



Performance Management Policy

UK Campuses

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HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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1.	INTRODUCTION
	The University recognises that our employees are our most important resource and is committed to ensuring that they feel supported to do their very best at work. Effective performance management plays a key role in achieving this. All employees will be made aware of the standards expected of them throughout their employment which the University will review annually. The Performance Management policy is designed around a Performance and Development Review (PDR) process. The PDR process is one of the ways in which employees (Reviewees) can be made aware of their value to the organisation by highlighting their own contribution, receiving feedback on that contribution and understanding how this links to School/Directorate/team objectives. The process enables opportunities for individual development and provides a formal opportunity for Reviewees to discuss and address a range of other work-related issues. The PDR process encourages good management practice across the University and improved communication between management and their colleagues. The process provides an opportunity to monitor and record performance throughout the year; however, this is not intended to replace regular open discussion during the year between the Reviewee and their manager/PDR Reviewer. For those with management responsibilities, the process will assist them in gaining a better understanding of their teams (e.g. abilities/strengths, skills, development needs, career aspirations and areas where performance requires improvement) with the aim of helping Reviewees to fulfil their potential and contribute as effectively as possible to the University's strategic aims and ambitions. In applying the PDR process, Heads of Schools and Directors of Service are able to agree with individuals, objectives and behaviours that are critical to the success of the School/ Directorate and ensure that resources are managed effectively. Crucially, PDR has a key role to play in the retention of appropriately skilled and motivated individuals.
2.	KEY PRINCIPLES
	Performance management at the University is designed to engage colleagues in setting values-led objectives. This ensures everyone has a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how this contributes to the success of the University. It will identify the necessary resources, training, development and support that colleagues need to carry out their role and achieve their objectives. Performance management will evaluate individual contribution against how well objectives have been met alongside other skills which maximise effectiveness. There will be provision for linking exceptional contribution to reward and a framework that supports improvements where performance standards are not being met. Effective performance management supports the achievement of personal career goals and aspirations by providing an opportunity to take stock, consider future direction, assess progress and identify future development. The PDR process is based on openness and transparency to allow employees access to all information within their PDR record. The employee owns the PDR record and is responsible for ensuring that this is kept up to date. The content reflects progress throughout the performance year as discussed with their manager/PDR Reviewer. Managers and Reviewers should take account of performance across the full year during the PDR meeting and avoid focussing on a particular period of time i.e. the weeks/months at the beginning or end of the PDR cycle. Employees are encouraged to keep any records of evidence that demonstrates performance across the year.

	Reviewers and Reviewees should also ensure that changes to objectives/priorities during the year are recorded and any contribution on partially completed objectives are recognised as part of the annual PDR. The University is fully committed to equality of opportunity in the workplace and the PDR process will be applied in accordance with the University's Equality and Diversity policy. Managers should be mindful that objectives are distributed fairly and do not disadvantage any particular groups of employees e.g. part-time staff.
3.	SCOPE
	All colleagues in the University are required to take part in the Performance and Development Review process with the exception of those who are not covered (i.e. casual workers, and colleagues employed under Knowledge Transfer Partnerships). This policy applies to UK staff only, Dubai and Malaysia campuses have local performance and probation policies aligned to the global PDR. Objectives agreed as part of the PDR process should be supportive of priorities/targets agreed during probation and academic probation. Details of how academic probation applies can be found in the Academic Probation Policy. Those engaged on a modern/graduate apprenticeship will have their own arrangements which they should refer to.
4.	AIMS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY
	The aim of the Performance Management Policy is to: • align contributions made by individual members of staff (referred to as Reviewees) to University Strategy/Values and School/ Directorate objectives • ensure Reviewees are fully equipped to carry out their roles • assess and recognise individual contribution and celebrate success • gain a better understanding of each individual's potential and assist colleagues/Reviewees to develop to their full potential. The Policy provides guidance to Reviewees, to ensure that they have the necessary information to allow them to effectively perform their duties to enable successful and continuing employment.
5.	PROBATION/ACADEMIC PROBATION AND THE PDR PROCESS
	All new employees are required to complete a 6-month probation period with objectives agreed after 4 weeks in post. Objectives agreed during probation should be aligned to the wider School/Directorate objectives/University strategy and values. Performance is assessed during probation to ensure that expected standards are achieved and regular review meetings take place with employees to ensure that performance concerns are addressed and standards/objectives are clear. Where an employee's probation ends between 1st March and 31st May, it will not be necessary for them to have a separate PDR meeting that year as per the PDR cycle. Instead, on successful completion of probation, the employees' objectives will be reviewed by their manager and adjusted accordingly to reflect School/Service priorities for the forthcoming year. At the mid-year review meeting, performance will be formally reviewed, and a formal PDR meeting will take place in June/July the following year. Further guidance is available in the Probation and Academic Probation Policies which you can find on the HR section of the intranet: https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/human-resources/human-resources-policies.htm

6.	RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION
	The responsibility for implementation of the PDR process rests with Heads of Schools/ and Directors of Service. This includes ensuring that all reviews are carried out within agreed timescales and in accordance with the procedures. The Human Resources Operations team and Professional and Organisational Development (POD) team are responsible for providing guidance to managers and colleagues. The POD team is also responsible for monitoring the process to ensure it is fit for purpose. It is the responsibility of line managers to induct new colleagues on PDR procedures, as part of local induction processes and probation periods. Reviewer Training, which is mandatory, is provided by POD.
7.	ALLOCATION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF REVIEWERS & COUNTERSIGNATORIES
	The person being reviewed is the Reviewee. The Reviewer is the person responsible for carrying out the review (normally the Reviewee's Line Manager). The Counter signatory is normally someone more senior in the Reviewee's Line Management chain (usually the Reviewer's Line Manager) and is responsible for encouraging the Reviewer to fulfil their role and for noting outcomes of the review process. The Reviewee will normally be reviewed by the person to whom they report i.e. their Line Manager. Where reporting lines are less straightforward, other arrangements will need to be considered and, in such cases, it is vital that colleagues are allocated the most appropriate Reviewer. Heads of School/ Directors of Service should refer to the Guidance Notes for more detailed advice on this point. It is the responsibility of the Heads of Schools//Directors of Service to allocate Reviewers and Counter signatories to Reviewees where it is not their direct line manager. This should take place before the beginning of each PDR year and the details circulated to all the relevant parties so that colleagues know who will be reviewing them, and Reviewers know who they will be responsible for reviewing, during the coming year. Where a Line Manager manages a large number of colleagues it may not be practical for them to act as Reviewer to them all. In such a case the Line Manager may agree an alternative Reviewer with the Head of School/Director of Service and will then advise the Reviewee. Alternative Reviewers should be familiar with the work that the reviewee undertakes to allow them to assess performance accurately and fairly. Responsibility of Reviewers During the PDR period, meetings with the Reviewee and Reviewer will be arranged between them. The Reviewer will be responsible for ensuring that adequate support is provided to Reviewees to ensure they perform effectively. Where this becomes a concern, the Reviewer is encouraged to seek advice from Human Resources. Training and Briefing of Reviewers It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Director of Service to ensure that all designated Reviewers and Counter signatories have received the necessary training before they conduct Performance and Development Reviews and that they understand how their School/ Service's objectives impact on the individuals they are reviewing. More information on training that is run every year, can be found here .

8.	THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES
	The role of Human Resources is to advise on adherence of the policy and procedures and to promptly assist with the timely application of the procedure throughout all its stages. This is to ensure consistency of application. Human Resources can also provide advice and guidance to both Reviewers and Reviewees. Human Resources must be notified in all instances where performance falls below the expected standards and an employee's future employment is at risk and before any of the stages within the Capability policy.
9.	ANNUAL BOARDS FOR CONTRIBUTION, PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT
	Submissions to the Contribution Pay Board, or the Academic Promotion/Advancement Boards are made in accordance with separate procedures which can be found on the HR Hub under Your Career and Development. Note that information from PDR records will be required to support any submission to the Contribution Pay Board.
10.	MONITORING AND EVALUATION
	This Policy and related Procedures will be reviewed every five years from the date of implementation, or earlier if legislation dictates. Any amendments will be notified to employees through the normal communication channels and/or e-mail. This Policy and related Procedures will be maintained on the Human Resources Website and Intranet pages. <u>Records</u> A written note of all meetings including the date and nature of the matter and any agreed outcomes should be kept in a secure confidential location by the manager. This information should also be shared with the employee and held on their personal file/HR record. Records and information obtained under this Policy and the related Procedures will be kept held and reported on in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, the University's Records Retention Policy and in line with the Staff Privacy Notice. General statistics are maintained and reported for equal opportunities monitoring, Athena SWAN and other accrediting bodies, Freedom of Information requests and key performance indicator purposes. Any reports produced using this information will be kept securely and confidentially with personal data removed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the University's Records Retention Policy.
11.	CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION
	University Guidelines on Employee Records state that all employment records held within Schools/ Services must be held securely (both physical and systems) and should only be seen by colleagues who have a legitimate reason to do so. In the case of PDR records this would normally be HR colleagues and those in the line management chain e.g. the Reviewer/Line Manager, the Counter signatory, and the Head of School/Directorate.

	The PDR Form is a confidential document and should be treated/handled with due care and attention. Colleagues should also ensure that any PDR records, whether hard copy or electronic, are held and processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection policy. PDR records should be retained for 3 years. This will also apply to PDR information held in the University's HR system. <i>The University reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time. Such amendments may be notified to employees through Network or e-mail. The policy will be maintained on the HR website.</i>		
12.	RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FURTHER REFERENCE		
	Policies • PDR Processes • Probation Policy • Capability Policy • Maximising Attendance Policy • Disciplinary Policy & Procedure • Academic Probation Policy All policies can be found in the HR section of the intranet: https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/human-resources/human-resources-policies.htm .		
13.	FURTHER REFERENCE		
	For Information about Athena SWAN Charter and Principles and the University's Action Plans: www.hw.ac.uk/athenaswan		
14.	FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE		
	Please contact: HRHelp@hw.ac.uk – for queries regarding this Policy and linked Procedures		
15.	POLICY VERSION AND HISTORY		
	Version No	Date of Approval	Approving Authority
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	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE
	The PDR process is based on openness and transparency to allow employees access to all information within their PDR record. The employee owns the PDR record and is responsible for ensuring that this is kept up to date. The content reflects progress throughout the performance year as discussed with their manager/PDR Reviewer. Managers and Reviewers should be careful that the PDR meeting looks at performance across the full year and not only focus on a particular time i.e. the weeks/months at the beginning or end of the PDR cycle. Employees are encouraged to keep records of evidence that demonstrates performance across the year. They should also ensure that changes to objectives/priorities during the year are recorded and any partially completed objectives are included as part of the annual PDR. The University's PDR process is based on an annual cycle of: Planning: looking ahead and planning individual objectives, in order to achieve the School/ Service's objectives, whilst planning how to support individual development needs. Monitoring: reviewing progress against the plan on a regular and ongoing basis and updating the PDR to reflect any changes during the year. Evaluating: looking back to review progress and assessing overall performance. The Performance Development Review cycle runs from 1st August to 31st July each year. Planning: Objectives Objectives provide the framework for the PDR process and should be: • a record of the individual's main responsibilities and objectives which have been agreed for the coming year • updated during the year, if necessary, to take account of changes to responsibilities or objectives • used to record progress made against those objectives during the year. Whilst the objectives are agreed by both the Reviewee and the Reviewer, the Reviewee would be responsible for drafting and updating it. However, when someone is new to the job, just out of probation, it may be more appropriate for the Reviewer to draft it. Objectives are normally created at the beginning of the PDR year i.e. August. When a new colleague joins, objectives should be agreed within the first 4 weeks of commencing employment and form the basis of the 6-month probation. Monitoring objectives and performance The setting and reviewing of objectives and performance, and providing feedback on a regular basis, are aspects of good management practice. The PDR process is the formal mechanism used and is intended to complement this feedback and not act as a substitute for it. Regular meetings between the Reviewer, the Reviewee and their line manager are essential. It is for the Reviewer to agree with the Reviewee how to monitor progress against objectives through the course of the year. Reviewers are encouraged to meet regularly to discuss progress. A mid-year review meeting is recommended alongside regular one-to-one meetings with the formal PDR meeting taking place in May/June/July.

There may be circumstances where it is necessary to review progress on a more frequent basis for example with a new employee or where under-performance has been identified.

Evaluating: The Performance and Development Review (PDR) Meeting

The PDR meeting is the final stage of the PDR process and it takes place at the end of the PDR year i.e. May/June/July. All employees should have their objectives agreed by 1st August each year.

Its purpose is to allow the Reviewee an opportunity to discuss with their Reviewer :

- their performance over the past year
- their objectives for the forthcoming year
- their training and development needs
- any performance issues that are causing concern/fall below required standards
- any work/personal issues that may be impacting performance
- their career aspirations

The meeting should take the form of a discussion between Reviewee and Reviewer. This document [Guidance Notes for Reviewers - Preparing for a PDR Meeting](#) is designed to prepare you as a Reviewer to support an effective PDR conversation.

The Formal PDR meeting

The PDR meeting is an opportunity to discuss past performance over the year and for the PDR Reviewer to outline what successful future performance should look like.

The meeting is the final part of the process, where all previous discussions around performance and evidence or work activity is pulled together to assess performance overall. The Reviewee should be able to pre-empt the outcome of the PDR meeting from the regular discussions they have during the year.

Reviewers are encouraged to split the PDR meeting into 2 parts i.e. discussing past performance and objectives and development for the forthcoming year. Reviewers should consider whether two meetings are more appropriate, one to discuss past performance and the other to agree future priorities, particularly where an employee may be rated as under-performing.

Preparation by Reviewee and Reviewer

An important factor in achieving a productive and helpful review meeting is good preparation on the parts of both the Reviewer and the Reviewee and the normal expectation is that this would be undertaken in work time. The Reviewee should update their PDR record/form with comments on how well they feel they have performed against their objectives across the year and send this to their Reviewer prior to the PDR meeting, allowing enough time for them to read this before the meeting. This is covered in more detail within the PDR Guidance Notes and it is important that colleagues read these before undertaking a PDR meeting.

PDR Documentation

PDR guidance and PDR forms are available on the [PDR SharePoint pages](#).

FOLLOW UP

Follow up at Individual level

Both Reviewee and Reviewer are jointly responsible for following through on any actions agreed at PDR meetings. If a Reviewee is concerned that a commitment made via the PDR process is not being met, then they should raise this with their Reviewer in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved, they should then refer it to their Counter signatory with a view to resolving informally.

	If the Reviewee is not satisfied with the outcome of that referral, they should contact HR for advice on how to resolve the situation. If the matter is still not resolved through informal discussions following referral to HR, a Reviewee may pursuing a formal complaint through the University Grievance procedure. It is not appropriate to raise a grievance because a Reviewer has raised concerns about performance. The PDR process is the mechanism in which a Reviewer is expected to discuss such concerns and review overall performance. Whilst these conversations may be difficult for the Reviewee, concerns around performance should have been discussed during one-to-one meetings and the PDR meeting will be when this is formally recorded. It is important that Reviewers are able to discuss these concerns with the Reviewee and apply ratings accordingly. Appendix A provides more information on how a Reviewee will be supported through the performance management process where there are concerns around performance. Reviewees are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their Reviewer or their Counter signatory. <u>Follow up at School/ Directorate level</u> Following the annual PDR meetings, it is the Reviewee's responsibility to update individual iHR records with PDR data for the period just reviewed. The Reviewer will review the information and discuss anything that requires updating with the Reviewee. This data will be used to provide School/Directorate level statistics, reported at University Governance Committee and for Athena SWAN purposes; however individual data will not be disclosed. The form will be kept as a record of the discussion which can be viewed by the Reviewee and Reviewer. It may be necessary following the PDR meetings for Reviewers to provide feedback to others in the line management chain. For example, issues raised by the Reviewee may need to be drawn to a senior manager's attention in order that they can be addressed. If outcomes of the PDR are likely to have an impact on School/ Service planning then these should also be fed to the School/ Service management team. This also assists the management team in managing limited resources whilst ensuring that critical needs for resources, support and development are met. Where such feedback is given, it should always be with the Reviewee's knowledge and special care must be taken if sensitive issues are involved. <u>Collation of Learning and Development Needs</u> Each School/Directorate is responsible for collating their team's learning and development needs and for prioritising and addressing those needs with support from Organisational and Development team. For more information on the development opportunities available to you please access via any of the following links: ➤ Learning & Teaching Academy ➤ Research Futures Academy
	APPENDIX A
	DEALING WITH UNDERFORMANCE
	There are occasions where a Reviewee's performance may fall short of the expected standards during the year and as such, the Reviewer is required to discuss this with them at the earliest opportunity. Conversations should be held quickly after the concerns have been identified and not be left until the Formal PDR meeting. Reviewees should be supported to meet the required standards and the following

	sections outline how Reviewers can support improvement and steps to follow where performance continues to cause concern. Reviewers are encouraged to discuss any concerns around performance with HR to ensure that appropriate support measures are put in place.
	SUPPORTING UNDER-PERFORMANCE
	Reviewees have a contractual responsibility to perform to a satisfactory level. It is the responsibility of Reviewer to ensure that Reviewees have a manageable workload and that agreed objectives are realistic. In considering whether a Reviewee is underperforming, account must be taken of workload and Reviewers should ensure when agreeing the objectives that they are split fairly within their teams and take account of complexity, working arrangements and any other relevant factors to ensure that no groups and/or individuals are placed at a disadvantage. Heads of Schools/Directorates or other designated managers are encouraged to review objectives across their teams to ensure they are balanced appropriately. Where underperformance is found to be a result of ill-health, disability or sickness absence, the Maximising Attendance Policy will normally apply. Where less than satisfactory performance is due to misconduct (e.g. negligence or lack of application) on the part of the Reviewee, then the Disciplinary Procedure will normally be appropriate. However, issues of a Reviewees capability may arise from time to time where underperformance relates to a lack of the required knowledge, skills or ability rather than misconduct. In this case, the Reviewee should be given support and reasonable time to achieve the required standard.
	DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH INSTANCES OF UNDERPERFORMANCE
	If a Reviewees performance becomes a matter of concern, Reviewers must take action promptly to manage that performance through the PDR process and following the stages laid out below. In managing underperformance, Reviewers are encouraged to seek guidance from Human Resources at each stage of the process. Reviewers should not wait until the end of year PDR meeting before discussing their concerns and support measures should be put in place early on, where appropriate, to support the Reviewee. The first step is for the Reviewer to investigate the underlying cause of the Reviewee's unsatisfactory performance through discussion with the Reviewee at an Interim Review meeting. At any Interim Review meeting where unsatisfactory performance is being discussed, the Reviewer will: • Clearly state the nature of the problem and explain why it is a problem, for example the consequences for the School/ Service when the Reviewee makes mistakes or misses deadlines • Give the Reviewee specific examples of instances where performance has fallen below the required standard or where tasks have not been completed on time or satisfactorily • Consider what might be done to improve the situation and help the Reviewee • Identify clear performance targets and a realistic timescale for improvement and discuss these with the Reviewee • Set a date for a further Interim Review meeting to be held at the end of the agreed timescale to review progress • Keep a record of the meeting and what has been agreed

	• Ensure the objectives are reviewed and updated. Where someone other than the Line Manager is carrying out the role of Reviewer, the Line Manager and the Reviewer must liaise closely during this process.
	STAGE 1 REVIEW MEETING
	The Reviewer must hold an Interim Review meeting with the Reviewee to explain how their performance falls short of the standard expected of someone in their position or grade. Specific examples of the ways in which the performance has fallen below acceptable standards must be provided including the occasions when this was recognised. The Reviewer will consider whether training or other development opportunities may enable the Reviewee to meet the required standard of performance. A plan for improvement will be drawn up which will clarify the areas and level of improvement needed. Clear performance targets will be set together with a realistic timescale for improvement. A date will be set to hold a second Interim Review meeting at the end of the agreed timescale to review progress. Should performance concerns continue during the period of review and/or there are further failings, the manager may decide to bring forward the date for the second Interim Review meeting. A note should be made of the main points discussed and actions agreed which should be signed by both the Reviewee and Reviewer as a record of that meeting. Objectives should also be revised and updated. <u>The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)</u> It is important that the PIP is capable of assessing the required standards. Reviewers should be careful when agreeing targets, outcomes and timescales as part of a PIP that they do not fall short of the standards expected for the role. Whilst Reviewers may have concerns about a Reviewee's ability and hesitations allowing them to undertake certain tasks, it is essential that targets, outcomes and timelines reflect the required standards of the job otherwise; the PIP is likely to be ineffective. Equally, Reviewers should be mindful not to set targets, outcomes and timescales that are unachievable or outside the remit of the role. Reviewers are encouraged to discuss the details of the PIP with the Counter Signatory and seek support from Human Resources.
	STAGE 2 REVIEW MEETING
	The Reviewer will meet with the Reviewee at a second review meeting, to review progress and evaluate any improvement in performance. The outcome of the Stage 2 Review meeting, including any agreed actions, must be confirmed in writing to the Reviewee. If performance has reached the required level and no further action is required, then this will be acknowledged and noted in writing by the Reviewer and a copy given to the Reviewee. If adequate improvement has not been made, the Reviewer will re-examine the cause of the problem and consider what else can be done to support and assist the Reviewee to improve. This could include, for example, further training/coaching/development or changes in the Reviewee's duties. The meeting should follow the same format as in Stage 1.

	Where it is recognised that a Reviewee's performance is unlikely to change irrespective of any further support being provided or that performance concerns are so significant that any further review period may expose the university to significant risks, the Reviewer may decide that no further period of improvement will be allowed and the case progress straight to the Capability Policy. In all circumstances, the Reviewer must ensure that a Stage 1 Review Meeting has taken place and the Reviewee has been made aware that their performance falls short of the expected standards. Reviewers should first discuss their concerns with the Counter Signatory and provide evidence of failings before proceeding to any stage of the Capability Policy. Advice should always be taken from Human Resources where this may apply. If there has been an improvement but the Reviewee's performance has still not quite reached the required level, then the period for improvement may be extended by a reasonable period of time and support given to facilitate that improvement. Where performance is still less than satisfactory at Stage 2, the Reviewer should make the Reviewee aware of the Capability policy and explain that, should the necessary improvements not be achieved, the Capability policy will apply and continued employment may, in due course, be at risk.
	STAGE 3 REVIEW MEETING
	As in Stage 2, the Reviewer will meet with the Reviewee to review progress and evaluate any improvement in performance. The outcome of the Stage 3 Review meeting, including any agreed actions, must be confirmed in writing to the Reviewee. If performance has reached the required level and no further action is required, then this will be acknowledged and noted in writing by the Reviewer and a copy given to the Reviewee. If adequate improvement has not been made, the Reviewer will advise the Reviewee that further action will be now be taken under the terms of the Capability policy. If, at Stage 3, there has been some improvement, but the Reviewee's performance has not quite reached the required level then the period for improvement should be extended for a reasonable, final period and a date set for a further final Review meeting. If, at this meeting, performance has not reached the required standard, the Reviewer will advise the Reviewee that further action will be taken under the terms of the Capability policy. Repeats of Under Performance If a Reviewee has previously been the subject of performance management and required standards are not <u>sustained</u> and subsequently performance becomes a concern again, the Reviewee should be placed back onto performance management at an appropriate stage. This will be dependent on the amount of time lapsed and the scope of deterioration in performance. In these circumstances, the Reviewer can invoke Appendix A/Capability policy at the point where they previously left. <i>NB: If at any stage it becomes clear that the underperformance is due to misconduct, rather than capability, then the Disciplinary procedures should be followed. HR must be consulted in such cases before any action is taken.</i> <i>Further guidance on how to conduct Stage 1, 2 and 3 meetings and how to manage underperformance is available from HR.</i>