



Performance Improvement Policy



STUDENTS' GUILD

Performance Improvement Policy

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 We are committed to ensuring that all employees are supported in reaching their full potential and contributing towards empowering Exeter's students to take their place in the world and make a positive difference.
- 1.2 This policy aims to help us provide an effective service to our members, whilst striving to ensure that our people feel purpose in their work, which means:
 - Ensuring high standards from all our employees;
 - Having the right skills, in the right place, at the right time;
 - Developing and supporting all of our employees to do their job well for the benefit of Exeter students.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The policy applies to all employees, with the exception of those within their probation period.
- 2.2 New members of staff who are within their probation period should refer to the Probation Period and Review Policy.
- 2.3 It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors
- 2.4 This policy does not form part of the contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

3 General Principles

- 3.1 Our Performance Development framework and associated performance management processes are designed to contribute to the Guild's mission, vision, values and strategic plan, as well as specific departmental objectives.
- 3.2 Line managers and their team members will work collaboratively to develop a shared understanding of performance and agree actions to improve and enhance performance, identifying development needs when the requirements of the role are not being met.
- 3.3 All employees will receive a full induction and have individual objectives and a development plan in place as part of the performance development framework.
- 3.4 Line Managers must ensure that this policy is applied in line with the Guild's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

4 Managing Performance Improvement

- 4.1 Before starting to manage performance improvements, line managers need to establish whether there is a genuine performance issue, rather than a breakdown in communication. Managers should be realistic about performance expectations and explain those standards clearly to team members. New employees in particular should be closely supported to ensure that performance expectations are clear and understood.
- 4.2 When dealing with problems of underperformance, inappropriate behaviour or work that does not meet expected standards, managers will need to determine whether the issue is one of capability or conduct:

- **Capability** – is where there is a lack of capability, skill or ability, and where the employee has received all necessary support and training but is unable to achieve a satisfactory level of performance.
 - **Conduct** - usually involves a measure of personal responsibility for failing to maintain the standards expected, for example deliberately ignoring instructions, inappropriate behaviour, or a negligent approach to work, for which some form of disciplinary action would normally be appropriate. In these instances, please refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 4.3 Poor performance may also be linked to a low level of attendance or ill-health capability. Managers should refer to our Sickness Absence Policy for more information on supporting employees with ill-health capability and making reasonable adjustments to support performance improvements.
- 4.4 In considering cases of unsatisfactory work performance, line managers should determine the cause as well as any barriers to improved performance and take steps to help employees overcome these obstacles. This may include additional support in the form of coaching, training and/or ongoing feedback.
- 4.5 The first approach with most performance issues will be to try to resolve the problem informally during usual regular 1-2-1s. An informal action plan (see [Appendix A: Performance Improvement Plan template](#)) should be developed and agreed between the line manager and employee. This will include:
- The required standards and expectations;
 - Areas of concern around the current level of performance and standards of behaviour;
 - The likely causes of poor performance and any training needs/solutions to the problem; and
 - Targets for improvement and a timescale for review.
- 4.6 If, at any stage, there is a suggestion that the underlying cause of underperformance may be linked to a disability or long-term health condition, the employee may be referred to Occupational Health for professional advice. Full consideration will be given to making reasonable adjustments to protect their health and support their wellbeing, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

5 Formal Action

- 5.1 Formal action will only be taken once informal options have been exhausted. Your manager will make it clear during your usual regular performance conversations if expectations are not being met and/or if an action plan has not led to the required performance improvements.
- 5.2 Any formal action will follow the steps outlined in the Guild’s Disciplinary Procedure.
- 5.3 Managers should seek guidance from a member of the senior management team and/or the HR Administrator before beginning disciplinary action in relation to underperformance.

Appendix A: Performance Improvement Plan Template

A Performance Improvement Plan is an informal action plan that is developed and agreed between the line manager and staff member and is designed to support the individual to achieve the required standards of performance and behaviours.

Our performance development framework ensures that expectations are clear, and that feedback is provided frequently and in-time. The first approach with most performance issues will be to try to resolve the problem informally during regular performance conversations (check-ins).

When this has been unsuccessful, a performance improvement plan can be used to create clarity around the performance issue, outline the expectations and explore the gaps in performance / behaviour.

The plan should be a short-term, informal solution and the duration of the plan will be agreed in advance and reviewed regularly. It will usually last between and 3 and 6 months and may be extended, however should not exceed 12 months in total. If the plan does not lead to the required improvements, formal action may be taken via the Disciplinary Procedure.

Performance Improvement Plan Template

Name:

Line Manager:

Date:

The initial conversation about the performance issue should take place as part of a regular 1-2-1 and should aim to establish the likely cause of underperformance. If there is any indication that the issue may be linked to a disability or health condition, reasonable adjustments should be explored either beforehand or as part of the action plan.

Current Performance (what needs to improve and why?)

What are the specific objectives and/or behaviours that are not being met? Provide examples and use dates, numbers and or other key metrics. Focus on specific, observable behaviours rather than judgements based on the person.

Expected Performance (what does 'good' look like?)

Describe the specific performance/behaviour expectations and discuss why they are important to us, referring to the Guild's strategy, values and behaviours.

Action Plan (how are we going to achieve it?)

Agree together 3-5 objectives that will need to be achieved as part of the plan. Include how each one will be measured, support needed and date for review

Objective	How we'll measure it	Support needed	Review date

Performance Improvement Check-ins

There should be regular meetings to review progress and improvements. The number and frequency of these should be agreed at the start, along with a target completion date for the plan.

Performance Improvement Plans should usually last between three and six months to allow time for improvement and support.

Review Date	Staff member reflections / notes	Line manager reflections / notes

Plan Completion

Before the Performance Improvement Plan is completed, a completion review meeting will take place. The purpose of this meeting is to review overall progress and confirm to what extent the performance expectations have been met.

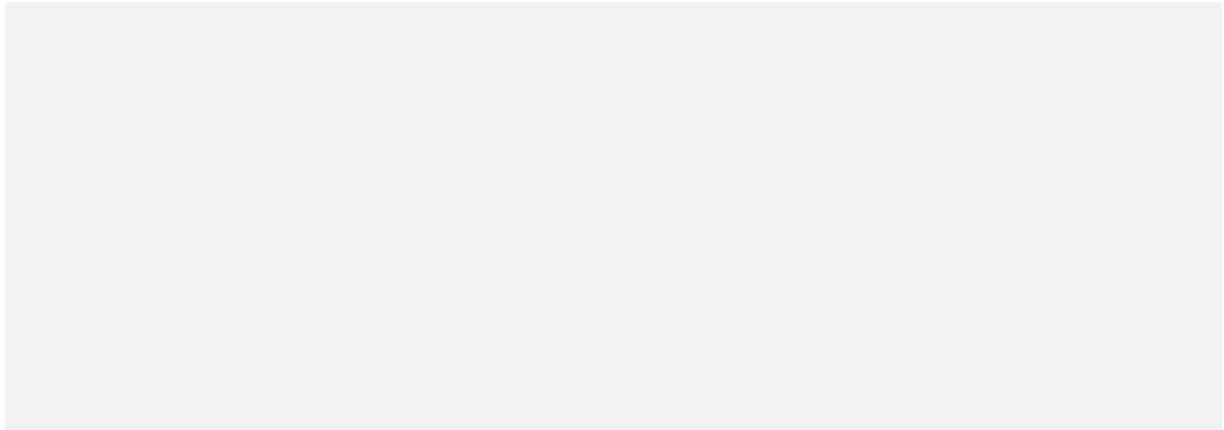
Before the meeting, the staff member should complete the summary section below to share their thoughts on the process and their success, using evidence to demonstrate the improvements made. During the meeting, the staff member and manager will discuss whether the expectations have been met. The plan will then be marked as either 'complete' or 'incomplete'.

"Complete" Performance Improvement Plans will remain with the staff member for 12 months, which means they may be used as part of performance-related disciplinary investigations taking place within that time.

"Incomplete" Performance Improvement Plans will either be extended or lead to further action, in which case the Disciplinary Procedure will be followed.

Reflections and summary

To be completed by the staff member ahead of the conversation.



Date of final review:

