



# HR Design

## Performance Management: Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is performance management?**

Performance management is an ongoing process where supervisors and employees work together to plan, monitor, and review an employee's work objectives, goals, and professional development. The most important element of performance management is communication between a supervisor and an employee throughout the year. Performance management is comprised of frequent informal conversations including coaching, feedback and support to employees about their work, needs and accomplishments related to the duties and expectations of their positions.

### **Who does the performance management policy affect?**

The new policy applies to almost all employees on campus. Supervisors, including faculty members, of Academic and University (Classified) Staff employees are expected to conduct performance management activities in accordance with the new policy.

### **What is the current state of performance management at UW-Madison?**

Performance management is currently being carried out in a variety of ways across the campus. Some units have very comprehensive systems in place while others do not have a process.

### **What is new about this performance management program and policy?**

The performance management policy requires at least four activities. These have not been required campuswide in the past. Therefore, many staff members will notice a change in the frequency, breadth and quality of conversations between supervisors and employees.

### **Why is performance management a necessary and important initiative for UW-Madison? What are the benefits and positive impacts of performance management?**

Performance management strategies will help us develop and retain a high-performing workforce. Research shows that effective performance management encourages employee behaviors that align with organizational goals and objectives. By clarifying expectations, providing feedback, recognizing high performers, addressing performance issues, and identifying developmental needs, performance management processes can help drive improved employee performance. The university is best served when it supports employees to meet their career and professional goals. Employees are best served when they receive ongoing feedback on their performance and career growth.



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### What are the components of the new performance management policy?

1. **Expectations and goal-setting.** Managers/supervisors should have initial expectation and goal-setting conversations with each of their new employees within 30 days of their start date, and annually after that. These discussions should cover the major duties of the new hire's position, work priorities, and how performance will be evaluated. Date of the conversation, goals, and expectations identified in this meeting must be documented and then provided to the employee.
2. **Informal conversations.** Managers/supervisors should regularly engage in informal conversations with their employees about the duties, expectations and performance. These meetings should include feedback, coaching and support about work, needs and accomplishments.
3. **Mid-point conversation.** Managers/supervisors should conduct a feedback and coaching conversation approximately midway through a new employee's probationary period and midway through each performance year after that. Documented mid-point conversations must identify whether the employee's performance is meeting expectations.
4. **Summary evaluation.** All managers/supervisors should conduct summary performance evaluations with their employees at the conclusion of each new employee's probationary period and at the end of each performance year after that. At a minimum, supervisors should discuss:
  - a. Whether the employee's performance met expectations
  - b. Whether the employee achieved annual goals
  - c. Professional development needs and opportunities
  - d. Options to develop additional skills and knowledge to foster career growth

The goal setting, mid-point, and summary evaluation conversations must be documented. There is no set format for this documentation, which can range from a signed checklist to a comprehensive written evaluation.

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) will provide performance management training, resources, and consulting.

### Who needs training to successfully implement the performance management program?

- Anyone who is developing and/or managing a divisional performance management program.
- Supervisors and managers of non-faculty employees
- Employees being evaluated under the policy



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### **How will this system provide flexibility to schools and divisions?**

Each division is free to design and carry out a customized performance management program that satisfies all required elements of the campus-wide policy. Individual units can customize their programs to meet their needs. OHR will support these efforts with training, resources, and consulting.

### **How does engagement and inclusion fit into the performance management process?**

Performance management is an important component of a well-developed engagement and inclusion program. Through performance management activities, employees are more engaged and have a greater sense of inclusion. They gain a better understanding of the positive impact of their work and how much the university values their important contributions. Conversations between managers and employees about obstacles and needs can result in more respect and appreciation for the benefits of a diverse workplace; people share ideas about how to promote a healthy workplace that is welcoming to different viewpoints and experiences.

### **Will faculty who are supervising Academic Staff and University (Classified) Staff be responsible for conducting reviews and implementing the performance management policy?**

Yes. Faculty members who supervise Academic or University Staff members will be responsible for conducting performance management activities in accordance with the university policy.

### **What information will HR staff need to track performance reviews? What will they be asked for?**

Unit HR Reps will work with their departments to make sure managers and supervisors complete the performance management activities required by the new university policy. These performance management activities include conducting and documenting a goal- and expectations-setting meeting, a mid-point conversation, and a summary conversation with every employee who reports to the manager/supervisor.

### **What happens if a manager or supervisor does not follow the performance management policy?**

Managers and supervisors who fail to complete all required performance management activities in accordance with the policy will be ineligible for the general wage adjustment (GWA) or performance pay increases for that fiscal year.





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### What is the timeline for implementing performance management?

- Early 2015** Performance management policy learning tools, modules and e-learning opportunities introduced.
- Spring 2015** Comprehensive performance management training and education introduced.
- July 1, 2015** Performance management policy in effect. Policy implemented by all departments and divisions across campus.
- July 1, 2016** Compliance date. Enforcement of policy for the previous year reflected in documentation of the required performance management elements (expectations and goal setting, mid-point conversation, and summary evaluation.)

For more information visit [kb.wisc.edu/ohr/policies](http://kb.wisc.edu/ohr/policies)



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