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1. INTRODUCTION

The Performance Development Framework and performance development practices are key enablers for the University of Melbourne to achieve the Growing Esteem strategy and its vision to be a public-spirited and international institution highly regarded for its distinctive contribution to society.

Our Performance Development Framework has been designed to help us perform our roles at a standard expected of a University of international standing by providing a continuous cycle of individual performance planning, feedback and review.

The aim of this guide is to describe the Performance Development Framework with its process, practices and procedures to enable the University’s performance culture. Its intent is to enhance the capability of staff, supervisors and senior managers, and to encourage pro-active participation in the performance development process. This will enable and support the achievement of individual and local goals and contribute to the achievement of the University’s goals.

In addition to this guide, Human Resources has developed a range of support tools which are available on the Performance Development Framework website:

www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/development/pdf
2. PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Performance Development Framework aims to promote performance and development at the University and align the performance culture to the Growing Esteem strategy. The University places a high priority on individual and organisational performance and the development of staff.

The Performance Development Framework aims to improve, develop and support staff performance aligned with the University’s strategy and Budget Division goals.

The Framework provides opportunities for discussions around performance, skill and knowledge development and career goals.
2.1 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR PERFORMANCE

The University of Melbourne’s strategy is to become one of the finest universities in the world. This strategy can only be accomplished through the continued efforts and commitment of our staff. The University’s Performance Development Framework is a strategic and integrated process aligning the University’s goals and strategy and individual performance.
3. PRINCIPLES

The framework is based on the following principles:

- Recognise and enhance a high performance culture that supports continuous individual and organisational development;
- Encourage individual, team and work unit planning which is linked to organisational goals and supports short term and longer term career development options;
- Enable performance objectives to be set that are consistent with and reflect the responsibilities of the position;
- Involve clear articulation of performance expectations and assessment of performance which is fair, equitable and relative to opportunity (i.e. Which recognises that staff experience a range of personal circumstances and working arrangements, and facilitates the setting of reasonable performance objectives and a fair evaluation of performance in the light of objective circumstances);
- Ensure clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities;
- Encourage productive working relationships and a focus on outcomes;
- Provide on-going feedback, coaching and support;
- Promote appropriate and timely career planning and development;
- Recognise and value individual and team achievements and contributions; and
- Encourage open dialogue to enable the staff member to provide feedback on the supervisor’s performance as a supervisor.

Performance Development Framework elements:

- The development of evaluative, transparent, fair and equitable performance objectives and performance indicators and appropriate professional development activities for all staff members;
- Provision of on-going discussion, feedback and coaching on performance;
- Discussion about professional development and career development;
- The discussion of performance elements requiring improvement as they arise, constructive feedback provided and issues to be documented;
- At least one annual review and feedback discussion.
  Where a fixed-term staff member is engaged for twelve months or less the review will be undertaken at least two weeks prior to the expiry of his/her fixed-term contract; and
- Data to be collected as part of the performance development framework in a format consistent with University policy.

All members of staff must undertake the University compliance training on the Performance Development Framework within their probationary period or within the first six months of employment if the probationary exceeds six months. Supervisors or staff promoted to a supervisory role are required to undertake the University compliance training on the Performance Development Framework prior to implementing performance development practices.

Human Resources has developed an extensive training and support program. More information about the training and training schedule can be found at:
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Performance Development is a shared responsibility between the staff member and the supervisor.

The supervisor is responsible for managing performance aligned with departmental plans and University strategy and goals. Their role is to provide leadership and clear direction for the expected level of performance through the setting of fair and equitable objectives and indicators relative to opportunity. Throughout the performance development cycle the supervisor provides ongoing feedback, coaching and support so that the staff member can meet the performance objectives. In the performance discussions the role and responsibilities of the staff member are clarified and career planning and development is discussed.

As part of the performance review, the supervisor is responsible for assessing performance and determining the overall performance rating. The performance rating and overall comments need to be entered in THEMIS.

The staff member will participate in the Performance Development Framework and take direction from the supervisor. The staff member will take an active role in their own performance development process and is responsible for:
- developing, together with the supervisor, the performance development plan as part of the performance development and review documentation;
- working towards achieving the objectives;
- identifying any development support required to meet the objectives;
- raising any concerns or issues at any time during the performance development cycle and work with the supervisor to address the matters;
- completing the performance development and review documentation prior to the performance review and submitting the completed document to the supervisor.

The Head of Budget Division determines the performance direction for their division in line with the University strategy and goals. They are responsible for ensuring that business plans are translated and communicated to ensure staff understand how their performance contributes to the business plan. Through this process they direct energy and effort towards specific achievements and ensure the division achieves its business plan. Heads of Budget Divisions also monitor performance development processes and set appropriate reward and recognition strategies for their division aligned with University policy.

Human Resources provides assistance and advice to the Head of Budget Division, the supervisor and the staff member on the performance development policy and processes. Human Resources is responsible for providing an appropriate training and support program for staff, supervisors and senior managers.
5. THE PROCESS

The performance development process runs on a twelve month cycle with a minimum of one performance feedback discussion and one performance review discussion. It is strongly encouraged to meet regularly to support the staff member in achieving the set objectives and indicators. The process is a dual responsibility between the supervisor and the staff member. The framework supports all continuing and fixed-term staff to develop to their full potential to achieve personal and professional goals, which are congruent with the strategic and operational objectives of the University.

The annual PDF cycle is aligned with the business planning cycle. On this basis, the annual PDF should be completed within the following timeframe:
- Academic Staff: December – April
- Professional Staff: November – February.

The Performance Development and Review Template (PD&R) can be downloaded from http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/pd/performance/pdf/forms

Your Faculty/Budget Division may have developed a modified version of PD&R template.

Stages of the process

The Performance Development Process consists of four stages.

1. Performance Development Planning
2. Ongoing Performance Discussions
3. Performance Development Review
4. Reward and Recognition
5.1 PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Performance Development Planning is the first stage of the cycle. During the planning stage, at the start of the twelve month cycle, the staff member and the supervisor will discuss the elements of a Performance Development Plan. During the discussion performance expectations, objectives and indicators, development needs and timeframes must be addressed. These aspects should be aligned with the staff member’s position description, the operational plan of the Budget Division/department and the University’s strategic plan and where possible take into account individual career goals.

The staff member is responsible for writing the Performance Development Plan with guidance from the supervisor.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the set objectives are realistic, clear, achievable and challenging.

**Departmental performance planning**
Prior to addressing individual performance plans, it is recommended that the Head of Department/unit meets with its supervisors to discuss the area’s business plan and address performance expectations for the department/unit for the performance period. This supports the overall performance planning in the department/unit and increases consistency of application.

**Performance Planning and Development**
For academic staff, objectives and indicators must be set in the Key Performance Areas (KPAs). For professional staff there are no University-wide Key Performance Areas identified. However, Faculties/departments may have identified these for their professional staff.

### PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Areas (for academic staff)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Discussions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5.1.1 KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

Key Performance Areas (KPAs) are determined by the University and aim to direct effort and energy
The University has identified academic KPAs. The following KPAs have been identified to support the achievement of Growing Esteem strategy.

For academic staff the KPAs are aligned with the promotion and probation policies and procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic KPAs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHS Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives must be written for the KPAs aligned with the position description, role requirements, work focus category and departmental plans and goals. Some academic roles may not be required to perform in all the KPAs.

5.1.2 PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES
Developing sound performance objectives and indicators is critical to managing performance. Research indicates that the setting of objectives is more likely to lead to higher performance than simply telling staff to do their best. Staff participation in objective setting tends to lead to higher commitment and to higher performance.

Performance Objectives define what a staff member is expected to achieve over a period of time.

Performance Objectives are:
- desired achievements or outcomes;
- measurable;
- guides for action;
- set within the twelve month performance review period;
- aligned with the position description and work focus category (if applicable);
- aligned with the operational plan of the department; and
- aligned with the University’s goals and strategy.


5.1.3 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Performance Indicators are the means by which it can be assessed whether objectives have been achieved. Depending on the nature of the objectives, measures of achievement may be quantitative and/or qualitative.

To improve the impact of indicators the following three factors may assist.

**Activity or Workload Measure**
The amount of activity or work done in a given period (day, week, year) e.g. number of classes.

**Efficiency Measures**
Efficiency indicators measure how well resources are being used to produce outcomes e.g. average contact hours per week per staff member.

**Effectiveness Measures**

Effectiveness indicators compare a project/program’s outcome with its objectives and are often expressed in terms of the impact of the program/project on a target population e.g. overall satisfaction of research students.


**5.1.4 DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT**

Development support can be provided to assist the staff member to achieve the set objectives and indicators. This might be required in the case of new tasks and projects, further improvement of skills and knowledge and/or general support.


**5.1.5 CAREER DISCUSSIONS**

To support career development and career paths for staff at the University it is essential to include discussions about individual career goals. This allows the supervisor and staff member to work together on a career plan to increase retention and succession planning. Career development opportunities should take into account staff’s existing knowledge, current tasks and skills. When planning career development opportunities consider:

- scope for improvement in the current role of the staff member;
- new skill requirements or interests;
- potential ways to gain new knowledge;
- new tasks;
- long-term career direction;
- short term goals (next twelve months);
- long term achievements; and
- Academic promotion.

The activities to provide career support will achieve the best results if they are related to work and the staff member’s preferred learning style. This could include reading and research, professional network activities, coaching and mentoring, special projects, courses and workshops, job rotation, secondments and international exchanges.

5.2 **ONGOING PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS**

Discussions about performance should be regarded as an integral part of the continuing process of performance development. Frequent discussions will help ensure that staff receive ongoing guidance, support, coaching and feedback on whether they are on track to meet the objectives or if any adjustments need to be made.

Ongoing discussions are important when setting objectives because many factors (staffing levels, workloads, or different work conditions, for example) can affect achievement. The more both staff and supervisor are involved in setting/updating objectives and agree they are clear and reasonable, the greater the chances for successful performance. This also assists with ensuring that there are no surprises by the time the performance review is conducted.

The following elements should be included in the Ongoing Performance Discussions:

- Discussion of progress of the objectives;
- Identifying support and coaching needed to meet objectives;
- Updating objectives if necessary;
- Adjustments of development support where necessary;
- Providing feedback on performance.

*Please refer to [http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/pd/performance/pdf/training](http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/pd/performance/pdf/training) for further support on giving and receiving feedback.*

5.3 **PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**

The Performance Development Review is the basis for assessing overall performance of the performance period. In an ideal world there should be no surprises at the review as performance issues have been discussed as they arise during the performance period. The objectives and performance indicators will have been clearly documented and feedback continuous. The value of ongoing and purposeful interaction between a supervisor and staff member should not be underestimated.

A formal performance review is due one year from employment commencement and should be undertaken at least once each year. The structured performance development review relies on a formal discussion and performance rating.

The discussion should take into account all of the following:

- the whole range of the agreed performance objectives set for the review period;
- factors which influenced performance;
- performance over the whole review period;
- the relevant position description;
- revision of the role and/or responsibilities;
- comments from significant clients or, if staff reported to another supervisor during the period under review, comments from the previous supervisor;
- development activities undertaken;
- career aspirations; and
- the overall performance rating (see table 1).

The discussion should take into account such issues as overall research plans and/or teaching goals, quality of service, resource management and behaviours that impact on the work environment. Relevant information needs to be consulted such as a work diary, reports or feedback from staff with significant work relationships and any other relevant material.

Both staff and the supervisor should sign the review documentation indicating acknowledgement that the review has taken place.

### Table 1: Performance Development ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Definition of Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Demonstration of performance consistently exceeding expectations. The consistently high standard has earned recognition by others internal and/or external to the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Overall demonstration of consistent and sustained performance with all objectives being met and many being exceeded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Overall demonstration of consistent and sustained performance with all objectives being met and some being exceeded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Performance in most areas met the requirements of the position whilst others missed by a small margin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Performance and/or behaviour falls short of the required standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.3.1 PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO OPPORTUNITY

Throughout the entire development and review process the principle of performance relative to opportunity must be applied. A ‘performance against opportunity’ approach facilitates *positive acknowledgement of what has been achieved given the actual opportunities available*.

The University recognises that a range of personal circumstances and approved working arrangements can affect career performance and progression. Relevant circumstances can include:

- Carer responsibilities, such as for children, elderly parents, or ill relatives
- Ill-health, disability, or ‘misadventure’, whether temporary or permanent
- Part-time or flexible work, or career interruptions such as absence on parental leave
- Other relevant circumstances
The consideration of ‘performance against opportunity’ aims to ensure that individuals who disclose relevant personal circumstances may be assessed fairly and holistically, with assurance that merit standards are being maintained.

For performance development purposes staff members are encouraged to disclose all relevant circumstances and their career impact, and supervisors are required to take those factors into account when considering performance planning and evaluation.

### 5.3.2 THEMIS

Through Themis the supervisor is required to enter the performance rating for staff members prior to the end of the performance development cycle. The rating will determine if eligible staff will be awarded an increment. Eligible staff with a rating of ‘satisfactory’ or higher will automatically be awarded increments from their increment date. Staff who have reached their increment ceiling are not eligible for an increment.

**Information in Themis**

There are two options for using the online performance development system in Themis. Supervisors can choose the FastTrack version which requires the overall performance rating and overall comment from the supervisor, or supervisors can choose to use the Full PDF online template. The Full PDF allows capturing of the performance planning and reviewing information in the system. The following guides provide assistance for the use of the Themis performance development system.

Staff can view their performance ratings in Themis self service.
5.4 REWARD AND RECOGNITION

The final component of the performance development cycle is reward and recognition.

Increments are awarded if a staff member has participated in the performance development process and their performance has been assessed as ‘satisfactory’ or higher and the staff member has not yet reached their increment ceiling. Increments are awarded from staff’s increment date which is normally their position start date.

Performance Development is also linked to:

- academic promotion
- linked advancement
- accelerated increments
- general faculty loadings
- special studies program
- professional recognition loadings
- performance bonus scheme

Outstanding individual and group performance can be recognized in a variety of ways. The University of Melbourne has a suite of reward programs, ranging from both organisational level and local level reward initiatives. http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/development/reward

5.5 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Transfer/ secondment / higher duties
When staff are transferred or seconded during the performance development cycle, the supervisor should record their performance assessment up to the end date of their assignment. This should be provided to the new supervisor to be included in the overall performance review.

The performance review needs to consider any higher duties undertaken in the year. Depending on the length and/ or nature of the higher duties, a review of the performance development plan may be required.

Staff movement/ promotion
When staff are promoted, have taken up a new position or are redeployed in the University during the performance development cycle, the staff member and supervisor should review the performance to date before taking up the new role. A new performance development plan should commence to reflect the new performance expectations of the new role/ employment level.

Deferral of an increment due to leave without salary
An increment will be deferred if a staff member has not participated in the PDF because they are on
unpaid leave from the workplace for a period greater than three months. In these circumstances, the period of deferral of the increment will be no more than the period of the unpaid absence. The supervisor will need to notify the HR consultant to ensure Themis reflects this matter.

**Supervisor departing**
In circumstances where the supervisor leaves their role, performance needs to be reviewed for each staff member prior to departure. Each staff member’s performance assessment to date need to be recorded on the performance development plan and provided to the new supervisor. The new supervisor should include the assessment in their overall performance review of the staff member at the end of the performance review period.

### 6. MANAGING UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

At times concerns might be raised by supervisors about the level of performance of staff members. Supervisors might identify that the performance achieved by a staff member is at a lower level than what is expected in the role.

The University and the supervisor have an obligation to work with the staff member to identify the performance issues and develop a strategy to improve performance. The aim of this process is to improve performance to an acceptable level by providing reasonable support, however, appropriate action will be taken if the performance has not improved and the staff member has not met specific performance objectives.

The University’s process for managing unsatisfactory performance is described in the *Managing Unsatisfactory Performance – a Guide for Supervisors Part B.*