Performance Review and Development Procedure for Professional Staff

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University of Newcastle (University) recognises the value of attracting, developing and retaining high quality staff and is committed to supporting staff to meet performance and behaviour expectations through an annual staff performance and development program. For professional staff the program is known at the Performance Review and Development (PRD) program.

(2) PRD aligns each staff member's endeavours with their level of appointment, the operational needs of their work unit and the University's strategic objectives through effective goal setting and building capability. This alignment fosters a shared responsibility for staff members in institutional success, performance, student experience and culture underpinned by the University's values of excellence, equity, engagement and sustainability.

(3) The procedure is aligned with and supports the performance and career development provisions of The University of Newcastle Professional Staff Enterprise Agreement 2023 (Enterprise Agreement). Professional staff and supervisors must comply with the provisions of the Enterprise Agreement throughout the PRD process, and the Enterprise Agreement should be read in conjunction with this procedure.

Section 2 - Purpose

(4) This procedure outlines the steps involved in the PRD process.

(5) The purpose of PRD is to ensure professional staff members have clear performance and development goals for each year, receive feedback on their progress, and engage in an annual review of their performance and development.

Section 3 - Scope

(6) This Procedure applies to all professional staff, as classified under the Enterprise Agreement who are required to complete and engage in the PRD each year, including key senior leadership positions in non-academic roles outside the Enterprise Agreement (non-EA staff).

(7) Ongoing professional staff who are within their probation period on 31 March must commence their first ful PRD cycle in the calendar year following completion of their probation period. Ongoing professional staff who complete their probation period before 31 March are required to commence the PRD when their probation is completed.

(8) Ongoing professional staff who are on parental leave or long service leave for more than 6 months of a calendar year are not required to participate in PRD within that calendar year.

(9) This procedure does not apply to:

a. casual professional staff who have been employed at the University for less than six months as these staff are

not required to participate in PRD. After six months of employment, participation in PRD is optional and may be undertaken at the request of the casual staff member or their supervisor in accordance with this Procedure;

b. fixed term professional staff members with a length of contract (or extension) less than 12 months or less then 0.4 FTE and contingent staff on less than 10% operating funding source.

(10) Supervisors may request an exemption to the eligibility criteria for a staff member to complete PRD by requesting this via a Service Now request to Human Resource Services.

(11) Staff and their supervisors share the accountability to actively engage in the PRD process and must adhere to the key timeframes associated with each phase of the process. For key senior leader professional staff roles, timeframes may vary at direction from the Vice-Chancellor to align with annual remuneration reviews or other planning processes.

Section 4 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

(12) The University is committed to fostering an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment where all professional staff have equal access to career development opportunities and are assessed in a fair and inclusive manner.

(13) This procedure aligns with the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

(14) Supervisors are responsible for mitigating biases and proactively identifying and addressing barriers to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) during PRD discussions.

Table A – How supervisors can integrate EDI practices into PRD

Key Principle	Actions
Recognise non-linear career paths	Acknowledge career breaks, parental leave, and part-time status, and assess performance relative to opportunity. Supervisors can contact the EDI team via Edi@newcastle.edu.au if they need further assistance considering non-linear career paths as part of a staff member's PRD.
Address bias	Supervisors must proactively identify and mitigate potential biases that may arise during PRD discussions, to minimise any adverse effect on staff contributions, engagement, and job satisfaction. Supervisors are expected to demonstrate awareness of potential biases, including but not limited gender bias, perception bias, confirmation bias and unconscious bias and actively ensure objectivity and fairness in the process.
Promote flexibility	Use PRD discussions to encourage flexible work practices that support staff in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.
Provide inclusive feedback and recognition	Provide constructive and evidence-based feedback that focuses on performance outcomes and observed behaviours aligned to expected standards rather than subject perceptions or personality traits.
Support career development	Ensure equitable access to development opportunities, including for staff who are on fixed-term contracts and staff who are part-time or casual and completing PRD.

Key Principle	Actions
Consider reasonable adjustments	Supervisors should proactively identify and address any barriers faced by employees with temporary or permanent disability during PRD discussions. This includes ensuring that reasonable adjustments are in place to support employees to perform their role effectively. During PRD, Supervisors must: - ensure reasonable adjustments are discussed, and if necessary, implemented or updated to meet the staff member's needs. Assistance in devising suitable reasonable adjustments can be accessed via Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team via usafe@newcastle.edu.au; - ask staff members if they are experiencing any barriers to undertaking their work and discuss potential suitable solutions; - recognise any self-advocacy burden staff may experience and aim to reduce this load; - discuss and identify where a staff member may be encountering barriers on an organisational or personal level and explore these can be addressed; - identify career progression opportunities and leadership potential ensuring staff have equitable access to development opportunities and support to advance in their careers; - encourage participation in networks such as the Staff with Disability Network and consider these efforts in PRD as a performance goal to capture the staff member's time and effort invested in the network's work.
Address self-advocacy burden	Support staff members who may need to engage in self-advocacy at work as a result of their marginalised identity. Discuss where professional staff may be needing to self-advocate and consider how to act as an ally. For example, challenging problematic institutional structures; identifying equity issues before they impact employees and advocating for resolution; helping a professional staff member to assert their rights and achieve an equitable outcome.

(15) All professional staff should consider incorporating EDI into their goals through committing to intentional actions that align their individual effort to the University's equity priorities. Examples of how professional staff can do this are:

a. mentor or sponsor staff members from equity cohorts to support their career progression;
b. attend professional development programs on topics like unconscious bias, cultural capability and inclusive leadership and incorporate skills and insights gained into work practices;
c. actively participate in EDI initiatives such as staff networks or working groups.

Section 5 - PRD Overview

(16) The PRD process is completed annually, aligned to the calendar year and captures performance and development goal setting, discussions and activities for professional staff.

(17) Human Resource Services will communicate the specific timeframe requirements each year for the completion of each phase of PRD through an all-staff communication channel.

(18) The University recognises that extenuating circumstances may impact a staff member's or supervisor's ability to meet PRD timeframes. In such cases, staff and/or supervisors should submit a request to Human Resource Services via Service Now advising of these circumstances.

Table B – Phases of the PRD cycle in the calendar year

Phase	Overview	Indicative Timing
Phase 1: Goal setting and Planning	This is the phase where performance goals and development goals are set and agreed upon between the professional staff member and their supervisor.	Completed by end of March.

Phase	Overview	Indicative Timing
Phase 2: Mid Year Review	All professional staff should have regular conversations with their supervisor throughout the year to review progress against performance and development goals. It is recommended that a mid-year review is completed between May to July. This phase is called “ongoing conversations and development” within Success Factors.	May to July
Year End Review	The final phase of the PRD cycle where professional staff and their supervisor recognise achievements, reflect on and assess performance and leadership behaviours, including any areas of opportunity, and consider future focus. Goal setting for the following year can be completed during the Year End Review or alternatively in a separate session.	October to December

(19) The online tool, Success Factors, is used to track and document performance and development discussions, agreed upon goals, actions and ratings. SuccessFactors training resources and references are available here.

(20) A professional staff member’s PRD will incorporate:

a. planning and goal setting;
b. performance feedback, including reviewing the role and responsibilities of the professional staff member;
c. review of achievements; and
d. development activities planned and completed.

(21) The PRD should be informed by:

a. the University's Strategic Plan and values;
b. the professional staff member’s position description, career aspirations and performance;
c. the University's Leadership Framework;
d. principles and obligations expected of professional staff, as detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct and other relevant University policy documents;
e. survey results if applicable and available such as 360 results, Your Voice, People Experience Survey; and
f. outcomes from the professional staff member’s previous PRD year-end review.

(22) Performance and development discussions and activities should be scheduled in advance and conducted in a confidential manner.

Section 6 - Approach to Underperformance

(23) The Enterprise Agreement outlines the procedures relating to managing underperformance. Human Resource Services can also be contacted via your divisional or College business partner to provide additional support and advice to both staff and supervisors via Service Now’s HR contact information.

Section 7 - Coordination and Completion

Phase 1: Goal Setting

(24) The Goal Setting phase defines the activities, goals, actions, and conduct that the professional staff member is responsible for during the review period, while recognising that some factors influencing goal achievement may be beyond their control.

(25) In accordance with the Enterprise Agreement, the goals should also align to the staff member's appointment, operational needs of their work unit, and the University's strategic objectives. Goals should be devised to maintain and improve skills, enhance career opportunities and promote organisational performance.

(26) Goals should be developed as "SMART" goals, which is an acronym for goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound. The Career Development Guide is an available resource to assist with developing "SMART" goals.

(27) It is recommended that each professional staff member have four performance goals and two development goals in their PRD.

(28) The key steps for completing this phase are:

a. the supervisor and professional staff member should determine who will schedule time to complete goal setting and discuss the professional staff member's performance and development plan;
b. PRD goals and performance expectations must be consistent with the staff member's position description in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement;
c. prior to the scheduled meeting, the professional staff member should reflect and prepare performance and development goals to discuss with their supervisor;
d. supervisors can cascade goals that have been selected for professional staff that support the achievement of organisational objectives and strategic plans. The goals can be cascaded from SuccessFactors and this should be done prior to the meeting;
e. the professional staff member and supervisor then meet to review and agree on performance and development goals, and record them in Success Factors within the required timeframe for completion;
f. the professional staff member and supervisor plan and schedule the mid-year review discussion as part of completing phase 1.

Phase 2: Mid Year Review

(29) The key steps for completing this phase are:

a. the supervisor and professional staff member should determine who will schedule time to conduct a mid-year discussion to review the professional staff member's progress with their PRD;
b. the professional staff member and supervisor should meet for a mid-year discussion to review goal progress and identify any adjustments or additional support and training needs;
c. consideration should be given to rewards and recognition programs for high performers. This could be divisional / College awards, or organisational programs such as Celebrating Success or the Excellence Awards;
d. goal progress and new career development goals must be updated in Success Factors by the supervisor in the "ongoing conversations and development" area of the platform.

Phase 3: Year End Review

(30) The key steps for completing this phase are:

a. the supervisor and professional staff member must determine who will schedule the meeting and when there is a suitable time;
b. to prepare for end of year review discussion the professional staff member and supervisor will review goals, reflect on the professional staff member's performance and behaviours against the Leadership Framework, and consider what rating will be allocated to each goal and Leadership Framework capabilities;
c. prior to the discussion the professional staff member must complete their end of year review comments and self-assessment in SuccessFactors, including the acknowledgement of completion of declarations and

mandatory training required for their role;

d. the professional staff member and supervisor complete the end of year review discussion, discuss ratings for all goals and overall performance;
e. planning and goal setting for the following PRD cycle can be completed in this phase if preferred in accordance with Phase 1;
f. the supervisor completes the final rating and comments in the system and ensures completion of the end of year review in SuccessFactors. If the PRD has been supervised by an Advisor, the supervisor will also have actions to complete in SuccessFactors to finalise the PRD.

Section 8 - Resources and Available Training

(31) The following resources are available to assist professional staff in completing PRD:

a. The University's learning management system Discover has a library of learning that can support with the effectiveness in performance discussions and other learning modules that can assist with completing PRD.
b. The Capability and Development Hub is a gateway to a range of resources for professional development, Linkedin Learning, change management and leadership resources.
c. The Career Development Guide is a self-service tool for staff and leaders that provides resources on career planning and development, including how to create and write “SMART” goals.

Section 9 - Roles and Responsibilities

Table C - Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Professional staff member	Actively participate in their own PRD and provide input on goal setting, performance and development planning. Self-assess achievement against goals and leadership behaviours prior to mid-year performance discussion and end of year review and make every effort to ensure that performance and career planning goals are met. Highlight any barriers to achieving goals to their supervisor when identified.
Supervisor or their nominee	Ensure the PRD process is completed on time for all eligible professional staff who are their direct reports. Ensure that performance and development goals align with strategic and operational objectives as well as support individual career aspirations. Facilitate PRD discussions and provide recognition, coaching and mentoring to professional staff members in relation to their performance and career development. If applicable, seek feedback and contribution from other leaders or stakeholders that have oversight of work, such as special projects, to ensure PRD captures a professional staff member’s performance and contribution in other teams or projects, if significant.
Co-planner	Provide input to a professional staff member’s PRD in Success Factors if they are not in their direct reporting line. This could be suitable if the staff member has worked with them on a project or they have previously been the direct supervisor of the professional staff member in the current PRD cycle.

Role	Responsibility
2UP Leader and Senior Leadership	Provide guidance to Supervisors and staff on goal setting to ensure it is aligned with College/divisional and University objectives. Ensure all professional staff complete the PRD process annually. Support Supervisors (or their nominee) to prepare for PRD discussions as needed, and with any post-discussion support requirements if they arise. Monitor PRD participation and completion rates and take opportunities to periodically observe reviews and provide coaching to supervisors on their effectiveness. Contribute to additional talent review processes and cascade up any learning and development needs and themes to support with organisational planning activities.
Human Resource Services	The People Experience team will coordinate the implementation of the PRD process including system support, maintaining training resources, communication and education. HR Business Partners will provide advice to leaders and staff to prepare for and conduct PRD sessions and on any performance management/improvement matters as needed. The Human Resources Information Systems team will provide leaders with access to a Human Resources dashboard that provides completion data on the PRD cycle.

Section 10 - Definitions

(32) In the context of this document the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Co-planner	This is the descriptive name that is assigned to a user in Success Factors, the University's online tool used to document the PRD process. A co-planner is a leader who may contribute to a staff member's PRD who is not their direct supervisor. An example of this would be if a staff member has performance and development goals relating to a project, and the project lead is not the staff member's direct supervisor. The project lead could contribute to the PRD as a co-planner. An alternate suitable use of this contributor type is if a staff member changes reporting lines or roles in the calendar year, and the previous supervisor provides feedback, goal progress and achievement as this user type, whilst still enabling the current supervisor to complete their role.
2UP Leader	A leader who is two levels above a professional staff member's direct supervisor.
Disability	In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, disability can encapsulate a range of identities, experiences and conditions including mental and chronic health conditions, neurodivergence, physical, sensory, learning, neurological and intellectual disabilities. The right of people with disability to access reasonable adjustments at work is protected under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (the Act). Carers and parents of people with disability who need adjustments to care for a person with disability are also protected under the Act. Not all people with disability or caring responsibilities may identify as having a disability and may not wish to access supports.
Non-EA Staff	HEW10+ professional staff employed on a contract that is outside the enterprise agreement, with an individual employment contract.
Equity Cohort	A specific group of individuals within a community, organisation, or institution who share characteristics that are associated with disadvantage, under-representation, or inequity in access to opportunities, resources, or outcomes. For the University, information on our equity cohorts is available on the staff website.
Gender Bias	A person's tendency to hold men and women accountable different standards.
Perception Bias	The tendency to form stereotypes about certain groups that make it impossible to make an objective judgment about members of those groups.
Confirmation bias	Seeking out and interpreting information in a way that supports your preconceptions or hypotheses.
Unconscious bias	A judgement made quickly without being aware of doing so.

Term	Definition
Relative to opportunity	The principle of assessing an individual's achievements and contributions in the context of their access to opportunities, taking into account any personal circumstances, challenges, or structural barriers that may have impacted their ability to achieve outcomes.
Performance goal	Performance goals focus on what a professional staff member needs to achieve in their role, such as delivering outcomes aligned with organisational priorities, strategic plans and delivery work activity that aligns with their position description.
Development goal	Development planning and goals are focussed on how a professional staff member can reach their full potential, enhance their skills and knowledge and gain development that will support career progression.

Status and Details

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Enquiries Contact	Human Resource Services

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"HR Business Partner" - The member of Human Resource Services (HRS) appointed as the business partner for the relevant Unit or College.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Supervisor" - Staff members with direct supervisory responsibility for other staff within the workplace (a Supervisor may also be member of Senior Management, with duties as an Officer as defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, or any replacing legislation).

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.