

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING
CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT?

Performance assessment is a formal, written evaluation summarizing an employee’s job performance for the current assessment period and setting goals for the next assessment period. (“Performance assessment” has the same meaning as the terms “evaluation” or “employee evaluation” in the University’s collective bargaining agreements with the unions.)

A meaningful and effective performance assessment promotes and enhances on-going, two-way communication between supervisors and employees in order to:

- provide feedback on accomplishments and areas in need of improvement;
- establish mutually understood performance expectations/goals;
- develop a plan for maintaining job performance at a satisfactory level or for improving performance;
- deal with specific performance problems as they occur.

Performance assessment is an important part of the performance management process. For tips, examples, and guidance on how to prepare for and conduct the performance assessment, visit:

<http://www.maine.edu/system/hr/perman.php>.

WHO COMPLETES THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT?

Each supervisor is responsible for doing at least an annual assessment of the regular employees s/he supervises. Employees have an opportunity to participate in the performance assessment process by doing a self-assessment and participating in goal setting. Here are the steps to follow, along with a suggested timeline and a checklist to help guide you through the process.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS *(For a quick guide, see the checklist at the end of the instructions)*

STEP 1	The supervisor and employee schedule a time 2-3 weeks before the actual performance assessment meeting. The supervisor gives the employee a copy of the forms (<i>Instructions; Part 1: Self-Assessment</i> ; and, for informational purposes, <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i>) and the employee’s current job description*. The supervisor asks the employee to complete the <i>Employee Self-Assessment</i> and, at the employee’s choice, either return it to the supervisor a week before the meeting or bring it to the meeting. The supervisor also encourages the employee to make notes about draft goals for the coming year.
STEP 2	The employee reviews the current job description before completing the <i>Self-Assessment</i> . The employee then completes the <i>Self-Assessment</i> and either gives it to the supervisor a week before the meeting or brings it to the meeting (the self-assessment is optional for employees in the ACSUM, Service & Maintenance, and Police Units).
STEP 3	In advance of the meeting, the supervisor reviews and signs the <i>Self-Assessment</i> (if provided by the employee) and drafts responses to <i>Part 2: Performance Assessment</i> . The supervisor is encouraged to request input from others who assign work to the employee in order to give a full and fair assessment (input should be gathered systematically). The supervisor should refer to the <i>Employee Performance Criteria</i> attached to the <i>Employee Performance Assessment</i> form to guide the assessment. To increase the value of this process, supervisors are encouraged to comment on each performance criterion. Any rating of <i>Needs Improvement</i> or <i>Unsatisfactory</i> requires a supervisory comment.

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STEP 4	<p>During the performance assessment meeting, the supervisor and employee discuss the <i>Employee Self-Assessment</i> (if one was completed) and the draft <i>Performance Assessment</i> form. The supervisor should begin by highlighting specific areas of strong performance, then point out specific areas where improvement is needed.</p> <p>The supervisor and employee review whether last year’s goals were accomplished and then jointly discuss and document goals for the next year (Section III.B.). Goals should be specific, attainable within the time in which they are to be completed, and appropriate to the employee’s job classification (for tips on establishing appropriate goals, visit http://www.maine.edu/system/hr/pa_smart.php). An employee may not agree with the goals set for his/her position but should understand that they will be used in the next assessment.</p> <p>For any rating of <i>Unsatisfactory</i> or <i>Needs Improvement</i>, it is highly recommended that a Performance Improvement Plan be developed in Section IV. The supervisor should first ask the employee for suggestions about ways to improve performance, then offer his or her own suggestions.</p>
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STEP 5	<p>After the performance assessment meeting, the supervisor finalizes the written assessment, incorporating points discussed at the meeting. Then both the supervisor and employee sign the Performance Assessment form (Section V). The employee may attach a written response or comments. If a copy of the form is not signed by the employee and returned within seven (7) calendar days, an unsigned copy is placed in the employee’s personnel file. The supervisor gives a copy of the <i>Self-Assessment</i> (if one was completed) and the <i>Employee Performance Assessment</i> to the employee and sends the original to the supervisor’s department or unit head for that administrator’s signature. No alterations or comments may be made on the form after the employee and supervisor have signed it. The department or unit head sends the complete assessment to the file custodian.</p>
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CONFIDENTIALITY	<p>Confidentiality of the performance assessment is the shared responsibility of the supervisor, any reviewing administrator(s) and the file custodian. Ordinarily, the performance assessment will be available only to the employee, his or her supervisor, appropriate administrators, a duly designated employee representative in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, the file custodian, and/or a hiring supervisor/search committee for another university job for which the employee has applied.</p>
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***IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE JOB DESCRIPTION**

Some departments have developed a site-specific job description that describes an employee’s specific duties. A site-specific job description is a supplement to the system-wide generic job description for the employee’s position. If desired, the site-specific job description may be used as the basis for the performance assessment. If using the site-specific job description for the performance assessment, please attach it to the assessment form. **Site-specific job descriptions require review and approval by the university Human Resources office.**

If the job description for the employee’s position does not provide a good fit for the employee’s actual responsibilities, the supervisor should consider whether a position review is needed to determine if the employee’s position is appropriately classified.

IS A POSITION REVIEW NEEDED?

If the performance assessment reveals that an employee’s current responsibilities have changed significantly from the job description, it may be appropriate for the employee or supervisor to contact Human Resources to request a position review.

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Performance Assessment Checklist for Supervisors

Done ✓	Item	When	Who
1.	Establish time to meet for performance assessment	2-3 weeks prior to meeting	supervisor and employee
2.	Download <i>Instructions, Part 1: Self-Assessment</i> , and <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i> from HR website Give Part I: <i>Self-Assessment</i> , copies of instructions, Part 2 form, and copy of job description to employee	2-3 weeks prior to meeting	supervisor supervisor
3.	Fill out and give <i>Self-Assessment</i> to supervisor (<i>optional for employees in the ACSUM, Service & Maintenance and Police Units</i>)	1 week prior to meeting or at the meeting	employee
4.	Review job description	Several days prior to meeting	employee, supervisor
5.	Meet to conduct performance assessment	For at least one hour	employee, supervisor
6.	Prepare final version of <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i> and give to employee	Within 1 week after the meeting	supervisor
7.	(Optional) Write response to <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i> and give to supervisor	Within 1 week after the meeting	employee
8.	Sign <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i>	Within 1 week after the meeting	employee, supervisor, dept/unit head
9.	Send signed <i>Part 1: Self-Assessment</i> (if completed) and <i>Part 2: Employee Performance Assessment</i> (and optional employee response) to HR file custodian; give copies of all documents to employee	Within 2 weeks after the meeting	supervisor