

Performance Assessment Form - Overview

University of New Hampshire

PURPOSE

The performance management process is anchored at the beginning and end of each review cycle with a comprehensive written performance assessment which has the following primary purpose:

- To define performance expectations including organizational objectives and strategies
- To provide a formal means of constructive, open and honest communication between the employee and supervisor
- To enhance employee development through ongoing performance feedback and through the identification of professional development activities linked to the priorities of the organization and the University. (The University's [Academic Plan](#) clarifies the priorities for both academic and non-academic departments)
- To measure and document job performance as a basis for promotion, compensation (e.g., merit increases), and other personnel management decisions

TWO-WAY DIALOGUE

The emphasis of this process is on two-way communication between the employee and supervisor. While the supervisor provides the employee with feedback about his or her performance and communicates future expectations, the employee should also actively participate in the process, describing his or her accomplishments over the assessment period. The employee and supervisor jointly set goals and conduct planning for the next assessment period in terms of performance expectations and development needed to achieve these goals.

The two way conversation is an important part of performance management. It is designed to promote two-way communication throughout the year; improve job understanding; and promote effective job performance, performance planning, and employee development. The performance assessment discussion involves the following:

- Review progress made on all aspects of work assignments and job goals over the previous assessment period.
- Review progress made on professional development goals over the previous assessment period.
- Establish new goals and behavioral expectations in consideration of performance ratings.

After the employee name and department are entered on the Performance Assessment Form (PAF), the employee fills out "blue"/shaded sections, then the supervisor completes the form, and the employee and supervisor meet to have a conversation. Either person can make additions or changes until the form is signed.

TIME LINE

Every department head is responsible for requiring completion of performance assessments. These assessments become part of the staff member's Human Resources file.

- [Annual Performance Assessment forms](#) are to be completed and forwarded to the Office of Human Resources during the period between January 1 and May 31.
- [3-month Performance Assessment forms](#) are to be completed *for newly hired Operating Staff*, and submitted to Human Resources, by the end of their first three months in their new position.

- [6-month Performance Assessment forms](#) (same form as used for “annual” review) - For *all staff members who are initial hires or in a subsequent introductory period*, the completed form is to be submitted to Human Resources by the end of the six-month introductory period.

COMPETENCIES

Competencies are observable behaviors that encompass the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics that distinguish levels of performance in the work environment. Specific competencies have been identified as critical for every job at the University, and they will serve as the basis for the supervisor’s rating of employee performance. A supervisor may *add* competencies when s/he believes there are competencies unique to the specific department/job. Adding competencies is *optional* and may not be needed in many departments. Competencies should *not* be deleted since they are understood to apply to all jobs within the University.

Following each competency is a:

- brief definition of the competency
- bulleted list of examples of performance indicators that, when performed well, demonstrate ability in that competency area. Supervisors may expand on the list of indicators and/or more explicitly describe a competency for a particular job. The examples of performance indicators under each competency are meant to be *illustrative*; therefore, it is not necessary to address all of them.

PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE

The supervisor will provide performance ratings based on each competency. There is also an “overall rating” that represents the employee’s performance and results in the areas of competencies and goals. The rating scale is *required* for assessment of Operating Staff; its use is *optional* for exempt employees (PAT, EE).

Below are definitions for supervisor’s rating of employee’s performance:

Far Exceeds Performance Expectations:

- The employee considerably and consistently surpasses performance expectations and goals, and achieves beyond the regular assignment in all areas throughout the performance cycle.
- Performance is well above expectations in terms of completeness, timeliness, and independence, and demonstrates mastery of the skills and tasks involved.
- The employee regularly makes significant contributions to the department’s and/or University’s success well beyond work assignments through unique and exceptional application of knowledge. Other University employees commonly seek out the employee for assistance. The employee is a model for excellence, with a strong potential for advancement
- The employee performs independently in planning, anticipating problems, and taking appropriate action.
- Shows grasp of the “big picture” and thinks beyond the details of the job or project at hand.
- The employee requires very minimal supervision or follow-up.

Exceeds Performance Expectations:

- The employee clearly and consistently surpasses performance expectations and goals, and demonstrates unique understanding of work well beyond job requirements.
- Work is done independently and completed on schedule with a high degree of accuracy and independence.
- Performance is what can be expected of a fully qualified and experienced person in this position.
- Errors in judgment are rare and seldom repeated.
- Performance is characterized by high achievement; the employee shows initiative and initiative.
- The employee requires minimal supervision or follow-up.

Meets Performance Expectations:

- The employee meets job performance standards in all or most areas.
- The employee is reliable in attaining expected results, and is timely and efficient.
- Initiative and outputs are generally adequate, and the employee is capable and knowledgeable in most aspects of his or her work.
- The employee requires a reasonable amount of supervision.

Needs improvement :

- The employee is not satisfactorily completing the assigned duties and needs to demonstrate improvement toward meeting performance standards.
- Work results are inconsistent.
- Continued improvement in performance is required.
- The employee requires close supervision.
- A written performance improvement plan should be in place.

Fails to Meet Performance Expectations:

- The employee is not meeting expected standards or goals set for the position.
- The employee does not demonstrate knowledge or ability to perform the majority of assigned duties.
- The employee must show significant improvement toward satisfactory achievement of performance standards in order to continue University employment.
- The employee requires excessive supervision, direction, and follow-up.
- The supervisor is to contact Human Resources prior to assigning an employee this rating. Immediate improvement is essential, and the employee may be on a documented performance improvement plan.

JOB GOALS and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

There are *two sections* for addressing “goals” in the performance assessment:

1. Section II - Describe the employee’s progress in achieving goals that were identified in the prior performance assessment, to be accomplished in the period immediately prior to this review (i.e., annual review, introductory period).
2. Section VI - Establish goals for the next assessment period (which begins at the time of this current performance assessment). The goals are to be written so that both parties understand their meaning and will know how to identify/measure when the goal has been

successfully completed. Goals should be **SMART**: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

- a. **Job Goals** – Specific task assignments that include clearly defined desired outcomes and measurement criteria, to be accomplished over the next assessment period. Each job goal should identify specific assignments or areas on which the staff member needs to focus and may describe the specific action that will be taken to accomplish this goal.
- b. **Professional Development Goals** - Specific aims for acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the job and/or for career development. This is not intended to imply substandard performance but rather *to identify areas on which the staff member will focus for improvement and/or professional growth* over the next assessment period, as well to identify ways the supervisor may provide assistance in achieving these goals.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FORMS

1. TYPES OF FORMS TO USE FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- **Job Competencies – Introduction (form)**. This form is to be completed by the supervisor either:
 - (a) when an employee begins to work in a position in your area. Please discuss these competencies with the employee within the first few days of employment, thus making your expectations clear. OR
 - (b) when the supervisor who is new to the department and/or position. It's important that employees understand your performance standards. Your performance expectations and emphasis on job competencies may differ from those of your predecessor, or you may be filling a new role in the department.
- **3-month assessment form** to be completed by the end of 3 months for a new Operating Staff member. This requirement provides a formal means for the supervisor and employee to “check in” in writing, for them to have dialogue about the employee’s progress in the job, and for the supervisor to provide written feedback and an overall performance rating.
- **Six-month/annual performance assessment form**.
 - (a) By the end of 6 months for OS and PAT/EE newly hired or promotion/transfer, or OS reclassified to PAT.
 - (b) Annually during the period from January 1 – May 31. The six-month assessment may also fill the “annual” requirement if the timing coincides with the annual evaluation period.

2. WHICH FORMAT TO USE (for six-month and annual performance assessment)

- **OPERATING STAFF**. The new competency-based **Performance Assessment Form (PAF)** and *use of the rating scale* are **required** for Operating Staff; the narrative format is *not* an option. Their assessment process has included a similar format; thus the new form is consistent with past practice.

- EXEMPT STAFF (PAT, EE). **Two options** are available for exempt staff performance assessments during the transition to the new competency-based approach. Previously performance assessments for exempt staff included a narrative format.
 - (1) Performance Assessment Form (PAF). For *exempt* staff use of the *rating scale* is optional.
 - (2) *Narrative format*. The written performance assessment may be in the form of a letter. The rating scale is not required in the narrative version. Feedback provided to the employee is to be comprehensive and to address the following in detail:
 - University job competencies. See [Guide to Job Competencies](#) as reference.
 - Job and professional development goals.

Also:

- Employee Self-Assessment. The supervisor should ask employees to submit, in preparation for the written assessment, a written description of his or her accomplishments over the assessment period, progress made toward achievement of job and performance goals, and additional comments.
- The performance assessment letter is to be signed by both the supervisor and employee (as is the Performance Assessment form to be signed by both).
- There are *two* options for submitting the signed document to HR (either the Performance Assessment form *or* narrative format):
 - a. Hard copy document with original signatures; or
 - b. Scan PDF document emailed as an attachment to the [HR Info](#).
With this option the original document would reside with the employee. The sender should check to be sure the PDF version is readable (not too light or dark). If it isn't readable, the original paper document is to be submitted to HR.
- When the performance rating scale is *not* used for exempt staff, it will be the responsibility of the supervisor and department to determine the basis for making performance distinctions for decisions such as merit increases.