



26th May, 2014

Staff Performance Review - Framework and Guidelines

The PSUAD is committed to excellence in both the quality and the delivery of its services. In support of this commitment, Senior Management expects both managers and employees to understand the strategic goals of the University, align their efforts to support these goals and be held accountable for their attainment. In this regard, all managers are required to keep their units current on the goals of the University and the unit, and to meet on an appropriate basis with their direct reports to discuss goal setting and performance. And, the measuring of managers' success will include reviewing evidence of activity in this area.

For employees, it is expected that they will familiarize themselves with the goals of the University and their unit, participate in regular performance discussions and be responsible for preparing appropriately for such discussions.

To assist managers and employees with performance discussion, the following framework and guidelines have been provided. While performance management applies to both faculty and staff, this document is specifically drafted for staff. In no case are the guidelines intended to replace the language in the policy manual relating to performance management. If an employee has a question or comment they may contact the HR Department.

"A goal without a plan is just a wish." Antoine de Saint-Exupery, French writer (1900 – 1944)

1) General Framework

The performance framework is built on the expectation that managers and employees discuss where the University and the unit are heading, how the employee's role fits in these efforts and how the employee's efforts will be evaluated. While the framework specifies two "formal" evaluation periods per contract year, it is expected that performance related dialogue will occur throughout the year – an "evaluation" should not result in a surprise, but rather reflect a summary of previous discussion. Frequent and candid discussion ensure that employees know what is expected of them and how they are progressing.

As noted in the attached "process flow" document, the framework calls for a formal annual meeting to set goals and objectives for the upcoming year, to meet mid-way through the contract review to discuss performance to date and then a final year-end review where the employee's performance is formally rated. This cycle then repeats.

The immediate supervisor is required to keep a written record of these meetings on the appropriate form, and the employee shall have the opportunity to add his/her comments and receive a signed copy. Note, however, that while the form supports input from both parties, and joint input is strongly encouraged, it is ultimately the manager who defines the goals to be achieved in the coming periods.

Aside from the formal meetings noted above, employees and their immediate supervisors are encouraged to meet more frequently on a less formal basis to discuss activity to date.

In addition to the points noted above, the performance framework supports informed decisions regarding training and development needs and salary progression recommendations. And, in the final year of an employee's contract (assignment), the mid-period review should inform contract renewal decisions/discussions.

The Human Resources Department does not "own" the performance evaluation framework. Performance setting and attainment is owned by all employees. That said, it is HR's responsibility to support performance management activity by providing managers and employees with guidance on the holding of goal setting and performance review meetings. HR is also responsible for supporting the parties on matters related to performance improvement opportunities including training, coaching and corrective action.

2) New Hires

To incorporate new hires into the performance cycle, a goal setting meeting will take place within the first three months of hire and then follow the normal review process thereafter. This does not, however, replace the need for the manager to have more frequent discussion with the employee as part of their on-boarding and integration into the unit. Frequent feedback, coaching and review is expected during the probationary period to confirm that the new joiner is appropriate for the role into which they were hired.

During the probationary period the Human Resources Department will connect with both the manager and the employee to encourage on-going assessment and will be available to assist either party during the period should issues arise.

A copy of the end-of-probation assessment form and probation period review "process flow" are available on the PSUAD website.

3) Goal Setting

In advance of meeting to discuss specific performance related goals, it is imported that employees understand the strategic direction of the University and their Department. It is the managers role to ensure that this information is communicated and it is the responsibility of employees to make efforts to stay informed. Additionally, employees need to understand the specifics of their roles in the department and how their role supports and interacts with others. Assuming that this understanding of both organizational direction and personal contribution exists, the employee and the manager can meet to discuss specific performance related goals/objectives.

To make for a more productive meeting, both the employee and the manager are encouraged to write out the specific performance related goals/objectives they believe should be defined as part of the performance management process. As noted above, while the manager is ultimately responsible for the articulation of these goals, joint development is more likely to result in shared understanding and focus.

A performance goal/objective is a specific end result that contributes to the success of the department and the University and that an employee is expected to accomplish or produce within a specific time frame. It is important to differentiate this from a work activity/task. Whereas a work activity/task is an

action taken while performing ones duties, a performance goal/objective specifies the outcome or result of the work activity/task.

While there are numerous approaches to the development of goals/objectives, one simple method is to firstly look at the key aspects of the employee's job description and define what is the main activity associated with that aspect of the job. From there the parties can then articulate the outcome or result of the work activity/task. These "outcomes" can be used to formulate the specific goal/objective to be achieved.

To be effective, goals/objectives should be well defined and concisely formalize the steps to be taken to achieve the desired outcome. One method used to focus the development of the goal/objective is to use the SMART principle. SMART is an acronym for:

- S** Specific - Clearly descriptive so as to not be misinterpreted
- M** Measurable - Can it be quantified or observed?
- A** Attainable - Is it probable that the individual can achieve the outcome?
- R** Relevant - Is it tied to the overall goals of the business and the department?
- T** Time-bound - Does it state the due-date things need to happen?

Goals should make you "stretch". This involves setting objectives that require the employee to do a bit more than the employee might believe himself/herself capable of. Through a constant series of "stretches", overall performance improves.

Once the goals/objectives have been discussed, defined and signed off on in section 1 of the "performance evaluation form", the form should be sent to the Head of Department (if completed at the Head of Section level) and then to the relevant Deputy Vice Chancellor for final validation. The original is returned to the manager and a copy is given to the employee and to Human Resources for record keeping.

4) Mid Period Review

While discussions related to goal attainment should be ongoing throughout the year, the manager and the employee are required to meet at the mid-point of the employee's contract year for a more formal discussion. In advance of the meeting, both the employee and the manager should review the goals/objectives outlined at the start of the review period and give thought to what has been achieved to date and what further needs to be achieved.

It is important that both the employee and the manager come to the mid-period review meeting prepared to have an open and candid discussion around performance to date. This should not, however, result in either party being "surprised" by the outcome – the meeting should simply reflect or summarize discussions that have been taking place during the period to date.

Review meetings need to be based on the principle of two-way communication. The employee is encouraged to discuss issues, job performance, career aspirations and training and development needs; and the manager is encouraged to provide objective, constructive feedback on strengths and areas for development.

Where goals/objectives have been achieved this should be noted and the parties may consider that addition of new goals/objectives. Likewise, where circumstances have resulted in the need to amend or change a goal/objective, this can be discussed and noted.

In some cases the parties may identify the need for specific training or coaching to better enable the employee to meet the goal/objective set. In such cases, the manager should contact the Human Resources Department to define what training support might be appropriate. The specific training needs can be added to the relevant section of the “performance evaluation form”.

The outcome of the mid-period discussions should be added to section 2 of the “performance evaluation form” and signed off by the relevant parties. The original is returned to the manager and a copy is given to the employee and to Human Resources for record keeping.

Note that in the final year of any employee’s contract term, the mid-period review should assist management in making a determination as to whether or not to offer a contract renewal to the employee.

Where considered appropriate, any of the signing parties may contact the Human Resources Department to discuss concerns related to the performance management process.

5) Annual Performance Evaluation

At the end of the employee’s contract year (ie. on their anniversary date), the manager and employee will meet to review the year in retrospect and to evaluate the actual success. The same principles outlined above in the “mid-period review” section apply in terms of being prepared and being candid.

In addition to the review of goal/objective attainment, the annual evaluation process required that the manager evaluate the employee on a number of job related competencies. The manager’s evaluation of these competencies should be completed in advance of meeting with the employee and the results shared with the employee during the meeting. It is expected that the manager will make reference to specific examples to support their evaluation.

Finally, based on the manager’s review of goal/objective attainment and evaluation of the employees competency in the role, the manager needs to assign an overall performance rating of either 1, 2 or 3. The ratings are defined as follows:

1 = Below Expectations / Improvement Needed:

Performance standards are not fully achieved. Employee needs to improve performance during the next appraisal period. *The parties are strongly encouraged to include with this evaluation, specific strategies for addressing areas of weakness.*

2 = Meets Expectations:

Employee performance is fully acceptable and consistently meets performance standards. *This represents the normal level of performance for most employees and is the expected rating of the majority of employees.*

3 = Exceeds Expectations:

Work performance consistently exceeds performance standards. Results exceeded the stated goal/proficiency area in terms of quality of work, timely completion, and/or use of resources budgeted. *This level of rating should be considered as rare and would normally only be granted in unique cases.*

While not required, where discussions are being led at the Section Head level, a pre-meeting evaluation discussion between the Section Head and the Head of Department may be prudent, particularly where a rating of 1 or 3 is being considered. In this way the Head of Department can offer his/her insights with the result being a more informed decision achieved.

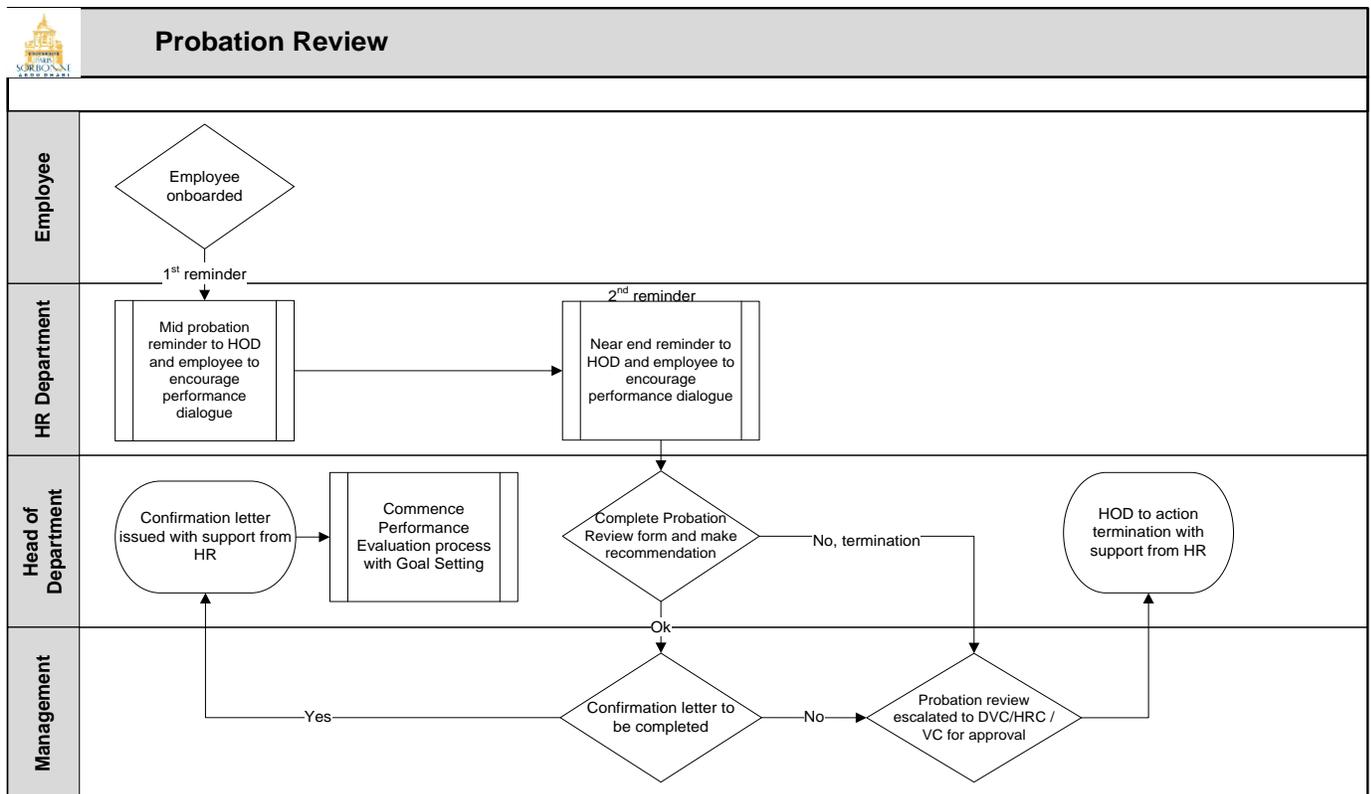
The outcome of the final evaluation discussions should be added to section 3 of the “performance evaluation form” and signed off by the relevant parties. The original is returned to Human Resources for record keeping and a copy is given to the employee and the manager.

6) Next Steps

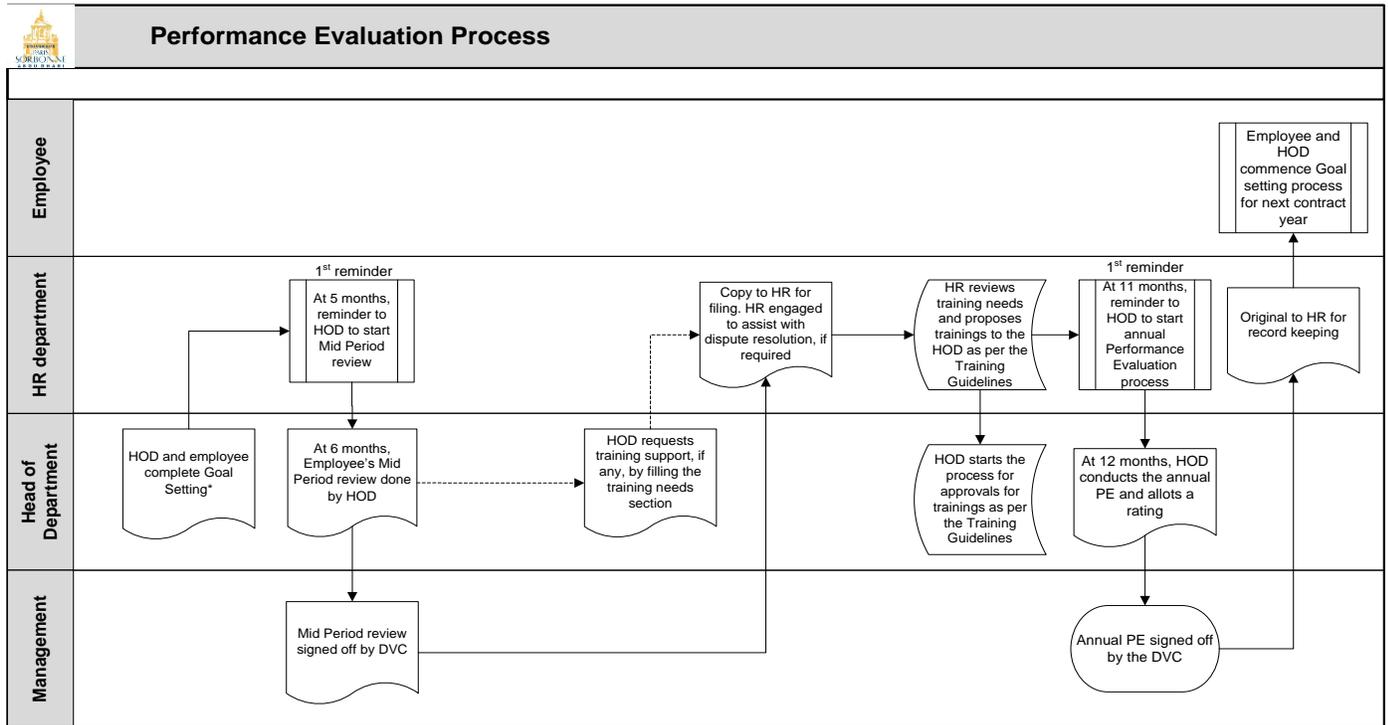
The end of the annual performance evaluation should lead directly into the goal/objective planning for the coming contract year. While the goal/objectives do not need to be set in the same meeting where the previous year’s evaluation are being discussed, they should be set within no later than two weeks of that meeting.

In general, while the timing of the goal setting, mid-period review and final evaluation meetings are tied to the employees anniversary date, it is understood that some flexibility in meeting dates is expected due to vacations, holidays, work-load, etc. That said, best efforts should be made to complete the relevant steps within one-month (either pre or post) of the “correct” meeting dates.

Appendix A



Appendix B



Grades 6,7,8 – the probation review is 3 months

Grades 5 – the probation review is 6 months

Goal Setting for new joiners conducted at 3 months. Existing staff complete Goal Setting at the start of the contract year

* DVC to approve for Grades 4 and above