ARC Annual Review: Topic Question Bank for Managers

Please use the suggested questions to guide the conversation around the sub-topics chosen by your staff.

Guidance note for managers

The ARC Topic Question Bank for Managers has been designed to support the Annual Review Conversation (ARC) by providing examples of questions that managers can utilise when covering each of the four Topics. This resource includes each of the topic areas that should be discussed throughout the annual review process and the associated sub-topics.

Each topic area includes a list of mandatory and optional sub-topics. A member of staff will select 2-3 sub-topics they would like to discuss (in addition to mandatory sub-topics) and will send the sub-topics to their manager ahead of the ARC Annual Review Conversation via an online form.
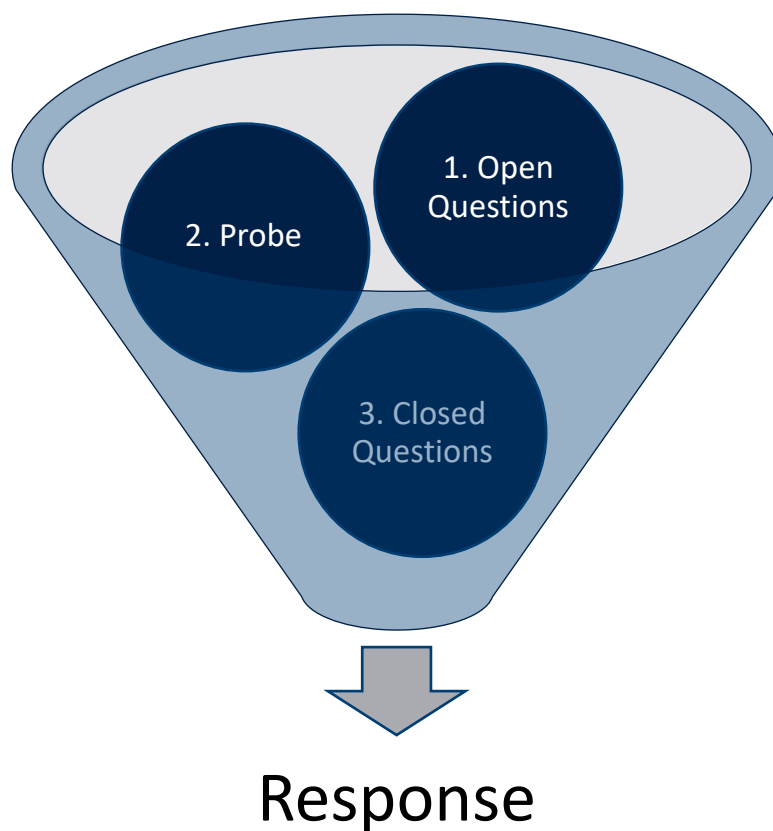
Staff are encouraged to select the optional sub-topics that are most important and meaningful to them, considering those sub-topics that enable them to work at their best. The mandatory and optional sub-topics will form the agenda of your discussion.

Please note- there are lots of questions in this Question Bank. We do not want you to use all of them, but please read through the document and choose the questions which you feel are most

relevant and useful. They are a prompt for conversation, and you will most likely find that once the conversation starts, you will no longer need the Question Bank.

If you do decide to use any of these questions as part of the ARC, you might also find it useful to consider questioning techniques. A questioning technique often used in coaching approaches is the 'Questioning Funnel'. This technique has three stages to help focus a conversation and support meaningful discussion. Each stage is outlined below:

1. Open questions – What, When, Who, How
2. Probing questions – asking for more detail, or asking for an example for clarity
3. Closed questions – asking specific questions around when something took place, or when someone will do something

If you have sub-topics you would like to discuss in addition to those selected by your staff, you should let them know before the meeting.

Review: Performance and previous objectives

Please note- this section has now been combined with the next section "Reflect", however, we have left the topics separate in this guide.

Sub-topics	Sample Questions
Internal contribution (Mandatory)	• What have you delivered and contributed to in the past year including with regard to your objectives? Please consider your overall contribution and what you have done well. • How have you demonstrated Imperial's Values and Behaviours relevant to your role? • Which aspects of your work and contribution(s) are you particularly proud of and why? • How does your internal contribution further the department / faculty / the University strategy? • Do you feel there are any activities your department / faculty / the University could undertake to help you with further achievement in your internal contribution?
Contribution outside of role	• Outside your defined role, what have you contributed to? E.g. supporting internal networks, mentoring other colleagues etc • What do you need to support you to continue to support this contribution/s? • What difference do these contributions make?
Line management (Mandatory for line managers)	• How have you demonstrated the leadership Values and Behaviours? • How have you contributed to the ability of your team to reach their goals? • How do you feel about your relationship with your team? • What could support you in managing relationships with your team? • How do you motivate and empower your team? • What skills/knowledge support you to manage your team? • How would your team describe your management style? • What type of leader/manager do you aim to be? • How do you ensure that all team members feel/are included? • How do you value, respond to, and draw on the diversity of your team's strengths and perspectives? • What have you found challenging in your role as a manager and how have you overcome these challenges?
External Visibility	• How have you contributed to the visibility of your department and the wider College within your field? • What community or educational outreach activities have you been involved in?
Research	• What collaborations have you engaged within the last year? • What future opportunities are you most looking forward to?

	• Do you have an achievement from the last year that you are particularly proud of? E.g. a publication, trade press preprints, a new course, patents, software etc? • What elements of research are going well? • How does your research contribute to the department strategy? • Do you feel there are any activities your department / faculty / the University could undertake to help you with further achievement in your research?
Learning and Teaching	• How have you supported your department's teaching and learning activity in the past year? E.g. lectures, tutorials, marking, person tutoring, project supervision etc. • Have you engaged with the development of new courses or the continuous improvement of existing courses? Please share how you contributed. • What aspects of your experience of project supervision have you enjoyed and what have you found challenging? • What elements of your teaching are going well? • How does your teaching contribute to the department strategy? • Do you feel there are any activities your department / faculty / the University could undertake to help you with further achievement in your teaching? • Is there any teaching you would like to take on in the future?
Academic roles	**Profession and Practice** • What are your significant contributions to the profession and practice of your discipline? (E.g. via professional societies, outreach, commercialisation, editorial roles) • Which of these elements are going well? • How do your profession and practice contributions further the department strategy? • Do you feel there are any activities your department / faculty / the university could undertake to help you with further achievement in your profession and practice? • Are there any professional or commercialisation opportunities you would like to explore in the future? **Portfolio of Activities** • What proportion of your time would you estimate you spend on each of these areas? (Research, Teaching, Internal Contribution, Profession and Practice) • How does your overall portfolio of activities fit with your long-term career plan? (and/or your next promotion step) • How would you like this proportion to change (if at all) in the coming period, and what can be done to help that happen? **Teaching** • What are your major contributions to teaching? • What elements of your teaching are going well? • How does your teaching contribute to the department strategy?

	Research • Do you have a publication from the last year of which you are particularly proud? • What elements of research are going well? • How does your research contribute to the department strategy?
Technical Roles	• What have you delivered and contributed to in the past year including with regard to your objectives? Please consider your overall contribution and what you have done well. • How have you demonstrated Imperial's Values and Behaviours relevant to your role? • Which aspects of your work and contribution(s) are you particularly proud of and why? • How does your internal contribution further the department / faculty / the University strategy? • What training / development activities have you taken in the last year and how has it helped you with your role? • How have you stayed up to date on trends and best practice in your area/discipline? • How have you supported your group?
Professional services staff	• What have you delivered and contributed to in the past year including with regard to your objectives? Please consider your overall contribution and what you have done well. • How have you demonstrated Imperial's Values and Behaviours relevant to your role? • Which aspects of your work and contribution(s) are you particularly proud of and why? • How does your internal contribution further the department / faculty / the University strategy? • How does your role contribute to Department, Faculty, and the University's strategy and aims? • How has your work enabled your team to meet your goals? • Who have you connected and collaborated with beyond your immediate team? • How has your work enabled other teams to meet their goals? • Can you share an example of feedback you've received from your stakeholders / customers and how it's influenced your work? • How have you measured your impact? What other methods could you introduce?
Clinical staff	• How have you kept up to date with University and Trust policies and related legislation? • Can you share which essential role-specific training you have completed? • Have you engaged with the annual job planning process? (for Clinical Academics)

Operational staff	• What have you delivered and contributed to in the past year including with regard to your objectives? Please consider your overall contribution and what you have done well. • How have you demonstrated Imperial's Values and Behaviours relevant to your role? • Which aspects of your work and contribution(s) are you particularly proud of and why? • How does your internal contribution further the department / faculty / the University strategy? • What do you consider as the main/key tasks of your operational role? • How do you provide a quality service to your customers? What measures do you use? • How do you manage service delivery? • How do you work collaboratively with your team? • How do ensure your set targets are met?

Reflect: Reflections and learning from previous year

Please note- this section is now combined with "Review" in the ARC form, but we have kept the questions separate for ease of reference

Sub-topics	Sample Questions
General (Mandatory)	• What are you most proud of in the last year? • What skills and strengths have contributed to your achievements in the last year? • What from the last year would you do differently if you were to do it again? • What feedback have you received in the last year? How did it make you feel and what did you learn from it? • What elements of your role have you found most rewarding? • What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?
Achievement and strengths	• What impact have your achievements had on your team/wider colleagues/stakeholders/users? • What skills did you use to support your achievements? • What are you particularly pleased with? • What do you believe your main strengths and talents are? • To what extent are your abilities being fully utilised in your current job (and how could we make sure they are fully utilised)
Appreciation and feedback	• How do you like to receive feedback? What does meaningful appreciation and feedback look like for you? • What feedback have you received from your team/users/colleagues/stakeholders? What did you learn from this feedback and what action have you taken as a result? • What feedback have you received from your manager? What did you learn from this feedback and what action have you taken as a result? • Personally, I'm really grateful for … / I admire this skill, etc
Working relationships (manager)	• What support have I given that has helped you in your role? • What could I do differently to support you more effectively? What action would you like me to take to help you be at your best? • How can we maintain our great relationship in the coming year? What could we both do differently to work more effectively in the coming year?
Working relationships (team members and other colleagues)	• What are the critical working relationships for you and your role? • What goes well when you are working with others? • Are there any relationships that could be improved? What action could you take to develop these relationships? • How do you effectively collaborate with people beyond your immediate team?

Working Well: Wellbeing and support needs (optional section)

Sub-topics	Sample Questions
Accessibility and support needs *Including neurodiversity conditions (i.e.common workplace challenges experienced by those with dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism & ADHD)*	• Do you have any access needs or support needs requirements you would like me to know about that would enable you to do your best work i.e. current workspace, working environment and working pattern? • Is there any equipment you require to enable you to work in the best way for you? • Is there anything else that you would like me to know that would be helpful to you to work at your best? • Has there been any changes to your needs that we should consider?
Health and Wellbeing	• Are there any health concerns for you that you would like to share with me? • Do you feel you have all the support and resources to fulfil your role? • Are you aware of the support available to you? • What helps you to stay healthy at work? • What can your manager do to support your health and wellbeing more effectively at work • Do you have any views you would like to share on what College should do to further support staff wellbeing? • What might you need more of that would support your wellbeing? • What might you need less of?
Job satisfaction	• Describe your ideal working environment • What do you find satisfying about your current role? • What causes you to feel dissatisfied in your work? • What ideas do you have to help to address any dissatisfaction/problems identified? • If you could change one thing about your role what would it be? • What would you like to happen or change at the moment? • What action are you taking to improve your engagement at work? • What do you feel can be done to improve things at the moment? • What do you feel you need help or support with?
Motivation	• What acknowledgement / recognition do you find meaningful - how do you like to be acknowledged / appreciated and thanked for the work you do? • What would 'fulfilling your potential' look and feel like to you? To what extent do you feel able to fulfil your potential in your current role? • Do you feel you have the opportunities for utilising your strengths and experience? What do you need to realise those opportunities?
Working patterns	• How do you work best? • What does a typical day look like to you? How does that support you to do your work?

	•	What does an ideal working day look like?
Workload	•	How would you describe your workload?
	•	What is your current capacity to add more / different things into your workload?
	•	Are you working on the right things (what's needed) in the right way? What suggests that you are? What suggests that you're not? How can I (your line manager) help you with this?
	•	How are you managing your workload?
	•	What are the current challenges (if any) to managing your workload?
	•	What support and resources are available to you to help manage your workload?
	•	If you have a challenging workload, what can be dropped?

Career: Career aspiration and development needs (optional)

Sub-topics	Sample Questions
Defining aspirations	- What do you most enjoy in your role that you would want to keep doing? - What are your ambitions for the future? - What are your thoughts on your career in the future? Where do you see yourself? - How does your current role fit in with your career goals? - Have you completed or considered taking part in any of the Career Moves training or toolkit? - What can I do to support you with your career aspirations?
Development needs	- How do you learn best? What type of learning meets your needs? - What are your development needs (skills, experience, exposure, expertise, confidence and behaviours) as a result of your aspirations and/or role/department needs? - What specifically do you want to learn about/be able to do? What difference will this make in your current role / working towards a future career move? - What might be the most appropriate method/s for meeting this need? Outside of formal training, what other methods could support you to achieve this? - Have you considered the options available to you via LinkedIn Learning, and the Learning and Talent offer? - What skills/knowledge are important for you to develop as you progress your career? - What might be the first small step to move this forward? - What can I do to support you with meeting your development needs?
Considering the next steps	- By when, realistically, can the development need be met? - How will you know you are achieving this developmental goal? - What experience/skills do you already have that will support you as you take this path? - What actions need to be taken and by whom?
Retirement	- What aspect of retirement would you like to discuss? - In terms of support for your next steps, what would like to focus on? - How can we support you in ensuring your remaining time at Imperial is meaningful to you?
Special and additional leave	- What aspect of special and/or additional leave would you like to discuss? - How can we support you in this?

Plan: Objective setting and work planning

Sub-topics	Sample Questions
Personal Objectives (Mandatory)	*Following a discussion with the individual on what their objectives are, you could then ask the following questions* • What will you achieve through completing this objective? • What are the measurable and tangible outcomes, actions, and targets for this objective that would indicate 'completion' or 'success' • Who else would need to contribute to ensure this objective was successfully completed? How will you engage them / work with them to ensure shared success? • What's your first step in getting started on this objective? • What values, skills, and behaviours do you need to develop to meet these objectives? • How often do we need to check-in and review your objectives to enable you to achieve them?
Team Objectives	• How do you feel about the activities and projects that are coming up for the team this year? How does your work feed into these? • How do you feel your personal objectives support the progress of the activities/projects? • What will you be contributing through your objectives towards the success of your team, department and/or organisation?
Aligning up to department strategy	• How will your objectives support the department's strategic goals? • Who will you collaborate with from across the team/department on meeting your objectives? • What do you think the department could be doing differently to meet its strategic goals? How could you influence this?
Work-balance and variety	• How do you find the balance and variety of your work activity? • Are you satisfied with the variety of objectives and tasks that you have in your role? • Bearing in mind the wider needs of the department, what additional experience and responsibility would you like?
Purpose of the role	• Can you describe the focus of your role and how you add value to the team? • Are you clear of what is expected of you in your role? What do you need to get more clarity? • Do you understand how your contribution fits into the bigger picture? • Who do you see as the key stakeholders or customers in your role? How could you build upon your working relationships with them? • In line with your objectives, what do you see as the priority and focus of your role in the next 12 months?
Management for success	• What can I, as your manager, do to better support you over the next year? • What should I continue to do that has worked well? • What could I do more of? What could I do less of?