

Performance Review and Planning for Professional Staff

Conversation Guide for Staff

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About this guide

This guide, revised October 2016 is designed to assist staff members undertaking the Annual Performance Review and Planning Process for Professional Staff.

Produced by:

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Introduction

The Performance Review and Planning (PRP) process provides a framework for:

- (a) managing and communicating about a staff member's work performance and development;
- (b) ensuring that a staff member's development and work align with the strategic objectives of the University and Faculty/School/Directorate; and
- (c) planning a staff member's development to contribute to the quality of their working life and future career.

The PRP process is most effective when there have been regular informal meetings between the nominated supervisor and the staff member during the year to:

- track progress against performance objectives;
- acknowledge successes;
- identify factors that may be hindering meeting performance objectives;
- discuss professional development activities; and
- where a staff member has a career plan, discuss progress against this plan.

The successful implementation of the process is important in ensuring performance planning and review across the organisation is conducted in line with ACU's strategic objectives. The involvement of all staff members is a key contributor to the University performing against new and emerging quality standards, including those set by TEQSA and the Mission-based Compact. The process also benefits staff by providing an opportunity to reflect on work achievements and receive feedback from their nominated supervisor about these, as well as being a prompt for staff members to consider their professional development priorities. The PRP process also provides the opportunity for you to seek guidance and support on their career aspirations from their supervisor, should the staff member wish to engage in a career conversation.



The PRP process incorporates ACU's Capability Development Framework (CDF), which describes the essential competencies that are needed in all ACU staff to achieve our strategy and support our Mission. It supports conversations between you and your supervisor in identifying competencies that are most needed in your current role, and the identification of professional development goals and activities. The CDF Core Competencies assist in both in strengthening capability in the current role and understanding expectations of potential future roles. For further information about the CDF and the 10 Core Competencies Visit www.acu.edu.au/cdf

The PRP Form has two parts:

Part A – Annual Performance Review

Section 1: You report on your achievements against the objectives identified in the previous year’s plan. Copies of supporting documents may be provided by either yourself or your nominated supervisor.

Section 2: Your nominated supervisor provides an evaluation of your performance which also includes an assessment of behavioural competencies.

Part B – Annual Performance Plan

You are encouraged to provide your input in draft form prior to the performance meeting to aid the conversation. Your nominated supervisor will work with you to finalise the three sections.

Section 1: Performance objectives

Section 2: Leave management

Section 3: Professional development

Part C – Career Planning (OPTIONAL)

Part C is optional and can be initiated by you as the staff member with your Supervisor. Once you have reflected on your career aspirations (see Career Planning Self-Assessment at Appendix 2) you can use Part C of the PRP Form to record the outcomes of the career conversation and keep for your reference.

This guide below outlines how the following tools can support you through the PRP process:

- Performance, Development and Career Conversation Model
- Professional Staff Checklist
- The CDF
- Examples of SMART Performance Objectives (incorporating the CDF and suggested strategic links)
- Career Planning Self-Assessment

Performance, Development and Career Conversation Model

The Performance, Development and Career Conversation Model illustrates the cycle of the performance review, professional development and career planning process.

The first three quadrants need to be addressed in the PRP conversation between you and your supervisor. In the first quadrant, performance is reviewed against previously set objectives, which sets the scene for quadrants 2 and 3, where the focus is on setting performance objectives and professional development. The fourth quadrant is optional and is normally initiated by you as the staff member. It is an opportunity for you to record the outcomes of your career conversation with your supervisor. The career conversation can be held at the same time as the PRP conversation or at any time during the year.


This Model interfaces with the *Performance Review and Planning Form for Professional Staff*, and the Professional Staff Checklist (see page 6).


Figure 1: The Performance, Development and Career Conversation Model



Professional Staff Checklist

The Professional Staff Checklist will help you in preparing for your annual performance review and planning meeting with your supervisor. It contains prompts, reflections and questions to ensure that the meeting achieves its purpose. You should work through this checklist and the *Performance Review and Planning Form for Professional Staff* together, section by section, before you begin planning the annual performance review and planning meeting with your supervisor.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CHECKLIST – Preparing for the PRP conversation	Tick when complete ✓
General preparation	
Agree on a time to meet with your supervisor for your performance review and planning conversation.	
Review the <i>Performance Review and Planning for Professional Staff Policy Performance Review and Planning (PRP) Form for Professional Staff (PRP Form)</i> , <i>Professional Development for Professional Staff policy</i> and any other relevant policies.	
Review University, Faculty/School/Directorate strategic priorities and ensure that you understand how they apply to your objectives. Review the CDF and reflect on the Core Competencies that would describe how the objectives in the Performance Plan would be achieved and those that may inform your professional development. Further information about the CDF and the 10 Core Competencies Visit www.acu.edu.au/cdf	
Draft your input into Part A Section 1 and into Part B Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the <i>PRP Form</i> , including associated evidence.	
Part C (OPTIONAL) – You may initiate a career conversation with your supervisor. Part C of the PRP form provides an opportunity for you to record the outcomes of the career conversation and retain for your records. You do not need to complete Part C before the conversation with your supervisor. If you wish to engage in the career conversation with your supervisor, you may like to prepare by reflecting on the questions in the Career Planning Self-Assessment at Appendix 2. You can use the CDF to consider the expectations and behaviours for your current role and/or potential future roles.	
Part A: Annual Performance Review	
Section 1: Review of work achievements based on agreed objectives	
 <p>In preparing for the review conversation, reflect on how you will use the conversation to share information with your supervisor about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your achievements in relation to your performance objectives, informed by the CDF Core Competencies, and any other achievements or key activities of note; • any factors that impacted on achieving your goals and objectives; • your behaviour, cooperation, collaboration and communication at work; • ideas you have for improvement and innovations; and • how you are feeling about your role (e.g. the level of autonomy, responsibility, the variety and complexity provided, and the systems/processes/procedures in place to support your work). <p>Your supervisor will provide feedback about the year, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what went well – highlighting achievements; • what could be improved; and • your progress in meeting your objectives (KPIs). <p>Take time to be prepared to consider this feedback in a professional and constructive way.</p>	
Section 2: Evaluation of overall work performance	
<p>Your supervisor will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider any issues that have impacted on your work performance; • provide feedback on your behaviour, cooperation, collaboration and communication at work; and 	

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CHECKLIST – Preparing for the PRP conversation		Tick when complete ✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide you with an overall rating, considering your achievements in relation to performance objectives, factors impacting on achievement of objectives, other major achievements, and behavioural competencies. <p>You will be given the opportunity to respond verbally and in writing prior to signing that the review process has been completed.</p>		
Part B: Annual Performance Plan		
Section 1: Performance Objectives		
 <p>Consider your main duties and priorities for the next 12 months, in the context of your position description, and University and Faculty/School/Directorate strategic priorities and prepare to discuss these with your supervisor.</p> <p>Use the SMART Principles to assist you with setting performance objectives. In addition, CDF core competencies relevant to the achievement level of your role should be identified for your performance objectives prior to the discussion with your supervisor. See Appendix 1 for examples of SMART performance objectives that include suggested relevant strategic links and CDF core competencies. For further information about the CDF and the 10 Core Competencies visit www.acu.edu.au/cdf</p>		
Setting objectives: The SMART Principles		
Specific	<p>Does the objective explain precisely what has to be achieved? Does the objective clearly explain the level/standard of expected outcome? Does the objective incorporate competencies from the CDF?</p> <p><i>Choose words that describe the objective in action-oriented terms, e.g. increase, reduce, provide, establish, eliminate, complete, etc. Objectives may or may not have specific measures attached, depending on the objective. Identify appropriate CDF Core Competencies that describe how the objective can be achieved.</i></p>	
Measurable	<p>Does the objective indicate how the results will be measured?</p> <p><i>Each objective must have at least one measure so everyone is clear on how success will be assessed.</i></p>	
Achievable	<p>Is the objective challenging, yet achievable?</p> <p><i>Are there appropriate resources (including time, money, and people) to enable its achievement?</i></p>	
Relevant	<p>Is it clear why the objective is important and how it contributes to short and/or longer-term goals?</p> <p><i>Does it align to University and School/Faculty strategic objectives?</i></p>	
Time framed	<p>Does the work objective clearly state when it needs to be achieved by?</p> <p><i>Timeframes must be realistic.</i></p>	
<p><i>Note: Examples of SMART performance objectives that incorporate suggested links to the ACU Strategic Plan and relevant CDF Core Competencies are provided in the Appendix for demonstration purposes only.</i></p>		

Section 2: Leave management plan

Prepare to discuss or provide details of your leave plans for the next 12 months, including annual and long-service leave. Keep in mind University policies in regard to management of leave balances, and the requirements of your area at certain times of the year in terms of busy periods and critical tasks.

Section 3: Professional development



It is important for you and your supervisor to consider the professional development that will assist you to meet the agreed performance objectives and to support your continuous learning. You should consider:

- professional development needs that will support achievement of your performance objectives;
- the CDF core competencies that will assist you and your supervisor in understanding expectations in your current role and identifying priority areas for development;
- the skills and knowledge you already have and those that will facilitate continuous learning;
- the actions and resources you need to acquire further skills/knowledge; and
- realistic timeframes to undertake development activities.

In the context of your performance objectives and/or career goals, your professional development may include:

- *specialist skills* – skills related to your specific role;
- *technical skills* – information and communication technology for professional purposes;
- *Core Competencies at your achievement level in the CDF* - the essential competencies that are needed in all ACU staff to achieve our strategy and support our Mission; and
- *transferrable skills* – can be applied across work contexts or tasks (e.g. communication, team work, interpersonal savvy, engaging customers and building partnerships).

After identifying your current strengths, competencies, skills and knowledge, focus on your development priorities and plans for the future. The professional development conversation with your supervisor is an opportunity to examine your identified strengths and understand any areas for further development. The outcomes of the conversation should contribute to a meaningful and relevant plan for the year ahead.

As a final note, most adult learning is informal and self-directed in nature. Informal and self-directed types of learning may include, for example: reflections during the course of your work; obtaining a paper or book on a topic and thinking about the writer’s viewpoint or attending a presentation and reflecting on the salient points. This is a consideration when planning professional development activities.

After completing the drafted PRP form

Once you have completed the relevant sections of the PRP form, email/provide the PRP form and attached supporting documents to your supervisor normally at least one week prior to the meeting. This will give your supervisor sufficient time to review the form and complete the supervisor comments. Bring your copies to your scheduled meeting with your supervisor.

Please note, if you wish to engage in a career conversation with your supervisor, reflect on the questions in the **Self-Assessment** at Appendix 2 and complete Part C of the PRP Form during the career conversation with your supervisor.

Career planning



You may choose at the time of the PRP conversation to discuss your career aspirations with your supervisor. Whilst this can be a natural outcome of the PRP conversation, you can also choose to have the career conversation at any time during the year.

Prior to your career conversation with your supervisor, complete the **Self-Assessment** at Appendix 2 to assist you in considering and identifying your career aspirations and aid your conversation with your supervisor. The CDF can assist in understanding the expectations of a potential future role and identifying capabilities that require further development. Further information about the CDF and the 10 Core Competencies Visit www.acu.edu.au/cdf

Once you have reflected on your career aspirations you can use Part C of the PRP form to record the outcomes of the career conversation and keep for your reference.

Be prepared to receive realistic feedback from your supervisor on your career aspirations and be open to suggestions from your supervisor about development activities that you may not have considered in the past.

Please note, when discussing your career plan with your supervisor keep in mind your career aspirations may align to your career at ACU or to longer-term career aspirations or aspirations unrelated to ACU. ACU may be able to provide some support through professional development or work opportunities, however you need to consider all the support and where this will be provided to achieve your career aspirations.

**Appendix 1:
Examples of SMART performance objectives with suggested strategic links and CDF Core Competencies**

Service Desk/Student Centre

- a) *Take personal accountability to provide an effective and efficient service to allocated customers with minimal errors and according to established guidelines. This will be measured by review of the customer service call data base and customer feedback.*

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence.

- b) *Take personal responsibility in providing accurate and timely advice to the required standard to students regarding a range of processes including applications, selection and offering. Advice given is in accord with University policy and guidelines. This will be measured by management observation and customer feedback.*

Strategic Link: Strategic Link: KRA 2.1 Student Experience

CDF Core Competencies: Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence.

Executive/Administrative Services

Coordinate Director’s diary so that meetings and Director’s availability is prioritised as agreed, there are no errors and core office applications are used effectively. Ensure relevant and comprehensive meeting materials are provided to the Director so they can prepare for the meeting. This will be measured by management observation.

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence, Know ACU Work Processes and Systems.

Communications Services

- a) *Manage the departmental website in accordance with standards in the ACU Brand Identity Guidelines. Convey facts, concepts and technical information clearly and concisely using terms that most people can understand. Ensure content is updated on a weekly basis and meets departmental priorities for information sharing. Liaise and work collaboratively with departmental units to ensure appropriate content is provided. This will be measured by management observation and customer feedback*

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Collaborate Effectively, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence.

- b) *Produce an informative, topical and engaging departmental monthly newsletter, coordinating content from authors and writing stories where required. Ensure departmental and University style guidelines are met. Convey facts, concepts and technical information clearly and concisely using terms that most people can understand Review with Director at least one week prior to scheduled publication. This will be measured by management observation and feedback from readers.*

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Know ACU’s Work Processes and Systems, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence

School/Faculty Administrative Services

- a) *Take personal accountability to coordinate effective, timely and appropriate student placement programs for professional experience ensuring all students have an appropriate placement. Maintain effective liaison with placement providers as appropriate. This will be measured by feedback from students, providers and management observation.*

Strategic Link: UPI 2.2 Quality Learning and Teaching Experiences or Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Collaborate Effectively,

- b) *Coordinate and prepare the school timetable each semester on time and to the required standard, and ensuring effective and efficient use of resources and timely availability of an accurate timetable. Accommodate staff requests wherever possible and appropriate. This will be measured by feedback from Timetabling, staff of the school and management observation.*

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence, Know ACU Work Processes and Systems.

Leadership

Provide leadership and guidance to the team through day to day management, holding of regular team meetings, individual performance discussions and development of improved processes. Actively coach direct reports and others within the unit and conduct regular career development discussions. This will be measured by management observation.

Strategic Link: KRA 4.2 Workplace Culture, Staff Performance and Development

CDF Core Competencies: Coach and Develop, Collaborate Effectively, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence, Make Informed Decisions.

Academic Skills

Provision of timely consultations with students that provide up to date and effective strategies to support improved student academic performance. Coach students to foster a culture of learning and improvement. This will be measured by management observation, review of consultation database and feedback from customers and lecturers.

Strategic Link: UPI 2.2 Quality Learning and Teaching Experiences

CDF Core Competencies: Coach and Develop, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence

Student Matters

- a) *Information sessions about new policies and procedures are held for students on each campus within six weeks of government or legislative changes. Convey facts, concepts and technical information clearly and concisely, using terms that most people can understand. Sessions are advertised effectively and the sessions are succinct and highlight important changes. Student evaluations of sessions should receive no less of an average score of 3.5 out of a possible 5 (where 5 is the most favourable).*

Strategic Link: UPI 2.1 Student Experience and Satisfaction

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Know ACU Work Processes and Systems

b) *Coordinate response to student appeals ensuring appeals are handled in a timely and effective manner according to University guidelines. This will be measured by management observation.*

Strategic Link: KRA 4.1 Student Experience and Satisfaction

CDF Core Competencies: Know ACU Work Processes and Systems, Communicate with Impact, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service,

Policy Management

Develop, review and maintain effective policies relevant to the function ensuring they are compliant with legislation and incorporate best practice. Ensure stakeholders are consulted as appropriate. Follow up to ensure stakeholder satisfaction. This will be measured by management review and observation.

Strategic Link: KRA 4.1 Strategic Approach and Governance

CDF Core Competencies: Know ACU Work Processes and Systems, Communicate with Impact, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence

Executive Services

As Committee Executive Officer, ensure all meetings are scheduled as planned, all delegates are invited within 2 months of the meeting schedule, agenda is tabled one month prior to scheduled meeting and all agenda papers are provided two weeks prior to meeting. Ensure all minutes are accurate and completed and distributed within two weeks of each meeting. Convey facts, concepts and technical information clearly and concisely using terms that most people can understand. This will be measured by management observation and feedback from delegates.

Strategic Link: UPI 4.1 Service Quality

CDF Core Competencies: Communicate with Impact, Deliver Stakeholder Centric Service, Be Responsible and Accountable for Achieving Excellence

Career Planning Self-Assessment

If you choose to have a career planning conversation with your supervisor, you may wish to reflect on the questions below and make a few notes to help you prepare. Use Part C of the PRP Form to record the outcomes of the career conversation and keep for your reference and ongoing guidance. The CDF can assist in understanding the expectations of your current or potential future role and identifying capabilities that require further development. For further information about the CDF and the 10 Core Competencies Visit www.acu.edu.au/cdf

Past	Responses
1. What roles have I enjoyed in the past? (E.g. Administrative, Executive Support, Project Role)	
2. How has my skill set changed from my early career? (E.g. moved into Management/Leadership)	
Present	
3. How well am I performing against current performance objectives? What are my development areas?	
4. How would I express my value to the organisation? What are my greatest strengths?	
5. What parts of my job would I like to do more frequently?	
6. What job areas am I interested in? In which other areas or projects in ACU could I contribute and add value?	
Future	
7. What are my aspirations? (E.g. What do you want to accomplish and why?)	
8. Where do I see myself in 2 to 5 years?	
9. In which areas of growth or change in the University could there be opportunities that might interest me?	
Gaps	
10. How do my strengths and development areas fit with my career aspirations and potential role opportunities?	
11. What do I need to do to achieve my career aspirations?	

