



Performance Management FAQs for Managers & Supervisors

1. When must performance/work plans be completed?

Performance/Work Plans must be created within the first 60 days of the performance cycle.

2. What are the performance cycle timelines?

- SHRA Cycle: April 1 – March 31
- EHRA Cycle: May 1 – April 30

3. What are the core objectives of performance management?

- Improve communication between managers and employees
- Clarify expectations and performance standards
- Align individual work with university goals
- Provide ongoing feedback
- Support employee development

4. What makes up a performance/Work Plan?

- Institutional Goals (50%) – Standard competencies for all employees
- Individual Goals (50%) – Role-specific performance goals
- Talent Development Goals (not rated)- identifies employee developmental opportunities for the cycle (ex. Attend a conference, complete assigned LinkedIn Learning trainings, etc.)

5. How many individual goals should employees have?

Employees should have 3–5 individual goals in their performance plan.

6. What do the percentages on goals mean?

The percentages indicate how much each goal contributes to the employee's overall performance rating.

7. What is the recommended structure for writing individual goals?

Use this 4-part structure:

1. Key deliverable/result
2. Effect of achieving it
3. Value to the department/University
4. Action items

8. What is a SMART goal?

SMART goals are written as:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

9. How should managers set expectations?

- Be clear and specific

- Align expectations with job duties
- Communicate early and consistently
- Document when appropriate
- Explain consequences if expectations are not met
- Provide support and feedback

10. How often should managers discuss performance with employees?

Performance should be discussed throughout the year, not just at evaluation time or when something is wrong.

11. What are mid-cycle reviews?

Mid-cycle reviews are check-ins conducted during the performance cycle to discuss progress, provide feedback, and adjust goals if needed.

12. What should managers do if performance issues arise?

- Reference the employee's work plan and expectations
- Provide feedback early
- Document discussions
- Seek guidance from Employee Relations if needed

13. What are best practices for evaluation conversations?

- Use documented performance and examples
- Be clear, respectful, and objective
- Make it a two-way conversation
- Avoid vague language
- Ask open-ended questions
- Focus on behaviors and outcomes

14. What rating scale is used?

- Not Meeting Expectations
- Meeting Expectations
- Exceeding Expectations

15. What are common rating biases to avoid?

- Recency Bias - allowing an employee's most recent performance level to skew the opinion of the total work cycle
- Horns Bias- tendency to give unfavorable ratings due to poor performance in one or two areas
- Leniency Bias- consistently rating employees higher than deserved
- Comparative Bias- comparing employees to each other instead of expectations

16. What happens if an employee transfers near the end of the cycle?

If a transfer occurs within the last 60 days of the cycle, the releasing manager still completes the evaluation.

17. What support is available to managers?

Managers can contact Employee Relations for:

- Guidance on performance management
- Additional training
- Support with disciplinary actions

Final Reminder:

Performance management is an ongoing process, not a one-time event. Clear expectations, consistent communication, and timely feedback are key to success!