



UNIVERSITEIT  
STELLENBOSCH  
UNIVERSITY

## Performance Management Policy and Strategy

<b>Type of Document:</b>	Policy
<b>Purpose:</b>	To formulate a policy for performance management and strategy at Stellenbosch University.
<b>Approved by:</b>	SU Council
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	2018/07/01
<b>Date of Implementation:</b>	2018/07/01
<b>Date of Next Revision:</b>	As required
<b>Date of Previous Revision(s):</b>	November 2016
<b>Policy Owner<sup>1</sup>:</b>	Vice Rector: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel
<b>Policy Curator<sup>2</sup>:</b>	Chief Director: Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources
<b>Keywords:</b>	Performance Management
<b>Reference number</b>	PM0301
<b>Validity:</b>	In case of differences in interpretation the English version of this policy will be regarded as the valid version.

SU Policies are available at [www.sun.ac.za/policies](http://www.sun.ac.za/policies)

---

<sup>1</sup> Policy Owner: Head(s) of Responsibility Centre(s) in which the policy functions.

<sup>2</sup> Policy Curator: Administrative head of the division responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy

## **The core of the policy**

This Performance Management Policy and Strategy was formulated with a view to achieving the University's performance goals by taking the performance of individual staff members to a higher level, and to strengthen the University's capacity and ability for sustained performance.

Implementing this policy will create individual responsibility and accountability for individual performance. Personal development is an important component of performance management, and the policy aims to create a framework that focuses on development initiatives according to which staff will take ownership of planning and managing their own career.

The policy creates a framework for effective and regular performance feedback, and for identifying underachievement with the purpose of establishing and confirming corrective follow-up actions.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2012 the Stellenbosch University (SU) Council approved a document entitled "Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018" that sets out, among other things, the University's mission, vision, values and goals.
- 1.2 On 13 December 2000 Council approved SU's Employment Equity Plan, which states as its premise that employment equity is a strategic priority of the University.
- 1.3 This policy regarding performance management and the procedures set out below must be interpreted and applied within the context of the principles and premises contained in the two documents mentioned above, and will be subject to them at all times.

## **2. Application of the policy**

This policy applies by default to all staff members (permanent as well as temporary) who are in the employment of the University.

## **3. Definitions**

- 3.1 Competencies: the visible application of knowledge and skills within a certain environment; the evaluation of competencies concerns not only a staff member's knowledge, but also the way in which the person applies it in the work environment;
- 3.2 Role description: the description of a staff member's function, taking into account the desired output of the post as well as the competencies required for the post;
- 3.3 Employment contract: the legal agreement between SU and a staff member, stipulating the formal conditions of employment as required by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act;

- 3.4 Key performance areas (KPAs): the specific performance areas in which performance will be measured; these areas constitute the core output for which the staff member is responsible;
- 3.5 Performance: performance of duties; the work output that a staff member delivers and which may constitute good, acceptable or poor performance; when a person delivers the agreed output, performance is rated acceptable;
- 3.6 Performance development: the process of developing competencies in accordance with the description of a staff member's role and based on the outcome of the development evaluation;
- 3.7 Performance development evaluation: the discussion during which staff members receive feedback on the evaluation results of their competencies in the light of the role description;
- 3.8 Personal development plan (PDP): the action plan that confirms the development activities of a staff member; it defines the specific competencies requiring development, as well as the interventions that will fulfil those needs; the PDP also offers an opportunity to discuss a staff member's career goals by referring to an agreed action plan;
- 3.9 Performance indicators: the specific criteria according to which the level of performance in a KPA is measured;
- 3.10 Multi-source evaluation: employing various sources of feedback to evaluate staff members' competence by referring to the role description;
- 3.11 Support service environment: an environment or division that renders support services to the academic or other environments, or both spheres;
- 3.12 Work agreement: the agreement or contract between staff members and their head or chair or direct supervisor that defines the required level of performance; the work agreement is based on the role description, which is drafted beforehand, and includes both components of performance – performance in the form of output as well as performance according to the requirements of the role.

#### **4. Aim of the policy**

The aim of this policy is to lay down policy and procedures for the management of staff performance at Stellenbosch University.

#### **5. Objectives of the policy**

This policy is meant to help the University achieve its performance goals by taking the performance of individual staff members to a higher level, and to strengthen the University's capacity and ability for sustained performance by striving after the following objectives:

- 5.1 to create, by means of implementing this policy, individual responsibility and accountability for individual performance;
- 5.2 to create a framework that focuses on development initiatives and thus to make staff take ownership of their career planning and management; and

- 5.3 to create a framework for effective and regular performance feedback, and for identifying underachievement with the purpose of establishing and confirming corrective follow-up actions.

## **6. Conflict resolution**

The regular line management practices must be applied to resolve conflict regarding this policy, and the University's Grievances Procedure must be followed.

## **7. Policy control**

### 7.1 Responsibilities

7.1.1 The Vice-Rector (Community Interaction and Personnel) is the owner of this policy and responsible for the policy being formulated, updated and implemented, and for a curator and complementary functionaries being appointed and functioning effectively.

7.1.2 The Chief Director: Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources is the curator of the policy and must ensure that it is formulated, approved, reviewed, communicated, made available and implemented.

### 7.2 Implementation

The curator of the policy is responsible for it being implemented as from the effective date or the review date.

### 7.3 Monitoring

7.3.1 The owner of the policy is accountable and the curator is responsible for the necessary controls being established to monitor the policy.

7.3.2 In case of noncompliance with the policy the regular line management practices will apply.

### 7.4 Review

The policy must be reviewed after essential amendments have been made.

### 7.5 Noncompliance

In case of noncompliance with the policy the regular line management practices must be followed.

## **8. Focus areas**

The University's focus areas (as determined from time to time) must be kept in mind when staff are appointed and promoted.

## **9. CONTEXT**

The premise of performance management at SU is to establish a process that contributes to the implementation of the University's mission (raison d'être) and vision

statement as well as the overarching strategic priorities contained in its Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018.

The Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018 states SU's **mission** as follows:

- 9.1 to create an academic community in which social justice and equal opportunities will lead to systemic sustainability;
- 9.2 to investigate and innovatively implement appropriate and sustainable approaches to the development of Africa;
- 9.3 to align our research with a wide-ranging spectrum of challenges facing the world, Africa, our country and the local community;
- 9.4 to maintain student-centred and future-oriented learning and teaching that establish a passion for lifelong learning;
- 9.5 to invest in the innovative scholarship and creative ability of all its people;
- 9.6 to leverage the inherent power of diversity; and
- 9.7 to establish and expand synergistic networks in which the University is a dynamic partner.

The **vision statement** for positioning the University as an institution that is relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with 2030 as time horizon, is formulated as follows in the Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018:

*Stellenbosch University is **inclusive, innovative and future-focused**: a place of discovery and excellence where both staff and students are thought leaders in advancing in the service of all stakeholders.*

The following three overarching **strategic priorities**, each supported by strategic themes, have been identified:

#### **9.7.1 Broadening access**

Theme 1: Increase access to new knowledge markets

Theme 2: Increase diversity profile of students and staff

#### **9.7.2 Sustain momentum on excellence**

Theme 3: Position as the leading research institution in Africa

Theme 4: Maintain success rate

#### **9.7.3 Enhance societal impact**

Theme 5: Establish committed, visionary leadership

## **10. Principles of performance management**

Performance management at SU will contribute towards the implementation of the University's vision, mission and strategic priorities if the process adheres to the following principles:

- 10.1 The process aligns the performance of all SU staff with the University's overarching mission, vision and strategic priorities.

- 10.2 The process contributes towards the expansion of SU's capacity to perform in the long term (and therefore is based on a strong development component).
- 10.3 The process is participatory in nature and therefore empowers individual staff members.
- 10.4 The principle of continued development and quality improvement forms the basis of the performance management process. A process of quality assurance and management has been instituted to evaluate implementation continuously.
- 10.5 Managing the ownership of the performance management process remains the responsibility of the staff member concerned, his or her direct head and the Division for Human Resources (HR). Implementation must be actualised up to the lowest level possible.
- 10.6 The performance management process endorses the principles of justice and fairness.
- 10.7 The principles of this process are applied consistently throughout the entire SU.

## **11. DEFINITION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Performance management is a systematic approach to managing the process by which the performance and development of individual staff members and entities within the institution are actively managed to ensure that SU's strategy and vision are implemented.

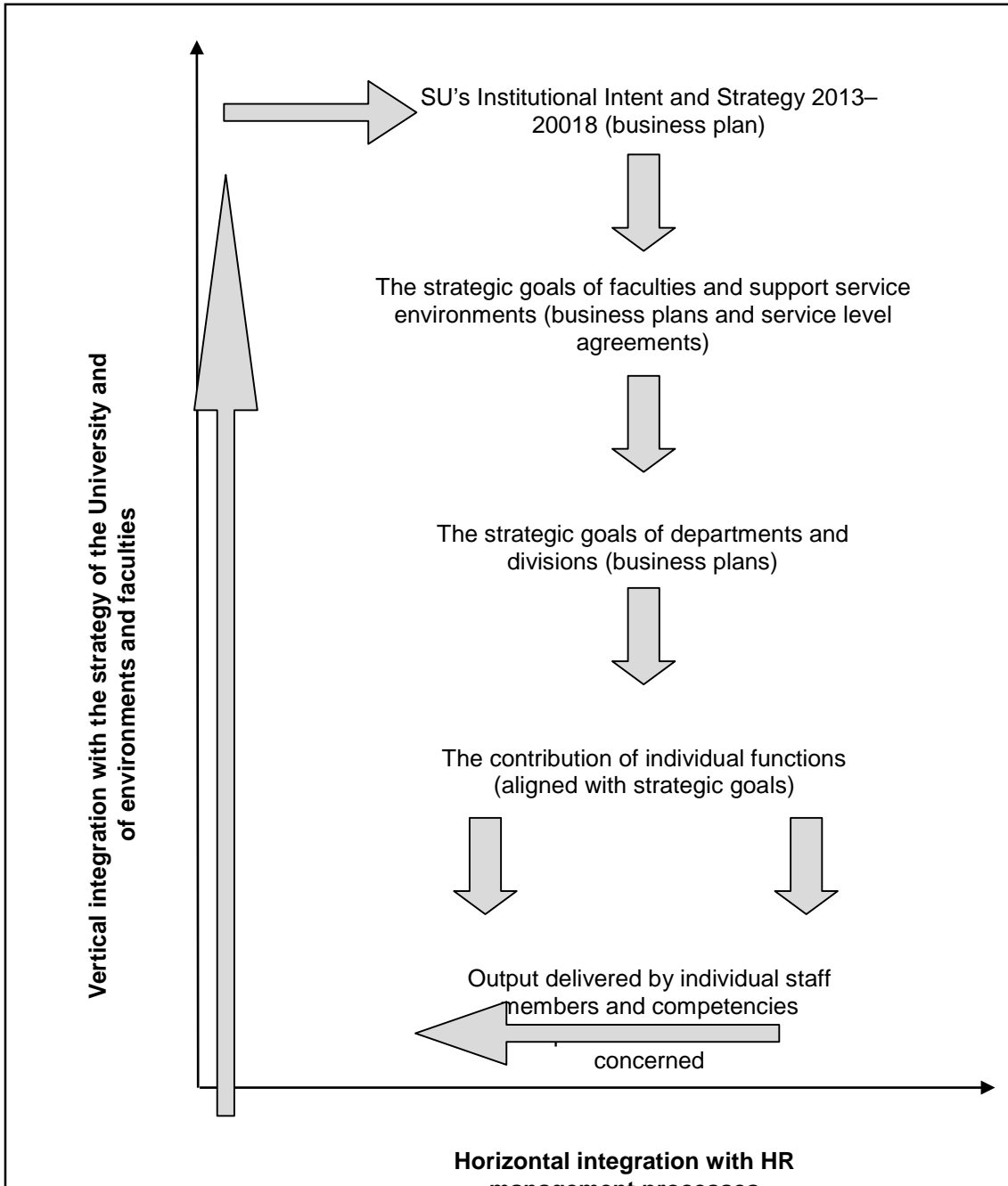
Performance management therefore entails:

- 11.1 defining the performance that is being managed (design),
- 11.2 the performance management process (implementation) and
- 11.3 managing the outcome of the performance that was delivered (integration).

## **12. GOALS OF A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

- 12.1 Ensure that the University's performance goals are achieved.
- 12.2 Take the performance of individual staff members to a higher level and build the University's capacity and ability to maintain performance. Individual development is a core component of performance management.
- 12.3 Hold individual staff members responsible and accountable for individual performance as well as personal development.
- 12.4 Set up a framework for effective and regular performance feedback.
- 12.5 Set up a framework that, by focusing on development initiatives, makes staff take co-ownership of their career planning and management.
- 12.6 Link individual performance to remuneration.
- 12.7 Make management information available that allows the University to take decisions about HR processes such as remuneration and training.
- 12.8 Identify underachievement and subsequently establish corrective follow-up actions and record them.

### 13. Integration at the four levels of performance (performance of individual staff members and structures within the institution)



Performance management must be integrated to such an extent that it appears like a golden thread throughout the University's entire strategy down to every individual contribution. To achieve this, performance must be managed at the following four levels:

- the University as a whole,
- faculties and support service environments,

- departments and divisions, and
- individual staff members.

### 13.1 The University as a whole

SU's Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018 serves as the defining context for the performance that is expected of each environment, department or division and staff member.

SU's strategic priorities are implemented by setting more operational goals for environments and departments or divisions.

However, currently the Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018 provides only a strategic framework, while the process of institutional planning contributes towards specific goals being devolved to different faculties and support service environments.

### 13.2 Faculties and support service environments

Each faculty and support service environment must actively interpret the University's strategic direction and goals. Faculties and environments must define their specific contribution to the strategic goals with a view to shaping a framework for divisional heads and departmental chairs within which environments can function with their specific contribution in mind.

### 13.3 Departments and divisions

In implementing the above-mentioned goals towards actualising SU's *raison d'être*, the greatest demands that departments within faculties (and divisions within environments) make on a performance management system come in the form of unique qualities that need to be accommodated. Consequently, contributions made at departmental and divisional level will be diverse. However, since divisional and departmental contributions serve as building blocks for the environment or faculty, the process and structure of departments' and divisions' business plans (if they have decided to adopt one) must be capable of accommodating uniqueness without failing to define the unit's generic contribution towards the faculty or environment.

### 13.4 Individual staff members

Goals for individuals are set to implement the departmental or divisional business plan operationally. The roles within the departments and divisions must be defined very clearly regarding the output to be achieved as well as the competencies required for each specific role.

A role description is defined by means of three components:

#### 13.4.1 The overarching goal of the post

#### 13.4.2 The expected output:

- a) KPAs (key performance areas)
- b) performance indicators
- c) performance goals

#### 13.4.3 The required competencies:

- a) knowledge
- b) skills



- c) qualifications

All the role descriptions are used to devise an output framework for the University as a whole. This allows the institution to refine the role descriptions as SU's strategic directions changes.

The role descriptions are also used to devise a framework of competencies. The framework of competencies can be employed to manage comparison across the whole institution. The competencies required of staff members usually are classified in competency categories such as:

- a) leadership
- b) management
- c) culture
- d) self-development and -management
- e) strategy
- f) functionality
- g) subject or technical expertise

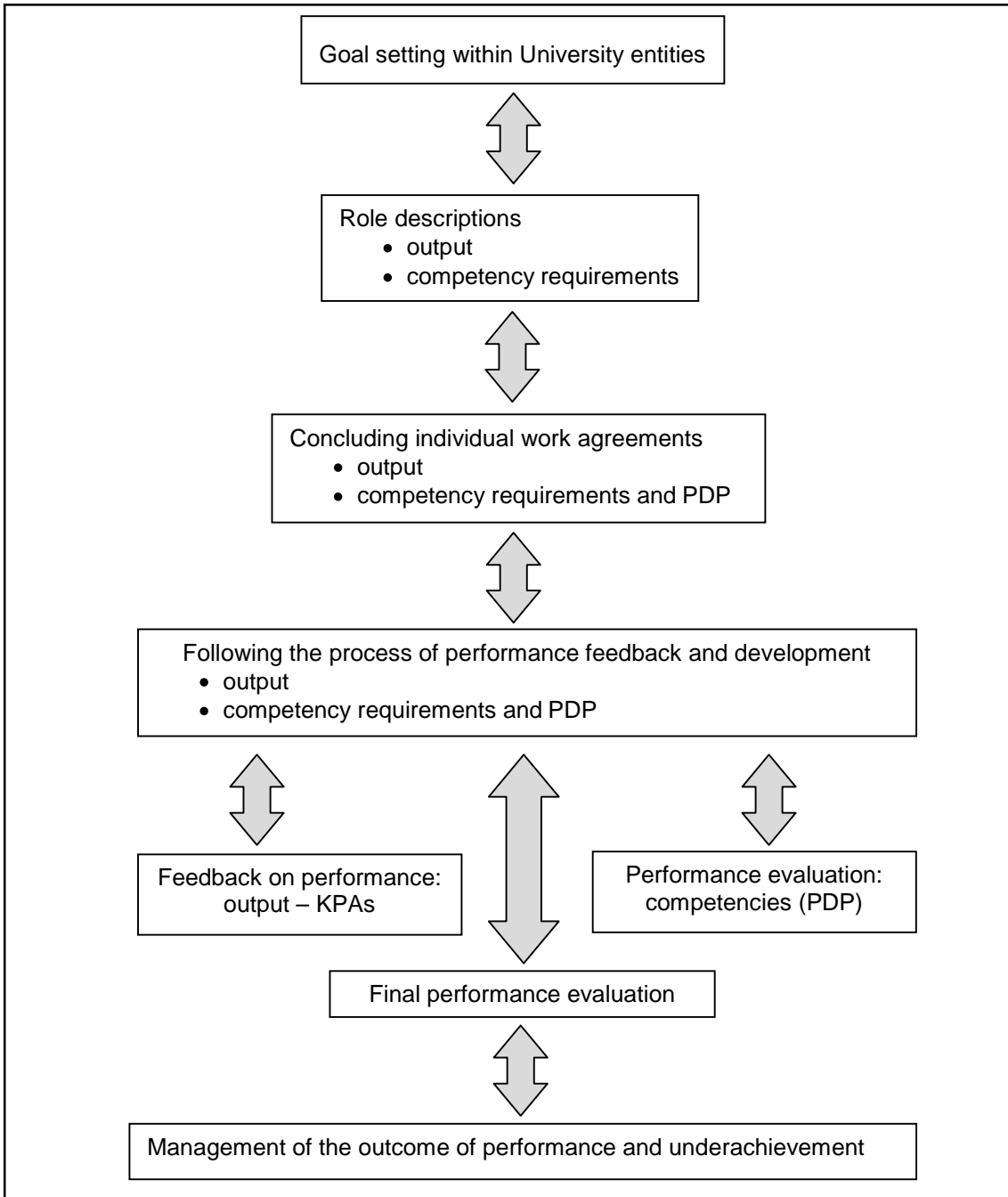
A scoring standard must be adopted. A five-point scale that is applied as set out below is widely supported:

- 1 = Work performance is below the expected standard **in all respects**.
- 2 = Work performance is on the expected standard **in most respects**.
- 3 = Work performance meets the requirements set out in the work agreement **in all respects**.
- 4 = Work performance **surpasses** the expected standards **in most respects**.
- 5 = Work performance is excellent – it **surpasses** the expected standards **in all respects**.

## **14. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS)**

Responsibility and accountability form the core of the debate regarding performance. When individual staff members accept responsibilities and perform according to specific performance goals, institutional performance will follow.

The key elements of individual performance are the work agreement and the feedback on and evaluation of performance.



## **STEP 1: Goal setting within University entities**

### **Aim**

1. Set clear, measurable and realistic goals for the University, environments and departments and divisions, thereby creating a framework for drafting individual work agreements.
2. Draft business plans for the various levels within SU, thereby helping to ensure that all activities at levels that have adopted a business plan are aligned with the University's strategy.

### **Process**

1. Goals for the University, environments and departments or divisions must be set by drafting clear business plans and role descriptions for the various levels within SU.
2. The purpose of the business plans is to explain the University's *raison d'être* and to set clear goals for the entity.
3. A business plan must provide at least the following structure:
  - an interpretation of the environment within which the entity functions (internal, external or both);
  - a definition of the entity's vision, mission and performance goals;
  - a definition of the performance indicators to be used to determine whether the entity has achieved the goals that were set;
  - a definition of the performance level or target to be achieved within the framework of the performance indicators; and
  - the assignment of responsibility and accountability to individual staff members within the entity with a view to achieving the performance goals.

### **Advantages**

1. Goals are set within the context of the SU environment within which the entity functions; SU's business plan, in turn, defines the context for environments and departments or divisions.
2. All functionaries are provided with a clear focus on the University's or the environment's priorities.
3. Staff members are empowered to realise their potential within a well-defined context.
4. The standards for expected performance have already been set.
5. Goal setting offers opportunity for self-management and self-motivation.
6. Staff members are assigned clearly defined responsibilities with a view to achieving the entity's goals.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Deans and environmental heads:
  - Draft business plans that are unique to the faculty or service environment concerned, but also aligned with the University's business plan.
  - Facilitate the drafting of business plans for departments within the faculties and for divisions within support service environments that have decided to adopt a plan.
  - Encourage staff to participate in drafting the business plan, thereby promoting understanding and ownership.
2. Departmental chairs and divisional heads:
  - Interpret the business plan for the faculty or the support service environment concerned.
  - Draft a business plan for the department or division that is aligned with that of the faculty or environment.
  - Encourage staff to participate in drafting the business plan, thereby promoting understanding and ownership.
3. Staff members:
  - Contribute to the business plan that concerns them.
  - Accept the responsibilities set out in the business plan.

## **STEP 2: Individual role description**

### **Aim**

1. Formulate clear definitions of the roles required within the environment with a view to achieving the environment's operational goals.
2. Formulate role descriptions that include the following:
  - key performance areas (KPA's) – the areas on which the functionary must focus and which will be considered when evaluating the person's performance in the function concerned; and
  - requirements for the role – the competencies (knowledge and skills) and qualifications required for succeeding in the KPA's in the post concerned.
3. Use the definition as guideline for drafting a work agreement.
4. Define performance standards and indicators with generic application.

### **Process**

1. The role description must be generic in nature and is formulated by the chair or head concerned when required.
2. The role description must be drafted with the strategic goals of the University and the environment in mind.

3. The role description must be modelled on a standard format used for defining all role descriptions within SU. It must, nonetheless, leave room for unique qualities of the role or environment concerned.
4. The role description must be discussed with the staff member concerned with a view to securing agreement.

### **Advantages**

1. The role description ensures that individual contributions are aligned with SU strategy.
2. The role descriptions provides a framework for drafting work agreements quickly and easily.
3. Standardised role descriptions contribute to the calibration process.
4. Defining roles according to a standardised format facilitates the availability of management information for further decision-making.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Environmental heads:
  - Commit to the principles and format of the strategy.
  - Formulate a role description for every function within the structure.
2. Departmental chairs and divisional heads:
  - Interpret the environment's business plan.
  - Formulate a role description for every individual post within the environment.
  - Encourage staff participation in the formulation of individual role descriptions.
  - Align the goals for individuals with those of the department or division.
3. Staff members:
  - Contribute to the role description that concerns them.
  - Accept the responsibilities set out in the role description.
4. HR:
  - Guide and advise environmental heads regarding the formulation and application of role descriptions.

### **STEP 3: Concluding individual work agreements**

#### **Aim**

1. The work agreement represents the contract concluded between a staff member and the direct supervisor or manager, or the chair, with a view to determining the level of performance expected (goals).

2. The work agreement is the starting point of the management process of individual performance and creates an opportunity to align the divisional or departmental goals with those of an individual staff member.
3. The work agreement should state:
  - the expected output; as well as
  - the competencies according to the personal development goals as summarised in the PDP.
4. The work agreement sets the required level of performance.

### **Process**

1. The role description serves as framework for an interactive discussion between the departmental chair or head and a staff member for purposes of drafting a work agreement.
2. The head or chair must study the business plan and draft proposals about the expectations for every staff member.
3. The staff member must offer proposals about the contribution that he or she will make.
4. The staff member and the head or chair must agree on specific goals that must be achieved in each KPA, and on the concomitant performance indicator(s).
5. The staff member and the head or chair must agree on the priorities for each KPA and assign weights to the individual performance indicators.
6. The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the relevant duties were discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.
7. The parties must also agree on an action plan for development that must be followed in order to equip the staff member for implementing the PDP.
8. The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the PDP as proof that personal development was discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.

### **Advantages**

1. Individual work agreements create an opportunity to devolve departmental or divisional goals to individual staff members.
2. Staff members are aware of their individual performance goals and the concomitant criteria right from the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.
3. The process as described allows for structured operational planning.
4. Regular feedback can refer to the goals that were agreed upon.
5. Personal development is determined by contract.
6. Employees find performance management to be a just and fair process.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Environmental heads:
  - Take ownership of implementation.
  - Commit to the principles and format of the strategy.
  - Monitor the number of work agreements concluded.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.
2. Departmental chairs and divisional heads:
  - Interpret the environment's business plan.
  - Prepare for the discussion with each staff member by drafting proposals regarding individual performance goals.
  - Create an environment where staff feel confident to contribute to the discussion and the agreement regarding performance goals.
  - Facilitate the discussion with each staff member with a view to agreeing upon performance goals.
  - Fulfil the formalities regarding the work agreement (e.g. by signing and dating the document).
  - Take ownership of implementation.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.
3. Staff members:
  - Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.
  - Take ownership of and accept the responsibilities set out in the work agreement (e.g. by signing and dating the document).
  - Compile information that may be used as input during feedback on performance and development as well as during performance evaluation.
4. HR:
  - Guide and advise environmental heads regarding the drafting and implementation of work agreements.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.
  - Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to hold a discussion about work agreements.

#### **STEP 4: Following the process of performance feedback and development**

##### 4.1 Performance feedback (KPAs)

#### **Aim**

1. Staff members must receive performance feedback as an aid to implement their contracted work agreement successfully.
2. SU supports the principle of continuous improvement. This requires that deviation from performance norms be addressed in time.

3. Performance feedback helps problem areas to be identified early on and to be handled in time, thus avoiding a crisis at the end of the performance period under evaluation.
4. Performance feedback applies to all staff members, but the frequency of feedback and the level of formality depend on the environment in which a specific person functions.

### **Process**

1. Performance feedback takes place between the staff member and the chair or head, or his or her delegate, and should be an inherent function of a chair or head.
2. The feedback process has a strong development motive.
3. A meaningful discussion requires that both parties come to the discussion informed and prepared.
4. In principle feedback must occur as regularly as possible, e.g. quarterly, but the frequency of feedback depends on each staff member's circumstances.
5. The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the performance feedback discussion took place and that the staff member was informed of the final score.

### **Advantages**

1. Strengthens staff members' motivation, because the feedback discussion also provides an opportunity to praise people.
2. Strengthens staff members' sense of responsibility and ownership.
3. Offers an opportunity for development.
4. Improves communication within the work environment.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Environmental head:
  - Monitor the success of the process.
2. Departmental chair or divisional head:
  - Take responsibility for managing the unit's performance management.
  - Actively take ownership of the management of performance by staff members within their environment.
  - Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it (the latter e.g. by signing and dating the work agreement).
  - Meet the requirements for good feedback.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.
3. Staff members:



- Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair, or his or her delegate.
- Take ownership of the implementation of the work agreement.
- Foster a positive attitude towards and receptiveness to feedback and recommendations (e.g. by signing and dating the work agreement).
- Take ownership of the management of their personal development.

#### 4. HR:

- Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.
- Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to manage the process.
- Monitor the success of the process.
- Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.

#### 4.2 Performance development (required for the role)

##### **Aim**

1. Performance development is done to facilitate development of individual staff members that will equip them to develop themselves.
2. Feedback to staff must be obtained from more than one source.
3. Performance development must be based on a personal development plan (PDP). The PDP takes into account those areas where the functionary needs to develop in order to better achieve the output of the post concerned and to improve the specific functionary's career prospects. All staff members must have a PDP.

##### **Process**

1. A staff member's PDP is formalised as follows:
  - The formal evaluation is initiated by asking various sources to comment on the person's performance by referring to a work agreement that was drafted beforehand.
  - The information is gathered and then used to determine any development needs by referring to the requirements for the role.
  - The staff member prepares a PDP that takes into account feedback on the evaluation as well as his or her development needs.
  - The parties agree on a PDP, which is an action plan for applying development interventions for the staff member concerned.
  - The staff member as well as the head or chair must sign and date the PDP.
2. The staff member's progress measured against this action plan forms part of the feedback process.

## **Advantages**

1. Staff members who are focused, are developed.
2. Individual staff members' motivation is boosted.
3. Staff more strongly commit to and take ownership of their personal development.
4. Communication in the work environment is strengthened.
5. Work output increases.
6. Greater job satisfaction is generated.

## **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Environmental heads:
  - Monitor the success of the process.
  - Implement the strategy at various levels.
2. Departmental chairs and divisional heads:
  - Take responsibility for the management of the unit's performance development.
  - Actively take ownership of the management of performance by staff members within their environment.
  - Ensure that individual PDPs are drafted, signed and dated.
  - Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it.
  - Meet the requirements for good feedback.
3. Staff members:
  - Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.
  - Take ownership of their personal development.
  - Ensure that their individual PDP is drafted, signed and dated.
  - Maintain a positive attitude towards and be receptive to feedback and recommendations.
  - Take ownership of the management of their personal development.
4. HR:
  - Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.
  - Offer development opportunities based on research regarding the opportunities that are available in the tertiary environment.
  - Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to manage the process.
  - Monitor the success of the process.
  - Establish and maintain a training system that is based on skills.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.

## **STEP 5: Conducting the final performance evaluation**

### **Aim**

1. The formal performance evaluation determines the final score for the individual staff member's performance during a certain period (one year).
2. It offers a summary of the performance feedback and development process.
3. It serves as input for other HR processes.

### **Process**

1. Performance feedback takes place between the staff member and the chair or head, or his or her delegate, and should be an inherent function of a chair or head.
2. The evaluation process is a formal summary of the feedback discussions that took place during the year.
3. A meaningful discussion requires that both parties come to the discussion informed and prepared.
4. In principle feedback must occur as regularly as possible, e.g. quarterly, but the frequency of feedback depends on each staff member's circumstances.
5. The staff member's progress measured against this action plan forms part of the feedback process.
6. The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the performance feedback discussion took place and that the staff member was informed of the final score.
7. Evaluation is done according to a five-point scale.

### **Advantages**

1. Staff members who are focused, are developed.
2. Individual staff members' motivation and performance are boosted.
3. Staff more strongly commit to and take ownership of their personal development.
4. Communication within the work environment improves.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

1. Environmental heads:
  - Monitor the success of the process.
  - Implement the strategy at various levels.
  - Set standards for calibration.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.

2. Departmental chairs and divisional heads:
  - Actively take ownership of the development of staff members in their environment.
  - Draft PDPs.
  - Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it (the latter e.g. by signing and dating the work agreement).
  - Meet the requirements for good feedback.
  - Set standards for calibration.
  - Inform a staff member if the final score was amended in the calibration process.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management.
3. Staff members:
  - Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.
  - Continuously make information available that can be used during the evaluation process.
  - Take ownership of their personal development.
  - Draft a PDP for themselves.
  - Foster a positive attitude towards and receptiveness to feedback and recommendations (e.g. by signing and dating the work agreement).
  - Sign and date the amended performance score after the calibration process (if applicable).
  - Take ownership of the management of their personal development.
4. HR:
  - Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.
  - Offer development opportunities based on research regarding the opportunities that are available in the tertiary environment.
  - Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs, heads and other staff members are equipped to implement the process.
  - Monitor the success of the process.
  - Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.

## **STEP 6: Managing the outcomes of performance or underperformance**

- 6.1 Managing underperformance
  - 6.1.1 Follow the policy and procedure for managing poor performance or underperformance – full details in Annexure A.
- 6.2 Developing performance
  - 6.2.1 Evaluate the multi-source results.

Report on the evaluation results measured against the competencies required for the role, including the following details:

- name of the person who was evaluated
- the competencies that were evaluated
- the results from the various evaluators
- the results of the self-evaluation

6.2.2 Devise a PDP according to the following format:

- Analyse the current position.
- Set goals.
- Draft an action plan.
- Implement the plan.
- Build on success.

6.2.3 Integrate the PDP with other HR processes.

6.2.3.1 Training and development strategy:

- Employ the role descriptions to form a framework that sets out the competencies required of the role. In this way, specific development strategies are connected to specific competencies, which results in focused staff training.
- Let various levels and environments within the University evaluate competencies, thus enabling SU to establish an integrated training and development strategy that is based on reliable management information.
- After every competency evaluation, identify the required development interventions. This will result in more effective development interventions being provided.

6.2.3.2 Succession planning:

- The role descriptions set a standard for measuring staff members with potential.
- By means of devising accelerated development plans individual staff members can be developed for specific competencies in preparation for filling key positions.

6.2.3.3 Career planning:

- Staff use the results of their development evaluation to compare their competencies with the standard set by the role descriptions.
- This may be done by having individuals compare their competencies with the role descriptions connected to posts for potential promotion within SU. That would enable them to focus their development planning according to the requirements of a role in which they would be interested.

## 15. Supporting documents

<b>Item no.</b>	<b>Name of document</b>	<b>Status</b> <i>(e.g. identified, in process or approved)</i>
PM0301	Policy for Managing Poor Performance	Approved

## 16. Supporting documents

<b>Item no.</b>	<b>Name of document</b>	<b>Status</b> <i>(e.g. identified, in process or approved)</i>
PM0301	Policy for Managing Poor Performance	Approved

<b>Step 1: Goal setting within University entities</b>				
<p><b>Goal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set clear, measurable and realistic objectives for the University, environments and departments and divisions, thereby creating a framework for drawing up individual work agreements.</li> <li>• Draft business plans for the various levels within SU, thereby helping to ensure that all activities at levels that have decided to adopt a business plan are aligned with SU strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals for the University, environments and departments or divisions will be set by drafting clear business plans and role descriptions for the various levels within SU.</li> <li>• The purpose of the business plans is to set out the University's raison d'être and to set clear goals for the entity.</li> <li>• A business plan must provide at least the following structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an interpretation of the environment within which the entity functions (internal, external or both);</li> <li>- a definition of the entity's vision, mission and performance goals;</li> <li>- a definition of the performance indicators to be applied when determining whether the entity has achieved the goals that were set; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals are set within the context of the SU environment within which the entity functions; SU's business plan, in turn, defines the context for environments and departments or divisions.</li> <li>• All functionaries are provided with a clear focus on the University's or the environment's priorities.</li> <li>• Staff members are empowered to realise their potential within a well-defined context.</li> <li>• The required performance levels have already been defined.</li> <li>• Goal setting offers opportunity for self-management and self-motivation.</li> <li>• Clearly defined responsibilities are assigned to staff members with a view to achieving the entity's goals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft business plans that are tailor-made for the faculty or service environment concerned, but also aligned with the SU business plan.</li> <li>• Facilitate the drafting of business plans for departments within faculties and for divisions within support service environments that have decided to adopt a business plan.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to participate in drafting the business plan, thereby promoting understanding and ownership.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental chairs and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret the business plan for the faculty or support service environment concerned.</li> <li>• Draft a business plan for the department or division that is aligned with that of the faculty or environment.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to participate in drafting the business plan, thereby promoting understanding and ownership.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p>	<p><b>Annually</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a definition of the performance level or target to be achieved within the framework of the performance indicators.</li> <li>• Responsibility and accountability for achieving performance goals will be assigned to individual staff members within the entity.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the business plan that concerns them.</li> <li>• Accept the responsibilities set out in the business plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Step 2: Role descriptions</b>				
<p><b>Goal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulate clear definitions of the roles required within the environment with a view to achieving the environment's operational goals.</li> <li>• The role description must include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- key performance areas (KPAs) – the areas on which the functionary must focus and which will be considered when evaluating the employee's performance in the role concerned;</li> <li>requirements for the role – the competencies (knowledge and skills) and qualifications required for succeeding in the KPAs in the post concerned;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role description must be generic in nature and is formulated jointly by HR and the chair or head concerned when required.</li> <li>• The role description must be drafted with the strategic goals of the University and those of the environment in mind.</li> <li>• The role description must be modelled on a standard format used for defining all roles within SU, without failing to leave room for unique qualities within roles and environments.</li> <li>• The role description must be discussed with the functionary concerned with a view to securing agreement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role descriptions ensure that individual staff members contribute towards the institutional strategy.</li> <li>• Role descriptions provide a framework for drafting work agreements quickly and easily.</li> <li>• Standardised role descriptions contribute to the calibration process.</li> <li>• Defining role descriptions according to a standardised format facilitates the availability of management information for further decision-making.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to the principles and format of the strategy.</li> <li>• Formulate a role description for every role within the structure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental chairs and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret the environment's business plan.</li> <li>• Formulate a role description for every individual post within the environment.</li> <li>• Encourage the staff members concerned to help draft individual role descriptions.</li> <li>• Align the goals of individual roles with those of the department or division.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p>	<p><b>As required</b></p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- role description – the guideline for drafting a work agreement;</li> <li>- definitions – descriptions of performance standards and indicators with generic application.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the role description that concerns them.</li> <li>• Accept the responsibilities set out in the role description.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide and advise environmental heads regarding the drafting and application of the role descriptions.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Step 3: Concluding individual work agreements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Output (KPAs)</b></li> <li>• <b>Competencies (knowledge &amp; skills) and qualifications</b></li> <li>• <b>Development actions</b></li> </ul>				
<p><b>Goal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work agreement represents the contract concluded between a staff member and the direct supervisor or manager, or the chair, with a view to determining the level of performance expected (goals).</li> <li>• The work agreement marks the starting point of the individual performance management process and creates an opportunity to ensure that the goals of the division or department are aligned with those of individuals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role description serves as framework for an interactive discussion between the departmental chair or head and the staff member for purposes of drafting a work agreement.</li> <li>• The head or chair must study the business plan and draft proposals about the expectations for every staff member.</li> <li>• The staff member must offer proposals about the contribution that he or she will make.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual work agreements create an opportunity to devolve departmental or divisional goals to individual staff members.</li> <li>• Staff members are aware of their individual performance goals and the concomitant criteria right from the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.</li> <li>• Drawing up work agreements provides a structured process for operational planning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take ownership of the implementation of the work agreement.</li> <li>• Commit to the principles and format of the strategy.</li> <li>• Monitor the number of work agreements concluded.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental chairs and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret the environment's business plan.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarterly</b> (as required)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work agreement should apply to both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the expected output; and</li> <li>○ the competencies according to the employee's personal development goals as summarised in the PDP.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The work agreement sets the required level of performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must agree on specific goals that must be achieved in each KPA, and on the concomitant performance indicator(s) that will be applied.</li> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must agree on the priorities for each KPA and assign a weight to every performance indicator.</li> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the relevant duties were discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.</li> <li>• The parties also agree on the development plan that will be followed with a view to equipping the staff member to implement the PDP.</li> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the PDP as proof that personal development was discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular feedback can be provided by referring to the goals that were agreed upon.</li> <li>• Personal development is determined by contract.</li> <li>• Staff find performance management to be a just and fair process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for the discussion with each staff member by drafting proposals regarding individual performance goals.</li> <li>• Create an environment where staff feel confident to contribute to the discussion and the agreement regarding performance goals.</li> <li>• Facilitate the discussion with each staff member with a view to securing agreement.</li> <li>• Fulfil the formalities regarding the performance agreement (e.g. by signing and dating the document).</li> <li>• Take ownership of the implementation of the work agreement.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.</li> <li>• Take ownership of and accept the responsibilities set out in the work agreement (e.g. by signing and dating the document).</li> <li>• Compile information that may be used as input during feedback on performance and development as well as during performance evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR</b></p>	
---	---	--	---	--

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide and advise environmental heads regarding the drafting and application of work agreements.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.</li> <li>• Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to hold discussions about work agreements.</li> </ul>	
<b>Step 4: Performance feedback and development</b>				
<b>4.1 Performance feedback (KPAs)</b>				
<p><b>Aim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual staff members must receive feedback on their performance in order to support them with a view to successfully achieving the goals set out in the work agreement.</li> <li>• SU supports the principle of continuous quality improvement. This requires that deviation from performance norms be addressed in time.</li> <li>• Performance feedback helps problem areas to be identified early on and to be handled in time, thus avoiding a crisis at the end</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance feedback occurs between the staff member and the chair or head, or his or her delegate. Such feedback should be an inherent function of a chair or head.</li> <li>• The feedback process has a strong development motive.</li> <li>• A meaningful discussion requires that both parties come to the discussion informed and prepared.</li> <li>• In principle feedback must occur as regularly as possible, e.g. quarterly, but the frequency of feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens staff members' motivation, because the feedback discussion also provides an opportunity to praise people.</li> <li>• Performance feedback strengthens individual staff members in taking and accepting ownership.</li> <li>• Offers an opportunity for development.</li> <li>• Improves communication within the work environment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the success of the process.</li> <li>• Implement the strategy at various levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the unit's performance.</li> <li>• Actively take ownership of the performance management of staff members in their environment.</li> <li>• Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it.</li> <li>• Meet the requirements for good feedback.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarterly</b> (as required)</p>

<p>of the performance period under evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance feedback applies to all staff members, but the frequency of feedback and the level of formality depend on the environment in which a specific person functions.</li> </ul>	<p>depends on each staff member's circumstances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the performance feedback discussion did take place and that the staff member was informed of the final score.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign and date the evaluation.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair, or his or her delegate.</li> <li>• Take ownership of the implementation of the work agreement.</li> <li>• Maintain a positive attitude towards and be receptive to feedback and recommendations.</li> <li>• Sign and date the evaluation.</li> <li>• Take ownership of the management of their personal development.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.</li> <li>• Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to manage the process.</li> <li>• Monitor the success of the process.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.2 Performance development</b></p>				

<b>(requirements for the role)</b>				
<p><b>Aim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance development is done to facilitate individual development that will equip staff members for developing themselves.</li> <li>• Feedback to staff must be obtained from more than one source.</li> <li>• Development must be based on a personal development plan (PDP) that takes into account the areas where the individual needs to develop in order to achieve the output of the post with greater success and also the individual's career prospects.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <p>The PDP is formulated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formal evaluation is initiated by asking various sources to comment on the employee's performance by referring to a work agreement that was drafted beforehand.</li> <li>• The information is gathered and then used to determine any development needs by referring to the role description.</li> <li>• The staff member must prepare a PDP that takes into account feedback on the evaluation as well as his or her development needs.</li> <li>• The parties agree on a PDP, which is an action plan for applying development interventions for the staff member concerned.</li> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the PDP as proof that personal development was discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the performance period under evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members who are focused, are developed.</li> <li>• Staff members become more motivated.</li> <li>• Staff take ownership and accept the responsibilities of their personal development.</li> <li>• Communication within the work environment improves.</li> <li>• Work output increases.</li> <li>• Staff experience greater job satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the success of the process.</li> <li>• Implement the strategy at various levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental chairs and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take responsibility for the management of the unit's performance development.</li> <li>• Actively take ownership of the management of the development of performance by staff members within their environment.</li> <li>• Draft individual PDPs.</li> <li>• Sign and date PDPs.</li> <li>• Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it.</li> <li>• Meet the requirements for good feedback.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.</li> <li>• Take ownership of their personal development.</li> <li>• Draft a PDP for themselves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Biannually</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff member's progress measured against this action plan forms part of the feedback process.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign and date their PDP.</li> <li>Maintain a positive attitude towards and be receptive to feedback and recommendations.</li> <li>Take ownership of the management of their personal development.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.</li> <li>Offer development opportunities based on research regarding the opportunities that are available in the tertiary environment.</li> <li>Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs and heads are equipped to manage the process.</li> <li>Monitor the success of the process.</li> <li>Establish and maintain a competency-based training system.</li> <li>Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Step 5: Performance evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Output</b></li> <li><b>Development</b></li> <li><b>Skills</b></li> </ul>				

<p><b>Aim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formal performance evaluation determines the final score for the individual staff member's performance during a certain period (one year).</li> <li>• It summarises the performance feedback and development process.</li> <li>• It serves as input for other HR processes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance evaluation occurs between the staff member and the chair or head, or his or her delegate. Such evaluation should be an inherent function of a chair or head.</li> <li>• The evaluation process is a formal summary of the feedback discussions that took place during the year.</li> <li>• A meaningful discussion requires that both parties come to the discussion informed and prepared.</li> <li>• In principle feedback must occur as regularly as possible, e.g. quarterly, but the frequency of feedback depends on each staff member's circumstances.</li> <li>• The staff member's progress measured against his or her action plan forms part of the feedback process.</li> <li>• The staff member and the head or chair must sign and date the work agreement as proof that the performance feedback discussion took place and that the staff member was informed of the final score.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members who are focused, are developed.</li> <li>• Staff members become more strongly motivated and perform better.</li> <li>• Staff more strongly commit to and take ownership of their personal development.</li> <li>• Communication within the work environment improves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functions and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the success of the process.</li> <li>• Implement the strategy at various levels.</li> <li>• Set standards for calibration.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Departmental chairs and divisional heads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively take ownership of the development of staff members in their environment.</li> <li>• Draft individual PDPs.</li> <li>• Actively manage the feedback process, e.g. by scheduling and implementing it.</li> <li>• Meet the requirements for good feedback.</li> <li>• Sign and date the work agreement.</li> <li>• Set standards for calibration.</li> <li>• Inform the staff member concerned if his or her final score was amended.</li> <li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff members</b></p>	<p><b>Annually</b></p>
--	---	---	---	------------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation is done according to a five-point scale.</li> <li>• If the final score was adapted during the calibration process, the staff member must be informed.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare thoroughly for the discussion with the head or chair.</li> <li>• Continuously make information available that can be used during the evaluation process.</li> <li>• Take ownership of their personal development.</li> <li>• Draft a PDP for themselves.</li> <li>• Maintain a positive attitude towards and be receptive to feedback and recommendations.</li> <li>• Sign and date the work agreement.</li> <li>• Sign and date the amended performance score after the calibration process (if applicable).</li> <li>• Take ownership of the management of their personal development.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide and advise environmental heads and staff members.</li> <li>• Offer development opportunities based on research regarding the opportunities that are available in the tertiary environment.</li> <li>• Facilitate interactive workshops where chairs, heads and other staff members are equipped to implement the process.</li> <li>• Monitor the success of the process.</li> </ul>	
--	--	--	--	--



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perform quality assurance and quality management by conducting surveys in environments.</li></ul>	
--	--	--	---	--



# Policy for Managing Poor Performance

## 1. Aim

The aims of this procedure are to:

- 1.1 establish a coherent policy and procedure for managing incompetence (poor performance) that fulfils the requirements of the Labour Relations Act, and so
- 1.2 assist managers and supervisors in identifying poor performance and in offering a structured system according to which staff can improve their performance to achieve the required level within a reasonable period.

## 2. Scope of application

This policy applies to all employees who are incapable of meeting the required performance standards because of incompetence such as lack of appropriate skills, training or ability. It does not apply to employees who are capable of meeting the required performance standards but who either refuse or fail to do so because of negligence or carelessness. HR must establish appropriate controls for identifying underachievers proactively and for monitoring their compulsory career management.

## 3. Procedure

### 3.1 Counselling

When an employee's performance is not up to standard, the manager or supervisor concerned must initiate a counselling process with the employee regarding his or her poor performance. The human resources practitioner (HR practitioner) of the division concerned must be involved in every step of the process.

### 3.2 Identification of poor performance

The manager or supervisor must identify deficiencies in performance by referring to the most objective forms of evaluation available. Reasons must be pointed out why the employee's performance is considered substandard. The manager or supervisor must discuss and resolve the deficiencies and reasons that were identified.

### 3.3 Action plan

If the reason for poor performance lies with the person him- or herself, the manager or supervisor must counsel the employee about ways of meeting the required standards, and the two parties must agree on a suitable action plan. The employee's agreement also has to be secured that the action plan is acceptable and that he or she will be capable of meeting the required standards if the action plan is

implemented. If the action plan is fair, but the employee refuses for no good reason to agree to it, the plan may be implemented nonetheless.

As soon as the action plan has been implemented the manager or supervisor must provide reasonable support for the employee, which may include appropriate training, with a view to enabling the employee to meet the required standards.

The employee must be allowed sufficient time to improve. Follow-up dates must be set for monitoring progress.

#### 3.4 Recording counselling and action plan

The content of the counselling discussion, as well as the action plan agreed upon, must be set out in writing in a memorandum to the employee in the form of a counselling record. The manager or supervisor concerned must sign the memorandum as a record to which the manager or supervisor may refer back if necessary. The memorandum also serves as proof that counselling did take place.

#### 3.5 Further counselling and warning

If the employee fails to meet the required performance standard within the set period, the manager or supervisor must implement further counselling, provided that he or she believes that the employee indeed has the potential to improve with the aid of further support and given more time. The manager or supervisor must also warn the employee that **his or her employment may be terminated** if he or she fail to meet the required standards by the end of the set period. The staff member as well as the head or chair must sign and date the record of further counselling.

#### 3.6 Inquiry and termination of employment

If an employee fails to meet the required performance standards even after further counselling and appropriate training (if applicable) or a warning – or all three – and even after a reasonable period has lapsed, or if the employee cannot prove to the satisfaction of the manager or supervisor concerned that he or she is able to meet the required standards, the manager or supervisor concerned must institute an incompetency inquiry to reconsider the matter. The inquiry may NOT be chaired by the person to whom the employee reports directly; the chair must be a person at least one level above the direct manager or supervisor. The Chief Director: Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources, or his or her delegate, must be present during the inquiry proceedings and must monitor whether the principles of substantive and procedural justice are observed.

The employee must be informed in writing of the nature of the inquiry, as well as of his or her right to be represented by a colleague of his or her choice. The employee must be allowed at least 48 hours to prepare for an inquiry of this nature.

After the matter has been heard, the chair may take any step that he or she considers appropriate – which may include termination of employment due to incompetence – but with due consideration of the criteria set out in paragraph 4 below.

#### 3.7 Review

If the outcome of the inquiry is termination of employment, the employee may request in writing that the decision be reviewed by a person at the next higher level of management. The employee must exercise the right to a review within seven days after the outcome of the inquiry was announced and must state the grounds for requesting a review clearly. The person who conducts the review must be assisted

by an HR representative and may confirm, set aside or amend the decision by the original inquiry.

As a general rule, no verbal evidence will be heard during the review process. However, the person who conducts the review may allow evidence to be presented according to his or her own discretion. In such instances the normal rules of evidence will apply.

#### 3.8 Payout at termination of employment

If an employee's service contract is terminated due to incompetency or poor performance, it is fitting that the required contractual notification period be paid out. In some cases, where it seems fair in the circumstances, additional compensation for the employee may be considered according to the manager's discretion.

## 4. Considerations at dismissal due to poor performance

When management is considering dismissing an employee due to poor performance, they must take the following factors into account:

#### 4.1 Knowledge of performance standards

Are the standards or criteria that were applied in evaluating the employee's performance clear and known to the employee? If not, the standards or criteria concerned must be defined clearly and the employee must be duly informed.

#### 4.2 Proof that the required standards were not met

Is there proof that the employee did not meet the required standards?

#### 4.3 Fair opportunity for improvement

Was the employee granted fair opportunity (as well as reasonable support) to meet the set standards, given the period allowed for improvement and given the University's operational requirements?

#### 4.4 Impact of the incompetence

Are the extent and the degree of the employee's incompetence serious enough to justify dismissal, given the employee's status and the nature of the work that he or she did?

#### 4.5 Probability of improvement

Is sustained future improvement reasonably probable?

#### 4.6 Other possibilities besides dismissal

What other possibilities besides dismissal are available, given the nature and extent of the incompetence as well as the University's operational requirements?

### Proposed checklist for managing poor performance

*Please note:* Always record discussions, actions plans, etc. in writing.

1. Point out poor performance.
2. Arrange an interview with the employee and inform him or her that the purpose of the appointment is to discuss his or her performance.

3. State clearly that his or her performance is unsatisfactory.
4. Determine whether the employee is aware of the required performance standards. If not, confirm the standards and explain to the employee that this will be the criteria for monitoring his or her performance in future.
5. If the employee is aware of the standards, establish the reasons for underachievement.
6. Consider the reasons offered by the employee. If they are acceptable, conclude the session.
7. If the reasons offered are unacceptable, or if indications are that further action is required, emphasise that it is essential that standards be maintained.
8. Discuss with the employee possible ways of solving the problem, e.g. training, support or transferral.
9. If the parties can agree on an action plan, sign and date the plan along with the employee.
10. Ensure that the employee is committed to the action plan.
11. If no agreement can be reached, set out your own action plan. Be clear about the required standard as well as the period allowed for improved performance. Ensure that the requirements are fair and just.
12. Sign and date the action plan along with the employee.
13. Whether the action plan is the result of an agreement or a unilateral measure, put it clearly to the employee that performance will be monitored and that, should it not improve, dismissal may follow.
14. Ensure the employee of your support – and be true to your word.
15. Monitor progress.
16. Should performance not improve, institute an incompetency inquiry. The employee is entitled to representation. Inquire about the reasons for performance having remained unimproved. If the reasons are acceptable, decide on further support; if they are unacceptable, terminate employment and give notice.
17. Inform the employee of his or her right to request a review by a more senior member of management.
18. If review fails, inform the employee of his or her right to refer the matter externally.
19. Conclude administrative matters, e.g. unemployment insurance and a service certificate. Always record discussions, actions plans, etc. in writing.