

Performance for Growth - Frequently Asked Questions

What is Performance for Growth

- The University's Performance Management Development (PMD) Framework which is known as Performance for Growth is the tool that will support our staff and managers to understand their roles and empower staff to work towards achieving the operational objectives, that ultimately supports the strategic goals of the University. The aim is to support the staff member to thrive and grow in their role. This is done through the initial goal/objective setting process and then reviewed through a mid-year and end of year review, which will also be where the next years goals and objective setting will take place.

Who needs to complete a Performance for Growth review?

- All staff who have completed their probationary period are required to complete a Performance for Growth review. Specifically, this includes Academics, Researchers, Technical staff, General Operatives, Professional Services (within the professional services group we have the following categories of staff – administrative staff, technical staff, maintenance staff). This also includes staff who are on Contracts of Indefinite Duration (CID).
- Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA's) are considered similar to 'Interns' and therefore should not be included for undertaking the Performance for Growth process. However, we recommend that any individual that is doing an internship or training role receives regular feedback on their progress.

Who is NOT required to complete a Performance for Growth review?

- Employees who are currently completing their Probation Period will not complete a Performance for Growth review.

Does the Performance for Growth policy cover agency and temporary staff?

- The policy does not cover agency staff as they are not directly employed by the University however, it does cover temporary staff who have completed their probation period.

When are review meetings held?

- There is an initial meeting where goals and objectives are agreed, then a mid-year review followed by a final year review. The final year review looks back on the performance and development of the previous year while also providing an opportunity for goal and objective setting for the year ahead.

- All managers are encouraged to hold regular 1:1 meeting with their staff throughout the year. Such meetings can continue as part of the operations of the Unit/School, and support Performance for Growth overall.
- For the first year the initial goal setting should take place between September and December, and then a review between April and June, when the above time frame recommendation will kick in. This will give an opportunity to easy into the process going forward.

How long should the review meeting last?

- There is no specific time limit on the duration of the meeting as long as it is effective for both parties. The length can range depending on the grade/role of the reviewee.

How does Performance for Growth differ from the Probation Policy?

- The probation policy is separate from Performance for Growth but has a number of similar elements. The probation process is to be completed for all staff who have commenced with the University until the period specified in their contract of employment. Once the individual has passed probation, Performance for Growth will then apply.

Can I request someone else to also attend my Performance for Growth review meeting?

- Normally, the only attendees at a performance meeting are the Reviewer and Reviewee. However, the staff member has the right to be accompanied either by a University of Galway colleague/HR Partner or Trade Union representative from their Union (if applicable), by informing the Reviewer at least one week in advance of the review meeting. In such circumstances, it should be noted that discussion at the meeting is between the Reviewer and Reviewee only.
- If, for a valid reason, other than a conflict of interest, a Reviewee does not wish to be reviewed by their assigned Reviewer, they may discuss this with their Head of School, College Dean, Line Manager or HR Business Partner, who may determine an alternative Reviewer.

Should the review form be completed during the meeting or after?

- The key is to have a quality conversation between the reviewer and reviewee. If there are elements of the form that have been discussed but not finalised during the meeting these can be completed post meeting. It is recommended that the form is completed within 24 hours of the meeting while the conversation is still fresh.

How do I find out who my Reviewer is?

- In most cases your Reviewer will be your line manager, this may be a Head of School/Discipline, a Senior Technical Officer, or a Grade 3 and above. However, there

may be circumstances, as set out in Section 2 and Section 3 of the procedure document, where an alternate reviewer is put in place.

I am a Researcher but am unclear on who my line manager is?

- For all Researchers your line manager is the Principal Investigator. A simple rule of thumb would be who was responsible for hiring you, or who you engaged with if the appointment was through an own award – this is your line manager.

I am a Researcher and I have completed the PDP document through the Researcher Development Centre, is P4G the same?

- While a PDP is not the same we do recommend they are used to support each other. As a researcher, you will have completed the Personal Development Planning (PDP) document as part of your career planning. This document serves as a valuable tool for reflecting on and mapping out both your short- and long-term career aspirations. The PDP is divided into several sections which assist in defining your short- and long-term career goals. To enhance efficiency, it is recommended to use the PDP document when discussing and setting your goals, objectives and training needs for the coming year with your Reviewer, as part of the P4G process.

Who ideally should carry out a discipline administrator's review, the Head of Discipline or the School Manager?

- In instances where an individual may have a reporting line into both, the review should be conducted with the manager who is involved in supporting the day-to-day duties of the role.

What is the guidance on the number of reviewees a reviewer should have?

- As a guide, each reviewer should have on average a maximum of 8-10 reviewees, this may vary depending on the School/Unit. Where there are Schools with large numbers the Head of Discipline can seek support from the Head of School

Does Performance for Growth restrict academic freedom?

- Performance for Growth may not be used to restrict academic freedom in any way. University of Galway is firmly committed to the principle of academic freedom, and it is enshrined in the Universities Act 1997.

How does the process work for Research Assistants and Postdoctoral Researchers on short-term contracts?

- Upon completion of probation, they are required to complete Performance for Growth. Researchers will have clear SMART objectives already set so this should be a straightforward process.

Are there guidelines on how to delegate Reviewer responsibilities in a fair, and transparent manner?

- The Head of each Unit can decide who will conduct reviews, this is personal to each unit.

What if my line manager changed over the review period?

- Your previous manager would have provided a handover that should include details for your new manager to use during this process.

What if I changed roles over the review period?

- You will have an initial meeting upon commencing in your new role, where goals and objectives are set and then those will be reviewed at the mid-year and final year review meetings.

What if an individual reduced their hours since they set their objectives?

- If hours have been reduced objectives should be adjusted to align with these.

What happens if an individual is on leave (maternity/sick leave/research sabbatical leave etc.) during the review period?

- If the individual is on leave during the review period, the review meeting should be scheduled as soon as is practicable after the Reviewee returns to normal duties.

How does the Workload Allocation Model fit into this?

- The Academic Workload Allocation Model assigns notional or proportional time for completion of forms academic work. The model notional time assigned to an academic staff member can be used to assess achievement and/or agree development goals for each academic staff member, under the Performance for Growth Framework, relative to the notional or proportional time allocated for academic work.

Will the Workload Allocation Model be in tandem with the Performance for Growth policy?

- It would be more effective if the Manager has implemented the Workload Allocation Model in advance as it will be easier to set objectives.

There are concerns over the amount of additional work Performance for Growth may bring along with the Workload Allocation Model, please advise?

- While initially there may be some concern regarding additional work, in the long run this will result in improved efficiencies and more effective ways of working for all involved. The simple act of having a conversation between reviewer and reviewee on

their objectives, development goals etc. has the potential to improve communication and engagement as well as overall employee wellbeing.

What is the role of HR in supporting the process?

- The HR office will issue reminders to all staff to ensure that each area is undertaking their review during the same period. Through HR Business Partners or Senior HR Managers advice and support will be provided to managers and staff who may have any questions in regard to the process.

Is Performance for Growth linked to Job Sizing?

- Performance for Growth is not linked to Job Sizing, they are two separate processes.

Will we have access to LinkedIn Learning as a support tool?

- Our license with LinkedIn Learning has now expired however, please note the University is a member of several alternative platforms, such as DCM learning, which provide free access to additional resources such as online tutorials, toolkits, webinars etc. Please refer to the learning and development webpage for further information: [Learning and Development - University of Galway](#)

How will it be ensured that learning and development needs are fed back to the Learning & Development Team?

- Managers should discuss development opportunities with their staff in the first instance to ensure the most relevant and appropriate training for professional development is considered. A catalogue of workshops and programmes will be available on the learning & development webpage with full instructions on how to register or express interest, this is the responsibility of the reviewee. The Learning & Development Team are available to discuss any programme or workshop that is not listed on the webpage. Managers should keep in mind that certain training and development opportunities may need to be arranged locally.

When learning and development needs are highlighted, when would training be organised and how can it be ensured that the people who were highlighted as having the need for it get onto the programmes?

- All available and upcoming workshops will be advertised on Core Portal. Places are limited for a number of workshops, but staff can add their name to the waiting list. Additional workshops will be arranged if the demand is there. Managers can organise bespoke workshops locally, but this needs to be funded by their own budget. If required, please contact Learning & Development or Procurement for a full list of contracted external training providers. Click [here](#) to read more about the funding support which the University is committed to providing to our staff.

How is HR going to capture information?

- The full Performance for Growth review report for each Reviewee is retained by the Reviewer until the Performance for Growth review report for the following year is completed, to allow reference to the prior year report during the process. However, the Reviewee may retain their Performance for Growth completed forms for as long as they remain employed by University of Galway, forming a record of their career development. This level of information is not captured by HR.

How will it be different to the former PMDS?

- Performance for Growth, is the tool that will support our staff and managers to understand the requirements of their roles and empower staff to work towards achieving the operational objectives that ultimately support our strategic goals. Performance Management is about creating a culture that encourages the continuous improvement of the skills, behaviour, and contributions, of our staff, thus supporting the University. The aim is to support the staff member to thrive and grow in their role. This will be done through the initial goal/objective setting process and then reviewed mid-year and through an end of year review, at which point the following year's goals and objective setting will take place. This process will also provide further clarity for staff and managers on alignment of expectations and support required for the upcoming period. In the past, we had a formal performance process in place, we have taken feedback and suggestions on board which has resulted in a number of improvements which should lead to greater success with this enhanced policy and procedure. Also, one key change is that there are no ratings in the new Performance for Growth policy.

Is Performance for Growth linked to the Academic Promotions Policy QA207?

- Candidates must have engaged and be up to date with their Performance for Growth review in advance of an application being submitted.

What is the University doing in terms of setting expectations at each grade/level of job to be consistent in the approach to a person at that level?

- Goal and objective setting should be guided by each individual's job description along with their roles and responsibilities.