

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

It is essential that there is clarity within the organisation about how matters relating to poor performance are handled and how they relate to other procedures and processes within the University. The Performance Management Procedure (PMP) is intended to address serious and/or continuous poor performance with the aim of identifying a strategy to enable an individual to return to a satisfactory level of consistent performance. In most instances, Heads of Department and appropriate line managers are able to discuss issues of performance with individuals without invoking the PMP. This procedure is a key mechanism in the implementation of the University's Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy as it ensures a consistent approach and a transparent and equitable process for all staff in dealing with poor performance.

1. This procedure complements the Professional Development and Review Procedure, Sickness Absence Procedure, Harassment & Bullying Procedure and formal University Disciplinary Procedure. The intention of the PMP is to resolve any problems that may exist and to develop appropriate remedial action plans to enable the improvement of performance to a satisfactory level of contribution. The PMP comprises three stages which should be conducted in a supportive and constructive manner. As issues emerge during the meetings, it may be necessary to invoke other key procedures developed by Human Resources.
2. Should the PMP and/or associated remedial actions not achieve improvement, then formal disciplinary action may follow. Representation by a friend or colleague, who may be a Trades Union representative, will therefore be available at all stages of the Performance Management Procedure, including the initial meeting.
3. Before invoking the PMP, the Head of Department will seek advice from the Area Human Resources Manager.
4. Depending on the matter(s) to be discussed, the levels of concern in relation to the matter(s), or as a result of referral from other procedures, the PMP can be activated and will be conducted according to the following procedure:-

5. **INITIAL MEETING**

- 5.1 A meeting will be called by the Head of Department with the individual member of staff.
- 5.2 The request to attend should be in writing, with clear identification of the broad matters for discussion.
- 5.3 The Head of Department and member of staff should explore any circumstances, including working environment, work systems or personal circumstances, which may have contributed to poor performance, identify clear instances of poor performance and determine whether external help is needed to address them.
- 5.4 The University acknowledges that it may be necessary to invoke alternative support mechanisms via the Sickness Absence Procedure, the Harassment and Bullying Procedure or another recognised procedure as appropriate.

- 5.5 If the Head of Department and individual disagree about the factual basis of any alleged poor performance, the opinion of an appropriate expert, acceptable to both parties, may be sought.
- 5.6 It may be determined at this stage that no further action needs to be taken and a note of the meeting is made to confirm the position.

6. **DETERMINING ACTIONS**

- 6.1 If, after comprehensive discussion, serious and/or continuous poor performance is identified, the Head of Department will confirm with the member of staff, in writing, a remedial course of action including training or an occupational health assessment. This letter will include the desired outcomes necessary to achieve the appropriate level of performance, usually within a timescale of 3 months, and an agreed date for a review meeting.
- 6.2 A note of the meeting will be kept and agreed by the Head of Department and the individual.

7. **REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

- 7.1 At the end of the remedial period, a review meeting will be called by the Head of Department with the individual.
- 7.2 The request to attend should be in writing, identifying the matters for discussion.
- 7.3 The Head of Department will confirm with the member of staff, in writing, any further remedial action including the desired outcomes necessary to achieve the appropriate level of performance usually within a further period of 3 months. If improvement is found to be satisfactory, the Head of Department will confirm this to the individual in writing and no further action will be taken.
- 7.4 A summary of the meeting will be agreed by the Head of Department and the individual, and a copy kept by both.
- 7.5 A review meeting will take place within the specified timescale. If the issues concerning performance and any related issues are resolved to the satisfaction of the Head of Department, an agreed note to this effect will be kept. This note and any previous notes and correspondence will be expunged from the records after a further period of 12 months.
- 7.6 If, at the review meeting, it is established that the appropriate levels of satisfactory performance have not been achieved within the specified timescale, the Head of Department will inform the member of staff that a formal disciplinary meeting will be called in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Should the formal disciplinary procedure be activated, then there will be no further requirement for informal exploration. The member of staff will be informed in writing of the formal disciplinary meeting.

9. Depending on the nature or seriousness of a given Performance Management issue, the University may still need to access the Disciplinary Procedure directly, including the informal stage of the Disciplinary Procedure.

10. **WITHHOLDING OF AN INCREMENT**

10.1 There may be exceptional instances when it is appropriate to withhold an annual increment for a defined period.

10.2 This can only be considered when the PMP has been instigated and appropriate actions have been determined to address established performance difficulties. In such instances, cases will be monitored and reviewed.

- 10.3 It is anticipated that the earliest stage at which an increment would be withheld is as part of the Review of Actions.
- 10.4 If the Review of Actions is successfully implemented, the increment will be reinstated within a period not exceeding 12 months from the date on which it is withheld.
- 10.5 Should performance improve sufficiently during the period of the decision being made and the normal incremental date then the annual increment will not be withheld.
- 10.6 Any such action will always require the involvement of Human Resources.
11. The University is committed to managing issues of performance as informally as possible, in a supportive and constructive manner, and therefore it does not wish to escalate issues of performance into the formal procedures if matters can be resolved by the individual member of staff and the Head of Department working together closely to achieve an effective resolution.