what I could do to improve. One of my colleagues said that I needed to create a better formatted sessions to stop conversations drifting from the subject. So, before the next session I sent an agenda with specific timelines to ensure the conversations stayed on track allowing us to use the time well and get the most from the sessions....

How do you apply this to your CPD, what training/development did you complete?

I realised one of the things I needed to do was build my confidence and time management so completed an internal training session on assertiveness so that going forwards I felt confident managing sessions where I may have to step in and halt conversations from the senior leadership team.....

Example Question 2

Component B1.2 Behaviours: Flexibility

Curious about HR/business trends and developments, incorporating them into their work.

Question

Describe how you remain inquisitive about HR business trends and other developments and how do you incorporate awareness of these into your work?

The answer you give should include:

Provide examples of how you maintain your curiosity about HR business trends.

With the outbreak of the global pandemic I wanted to understand the global business awareness of wellbeing in organisations and what was happening around the world in regards to returning to work and what the new normal would effectively look like so I reviewed the government website gov.uk and read what I could and then also looked at organisation websites from different parts of the world to see what they were doing so, I created a staff survey trying to better understand how everyone in the organisation wanted the future of work to look like and to get an idea of thoughts and feelings on working from home.

Show how you have incorporated them into your day-to-day work.

As a result of the survey, I spoke with the senior leadership team and reflected on the outcomes and contributed to the changing environment by suggesting hybrid work we now use the survey on a regular basis as a temperature check and a means to get a feel for how people are feeling

Appendix 2

Level 5 HR Consultant/Business Partner Professional Discussion Components

These are the components you'll be assessed against in the Professional Discussion. You must show evidence and examples that meet each component to be able to pass.

Component Title	Code	Description	Assessment Method
Personal Development	S6.1	Keeps up to date with business changes and HR legal/policy/process changes relevant to their role	Professional Discussion
	S6.2	Seeks feedback and acts on it to improve their performance and overall capability.	Professional Discussion
	S6.3	Plans their own development; shows commitment to the job and the profession	Professional Discussion
Relationship Management	S7.1	Builds effective working relationships with business managers (using the language of the business), peers and other HR functions, together with relevant external organisations.	Professional Discussion
	S7.2	Communicates confidently with people at all levels, including senior management.	Professional Discussion
Flexibility	B1.1	Adapts positively to changing work priorities and patterns, ensuring key business and HR deadlines continue to be met.	Professional Discussion
	B1.2	Curious about HR/business trends and developments, incorporating them into their work.	Professional Discussion
Resilience	B2.1	Displays tenacity and proactivity in the way they go about their role, staying positive when under pressure	Professional Discussion
	B2.2	Deals positively with setbacks when they occur.	Professional Discussion