

Performance Procedure - Annual Performance Cycle

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Administrative - Vice-Chancellor
Accountable Executive - Policy	Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Manager - Policy	Chief People Officer
Review Date	12 March 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) The University is committed to advancing a culture of high performance and developing and retaining high performing staff. This Procedure outlines the University's approach to performance and development via the annual performance cycle and as governed by the [La Trobe University Enterprise Agreement 2023](#) clause 58.

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

- a. all fixed term and continuing staff.

(3) New staff members are required to participate in the probation process from commencement of employment as well as the Annual Performance Cycle. Probation goals and performance goals are separate undertakings but should be aligned where appropriate.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key decisions/Responsibilities	Role
Performance assessment outcomes for each staff member (i.e. performance ratings) are determined by the relevant line manager in line with Total Effective Performance and the published rating scale.	Line Manager

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(4) This procedure forms part of the [Workforce Management Policy](#) suite which governs its application.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Annual Cycle

(5) The annual performance cycle operates over a 14-month period, commencing on 1 December each year and concluding on 28 February, pertaining to performance throughout the calendar year.

Part B - Total Effective Performance Plan

(6) The Total Effective Performance Plan comprises of the following sections:

Section	Overview
Achievement Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model defines Achievements as one element of performance, along with Behaviours and Capabilities.2. All staff are required to set a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of six (6) Achievement goals.3. Goals are to be created in agreement between the line manager / academic reviewer and the staff member and should be aligned to the staff member's Position Description, Academic Level or Professional Staff Classification, University strategy and the area's Business Plan and/or local priorities.
Behaviour Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model defines Behaviours as one element of performance, along with Achievements and Capabilities.2. All staff are required to set a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) Behaviour goals.3. Goals are to be created in agreement between the line manager / academic reviewer and the staff member and with consideration of La Trobe's Cultural Qualities.
Capability Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model defines Capabilities as one element of performance, along with Achievements and Behaviours.2. All staff are required to set a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) Capability goals.3. Goals are to be created in agreement between the line manager / academic reviewer and the staff member and should be aligned to the staff member's Position Description, Academic Level or Professional Staff Classification, and with consideration to La Trobe's Capability Framework, and the outcomes of area Strategic Workforce Planning and Workforce Mapping and Planning activities.
Development Goals (individual contributors / non-people leaders only)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All staff are encouraged to set at least one Development goal.2. Development goals and activities are supported through a mix of on-the-job experience, exposure (e.g., coaching, mentoring, job shadowing etc) and education initiatives or workshops.3. Development goals should be created in agreement with the line manager / academic reviewer.
Leadership Development Plan (people leaders only)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All leaders are required to create a Leadership Development Plan, focusing on the development of leadership skills, knowledge and practice.2. The Leadership Development Plan requires leaders to determine one (1) overarching leadership objective for the year and identify a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) actions that will be taken to achieve the objective.

Part C - Phases

(7) The annual performance cycle consists of the following key phases:

Phase	Overview
Goal Setting (December-February)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss and set performance goals (achievements, behaviours and capabilities), aligning to the staff member's position description, time fraction, their Academic Level or Professional Classification, the University Strategic Plan and the Area Business Plan and local priorities. 2. Reflecting, discussing and defining a meaningful development goal (recommended). 3. Reflecting, discussing and creating a Leadership Development Plan (LDP) (leaders only). 4. Recording finalised goals in the Total Effective Performance Plan in the My Impact platform. 5. Agreeing on a cadence of Ongoing Progress Conversations for the cycle (recommended quarterly minimum). 6. Note: Local Areas may choose to combine Goal Setting and Year End Review conversations, or conduct Goal Setting as a separate, sequential activity after the Year-End Review is concluded.
Ongoing Progress Conversations (March-November)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Line manager / academic reviewer and staff member engage in frequent progress conversations, with reference to the Total Effective Performance and documented goals. 2. The frequency of ongoing progress conversations is in accordance with the cadence agreed between line manager / academic reviewer and staff member during Goal Setting (see point 5 in Goal Setting above). 3. The conversations are intended to share two-way feedback, insights and actions required to support performance. 4. Taking notes within the Performance Plan to document key discussions points, progress, and achievements.
Workforce Development Planning (as directed)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the direction of the university, and as a supplementary component of Ongoing Progress Conversations, each local area will undertake a Workforce Mapping and Planning activity at a specified time to identify the career aspirations and development needs of their people.
Year End Review (December-February)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss and assess the staff member's Total Effective Performance throughout the performance period, including giving and receiving effective and constructive performance feedback. 2. Recognise and celebrate achievements for the year. 3. Reflect on opportunities to shape goals for the year ahead. 4. Line Manager to assess, determine and communicate final performance outcome against rating scale. 5. Where the staff member has an academic reviewer, the academic reviewer will recommend a performance outcome against rating scale to the Line Manager, for their final determination. 6. Record outcomes and comments within the performance system. 7. Note: Local Areas may decide to combine Year End Review and Goal Setting conversations, or conduct Goal Setting as a separate, sequential activity after the Year-End Review is concluded. This decision will be communicated with relevant staff.

Part D - Roles and Responsibilities

(8) The roles and responsibilities throughout the annual performance cycle include:

Role	Responsibility
Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively engaging with and participating in the annual performance cycle. 2. Drafting, refining, and progressing performance (Achievement, Behaviour and Capability), and development or leadership development goals. 3. Actively participating in ongoing progress conversations throughout the performance cycle (minimum quarterly). 4. Appropriately preparing for and participating in year-end reflection and performance review. 5. Instigating and participating in effective and constructive feedback and two-way conversations throughout all phases of the annual performance cycle.

Role	Responsibility
Line Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively engaging with and participating in the annual performance cycle. 2. Demonstrating effective leadership by prioritising performance cycle activities, and reinforcing the value of performance planning, progress conversations and reflection. 3. Preparing meaningfully and appropriately for all performance discussions and activities. 4. Ensuring alignment of individual performance with the area Business Plan, University strategy and the Total Effective Performance model. 5. Guiding and supporting staff to develop and maintain their Total Effective Performance plan an active document that supports performance. 6. Regularly discussing progress, feedback and performance throughout all phases of the cycle. 7. Assessing total effective performance fairly against the university rating scale. 8. Communicating the final performance rating, and associated rationale, to the staff member.
Academic Reviewer (if applicable)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaging proactively and positively with the annual performance cycle, prioritising all assigned performance cycle activities. Based on individual school structure, size and leadership span of control, in some schools this may be ongoing progress conversations throughout the year, in other schools this may be all performance activities as listed above for Line Manager. The local approach will be communicated with relevant leaders. 2. Providing a recommendation regarding the overall year end performance rating to the line manager.

Part E - Performance Rating

(9) Total Effective Performance goals and overall performance will be assessed against the following qualitative rating scale:

Not Met Requirements	Performance in one or more areas - Achievements, Behaviours, or Capabilities - falls below the expected standards for the role.
Met Requirements	The individual has delivered on the role's requirements, consistently demonstrating the expected Achievements, Behaviours and Capabilities.
Exceeded Requirements	The individual consistently and substantially surpasses expected achievements, displaying exemplary behaviours and advanced capabilities beyond their role requirements.

(10) Performance should be considered relative to opportunity, for example, staff with extenuating circumstances or absent for a significant period during the performance year.

Part F - Exclusions - Ineligible for Rating

(11) Staff who have been in the annual performance cycle for less than six months will be ineligible to be rated. This timeframe can be varied in consultation and agreement between the staff member and their line manager and based upon individual circumstances. A Year End conversation reflective of performance during the period the staff member was at work should still be held.

Part G - Incremental Progression

(12) A staff member will automatically proceed through the incremental scale of their classification level if the staff member's performance is assessed by the University as 'Met Requirements' or 'Exceeded Requirements' as an outcome of the Year End Review. Increment level increases will be paid in accordance with the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

(13) A staff member who receives a rating of 'Not Met Requirements' may have their incremental progression withheld or delayed in line with the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

Part H - Under Performance

(14) Were a line manager / academic reviewer is of the view that a staff member's performance is not meeting the required standard, the line manager will make reasonable efforts to informally resolve the instances or aspects of the

staff member's performance which are viewed as unsatisfactory. This may include, but is not limited to, provision of guidance, support, counselling or appropriate staff development measures. If the staff member has an academic reviewer, the line manager and academic reviewer will discuss the approach to supporting performance improvement, including their roles and responsibilities.

(15) Line managers / academic reviewers should not wait for the Year End Review conversation to discuss performance concerns with a staff member. Line managers / academic reviewers will take timely, constructive action, giving the staff member relevant support and a fair opportunity to improve and meet standards.

(16) Where a staff member's overall performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory it is appropriate that the staff member is assessed as 'Not Met Requirements' under the Annual Performance Cycle rating scale.

(17) If performance does not improve to the required standard within a reasonable time frame, the processes detailed in the [Enterprise Agreement](#) clause 69 may be initiated.

Part I - Disagreements Regarding Annual Performance Cycle Processes

(18) If there is a disagreement between a staff member and their line manager about a performance goal, performance rating, or the performance process followed, there will be an attempt to resolve any disagreements between staff member and line manager at the local level in the first instance.

(19) If the staff member and their line manager are unable to reach an agreement in relation to performance goals, ratings or process and the increment level increase is not being withheld, the staff member may seek further assessment of their performance by the manager of their reviewer (this may be the manager once removed of the staff member, or in the instance where an Academic Review has assessed performance, the Line Manager). If the disagreement is not resolved a final review will be undertaken by the leader two levels up from the original decision maker and a final decision will be made.

(20) If a line manager makes a decision that an increment level increase is to be withheld they must:

- a. have given an early indication during the cycle that the agreed goals and requirements are not being met; and that, should there not be sufficient improvement, an increment may be withheld at the end of a review cycle;
- b. advise the staff member during the Year End conversation that they have Not Met Requirements and that an increment will be withheld, with the decision and rationale then passed on to People & Culture.

(21) If the staff member disagrees with the withholding of an increment, the staff member can access the [Workplace Issue Resolution \(Staff\) Procedure](#) under the [Enterprise Agreement](#). If the disagreement is not resolved, clause 63 ([Workplace Issue Resolution \(Staff\) Procedure](#)) will first be applied, and then clause 62 (Dispute Resolution Procedures).

(22) Should the local area intervention not provide a sufficient outcome, and staff members choose to utilise the [Workplace Issue Resolution \(Staff\) Procedure](#) they must lodge/begin a workplace issue within 2 (two) months of receiving their rating.

Part J - Development & Support

(23) Training and support material will be made available to assist line managers, academic reviewers and staff in carrying out their responsibilities as part of the annual performance cycle.

Section 7 - Definitions

(24) For the purpose of this procedure:

- a. Academic Reviewer: means someone who provides oversight, feedback and commentary on an academic staff member's performance. Academic Reviewers are not line managers but can support line managers to administer the performance cycle, provide feedback and make a recommendation of overall performance for the year.
- b. Achievements: one component of La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model, achievements are the measurable results and contributions that individuals and teams deliver.
- c. Behaviours: one component of La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model, behaviours are the actions, attitudes, and values demonstrated in our daily interactions and decision-making.
- d. Capabilities: one component of La Trobe's Total Effective Performance model, capabilities are the skills, knowledge, and competencies that enable us to excel in our roles.
- e. [Enterprise Agreement](#): refers to the current [La Trobe University Enterprise Agreement 2023](#).
- f. Line Manager: means the immediate line manager/supervisor.
- g. Staff: All persons employed by the University.
- h. Total Effective Performance: La Trobe's performance model defining performance as an integration of achievements, behaviours and capabilities.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(25) This Policy is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(26) Associated information includes:

- a. [Optimising Performance Intranet Hub](#)
- b. [Achievement Relative to Opportunity Guidelines](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	24th March 2026
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Responsible Manager - Policy	Regan Sterry Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	People & Culture +61 3 9479 1234