

Performance Management

1. Introduction

The Forestry Commission wants all employees to reach and maintain the required standards of performance for their role. This procedure sets out the steps to managing performance through setting objectives, providing feedback, performance reviews and ratings.

For information on the management of employees whose performance has fallen below acceptable standards for their role, please refer to [HR Policy and HR Procedure – Performance Improvement](#).

2. Performance and development planning

At the beginning of the performance year, unit managers will cascade the unit's business plan, operational plan or corporate plan, and the behavioural standard expectations, to ensure these are being applied consistently and to inform the setting of objectives.

Managers may refer to the [FC Grading Guidance](#) and [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) to ensure the range of key work areas and objectives are broadly consistent across employees doing similar jobs.

You will plan your performance year and agree your [Forward Job Plan \(FJP\)](#) with your reporting officer who will typically be your line manager. Your confirming officer, normally your line managers' manager, will oversee consistency of performance planning and review.

Your [FJP](#) will record:

- the purpose of your job, core competencies and key work areas (see [Section 2.1](#));
- your objectives (see [Section 2.2](#));
- your personal development (see [Section 2.3](#)); and
- your mid-year and end-of-year performance reviews (see [Section 4](#) & [Section 5](#))

The flowchart at [Appendix 1](#) will guide you through the performance management process.

2.1 Purpose of your job, core competencies and key work areas

The purpose of your job is a summary description of your job describing what you do in a way that others outside the immediate work area can understand.

The 10 core competencies outlined in the [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) are set out on the first page of the [FJP](#). You and your reporting officer will normally select 4 to 6 core competencies, which are required to deliver your job. You can do this either by reading the competency descriptors in the [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) or by selecting the effective behaviours first (see [Section 2.2.3](#)). The other core competencies should be deleted from your [FJP](#).

Your key work areas will be the main areas of work for your job, including training and development (see [Section 2.3](#)) and the number of areas required will depend on the scope of your job.

Each key work area will be allocated a percentage to demonstrate the relative weighting and indicate the amount of time you will be expected to work in each area. The percentages will total 100% and you will discuss the weighting of each key work area with your reporting officer during performance and development planning.

2.1.1 People and financial management responsibilities

If you have any line management responsibilities, you must have a leadership or people management key work area. Similarly, budget holders should have this captured as a specific key work area.

2.2 Setting objectives

Each key work area will have at least one objective which covers:

- outcomes and targets – ‘What’ you are required to do (see [Section 2.2.2](#)); and
- effective behaviours – ‘How’ you are required to do it (see [Section 2.2.3](#)).

The number of objectives will depend on the number of key work areas. A key work area can have more than one objective.

Your reporting officer has responsibility for setting your objectives at the start of the performance year however you may be asked to produce the first draft. Your outcomes and targets should link clearly to your unit’s business plan, operational plan or corporate plan and your effective behaviours will link to the [Civil Service Competency Framework](#). You and your reporting officer are both responsible for ensuring your objectives are discussed and understood.

While your objectives may be longer term and stretch beyond the end of the performance year, your reporting officer will ensure that clear achievements and deliverables for the end of the performance year are agreed.

Objectives should be reviewed throughout the performance year, particularly when they are achieved, amended or new objectives are identified.

2.2.1 Health and safety responsibilities

All employees should have an objective that reflects their responsibilities for health and safety. For managers, this should cover the additional responsibilities for managing health and safety, which include providing leadership to promote a positive safety culture.

2.2.2 Outcomes and targets – the ‘What’

For each key work area you will have outcomes and targets that should be:

- relevant to your job role;
- succinct; and
- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed (SMART).

You must ensure you are clear about what is expected of you.

2.2.3 Effective behaviours – the ‘How’

You and your reporting officer must use the [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) to identify the core competencies that you need to demonstrate in your job. You would normally expect to have 4 to 6 core competencies.

From these core competencies you must also select the effective behaviours that you are expected to demonstrate when delivering the outcomes and targets (the ‘What’). The [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) sets out a range of effective behaviours for each competency, by pay band, and you and your reporting officer should identify 1 to 2 effective behaviours for each ‘What’.

2.3 Personal Development

Continuous development helps to maintain, and can enhance, performance in your current role, as well as supporting potential career development.

Personal development will be a key work area in your [FJP](#) and you will agree with your reporting officer the percentage of time you will spend on your training and development during the year. Your personal development will be recorded in the Individual Learning Plan section of your FJP and discussed and reviewed as part of the performance management process.

You and your reporting officer are responsible for taking any appropriate actions to address your development needs. For more information on this, please contact your dedicated Learning and Development Team.

3. Performance and development monitoring

3.1 Regular performance discussions

Regular performance discussions are vital to ensure you are aware of your progress against both the delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and the demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How').

Reviewing performance is a normal part of day-to-day work and not an annual process. You and your reporting officer are jointly responsible for having regular performance discussions throughout the year.

Your reporting officer will use these discussions to give you feedback on outcomes and targets (the 'What') and the demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How') recognising good performance and achievements and identifying any areas requiring further development or corrective action. You will be given the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns you may have about your work or development.

These discussions will be open, unbiased and factual supported by examples gathered by you and, where appropriate, your reporting officer.

4. Mid-year review

A mid-year review must be held between you and your reporting officer, in September / October, to discuss your performance. You can hold additional reviews, if you or your reporting officer feels this is necessary.

For information on how the mid-year review will be carried out if you are new in post, absent or due to leave the FC please refer to [Appendix 4](#).

4.1 Interim Standards meeting

At mid-year reporting officers and confirming officers in your unit may take part in an interim standards meeting to:

- ensure performance expectations remain clear and objectives remain relevant; and
- discuss indicative performance ratings (see [Section 6](#)).

4.2 Preparing for your mid-year review

Prior to the meeting, you should assess your own performance against both the delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and the demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How'). Your reporting officer may also ask you to propose your own indicative performance rating (see [Section 6](#)).

You should record in your [FJP](#) before the meeting:

- examples of your delivery of outcomes and targets;
- examples of how you have demonstrated effective behaviours; and
- your own proposed indicative performance rating.

Your reporting officer will also provide examples to support their assessment of your performance.

4.3 During your mid-year review

The review will cover the following areas:

- Your delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How'), with each given equal weight.
- Giving and seeking feedback.
- Support and coaching required for development.
- Your self assessment and indicative performance rating.
- Next steps – a review of current objectives and agreement of any amendments, as required.

Your indicative performance rating at the mid-year review does not guarantee your performance rating at the end of the year.

4.4 Following your mid-year review

Your reporting officer will record a summary of the review on your FJP. Your FJP will be returned to you and you will be asked to confirm that the summary reflects what was discussed.

5. End-of-year review

An end-of-year review must be held between you and your reporting officer, in March / April, to discuss your performance. Your end-of-year review will include your performance over the whole performance year and may therefore cover points that have been discussed during your mid-year review.

For information on how the end-of-year review will be carried out if you are new in post, absent or due to leave the FC please refer to [Appendix 4](#).

5.1 Standards meeting

Prior to the end-of-year reviews, reporting officers and confirming officers in your unit will take part in an end-of-year standards meeting to ensure final performance ratings are appropriately and consistently applied by assessing your performance against that of your peers.

5.2 Preparing for your end-of-year review

Prior to the meeting, you should assess your own performance against both the delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and the demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How').

You should bring to the meeting:

- examples of your delivery of outcomes and targets; and
- examples of how you have demonstrated effective behaviours.

Your reporting officer will also provide examples to support their assessment of your performance.

5.3 During your end-of-year review

The review will cover the following areas:

- Your delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How'), with each given equal weight.
- Giving and seeking feedback.
- Your development over the performance year.
- Your self assessment.
- Your final end-of-year performance rating.

Your reporting office may also discuss your objectives and areas for development for the coming performance year.

5.4 Following your end-of-year review

Your reporting officer will record a summary of the review on your FJP. Your FJP will be returned to you and you will be asked to confirm that the summary reflects what was discussed.

Your confirming officer will then review and comment on your [FJP](#) and the final copy will be passed back to you.

6. Performance ratings

Your performance, based on your delivery of outcomes and targets (the 'What') and demonstration of effective behaviours (the 'How') will be assessed against three possible ratings:

- Top Performer (TP);
- Good Performer (GP); and
- Not Fully Effective (NFE).

The Performance Grid at [Appendix 3](#) provides a definition for each of these ratings and will help your reporting officer to assess your performance throughout the year and award your performance rating by plotting your performance on the grid.

6.1 Performance improvement procedure

The 'NFE' category will include those whose performance is being formally managed under [HR Policy and HR Procedure – Performance Improvement](#) at the time of the end-of-year review.

If you have successfully completed a monitoring or trial period under [HR Policy and HR Procedure – Performance Improvement](#), but you still have a live performance warning, your performance will be assessed in the normal way at the end of the performance year, taking into account your performance for the whole performance period.

7. Reasonable adjustments

Managers will consider any reasonable adjustments, where applicable, to allow you to achieve and maintain the required standards of performance and behaviour and engage fully with the performance management process. If appropriate, you should discuss this with your reporting officer.

8. Disagreements

The aim of performance management is to encourage open and honest discussion between you and your reporting officer, allowing any difficulties or disputes to be resolved at an early stage. Regular performance discussions throughout the year provide the opportunity to discuss issues informally, as they occur, and the final end-of-year assessment should not come as a surprise to you.

You should try to resolve any disagreements with your reporting officer in the first instance. Where this does not resolve the issue, your confirming officer should facilitate a discussion, speaking with you and your reporting officer individually and/or together, as early as possible. Disagreements that cannot be resolved in this way should be dealt with under [HR Policy and HR Procedure – Grievance](#).

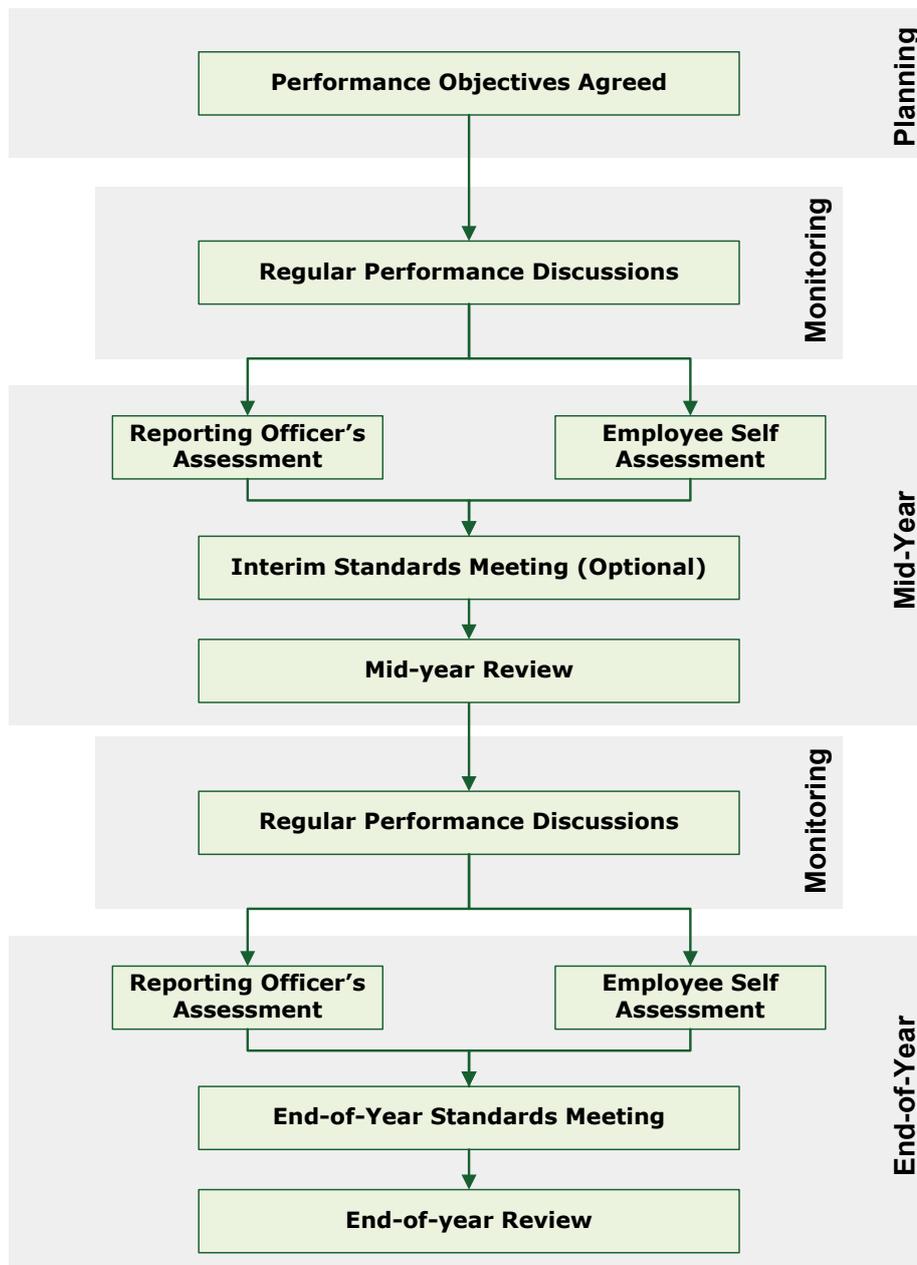
9. Documentation

All [FJP](#), documentation and spreadsheets that contain your personal data, or personal sensitive data, are confidential. They will be kept secure and handled in line with the FC's data protection and information security requirements.

You and your reporting officer should keep a copy of your most recent [FJP](#) in order to document your standard of work performance. Once an [FJP](#) is no longer recent, you are responsible for retaining a copy.

Appendix 1

Performance Management Flowchart



Appendix 2

Forward Job Plan

Personal details

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Job title: |
| Unit name: | Performance year: |

Purpose of the job

A summary description of your job in a way that others can understand.

Core competencies

The [Civil Service Competency Framework](#) has 10 competencies. From this 10, you should select 4 to 6 core competencies that you need to demonstrate in your job.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Seeing the Big Picture | 2. Changing and Improving | 3. Making Effective Decisions | 4. Leading and Communicating | 5. Collaborating and Partnering |
| 6. Building Capability for All | 7. Achieving Commercial Outcomes | 8. Delivering Value for Money | 9. Managing a Quality Service | 10. Delivering at Pace |

Key work areas

| | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Key work area: | A description of the area of work. | %: | Time spent on Key Work Area |
| Objectives | | Progress update | |
| The 'What': | The 'How': | <p>Mid-year: Employees should use this column to record their own assessment of their performance against both the 'What' (outcome and target date) and the 'How' (effective behaviours).</p> <p>End-of-year:</p> | |
| The 'What' defines what is required in terms of the outcome and target date. It must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed. | The 'How' is the effective behaviours from the Civil Service Competency Framework needed to achieve the 'What'. | | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Key work area: | | %: | |
| Objectives | | Progress update | |
| The 'What': | The 'How': | <p>Mid-year:</p> <p>End-of-year:</p> | |
| | | | |

Add or delete key work area boxes as required.

Individual learning plan

| Key work area: | Training and Development | | %: | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| Objective: | Method: | Planned timing: | Evaluation: | |
| Development need. | What you intend to do and how. | When you intend to do it. | What you have you done and the impact. | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Mid-year review

Progress against key work areas:

The reporting officer should comment here on: performance against the delivery of objectives covering both the 'What' (progress against the outcomes and targets) and the 'How' (demonstration of the effective behaviours); particular strengths and / or areas for development; and overall performance. An indicative performance rating should be given.

Date of review:**Indicative performance rating:**

End-of-year review

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Progress against key work areas: The reporting officer should comment here on: performance against the delivery of objectives covering both the 'What' (progress against both the outcomes and targets) and the 'How' (demonstration of effective behaviours); particular strengths and / or areas for development; and overall performance.</p> | |
| Date of review: | |

Reporting Officer

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Signature: | Date: | |
| | Name: | |
| | Job title: | |

Confirming Officer

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Comments on performance for the year: | | |
| Signature: | Date: | |
| | Name: | |
| | Job title: | |

Employee

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Signature: | Date: | |
| | Name: | |
| | Job title: | |

Final performance rating

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| Not Fully Effective: | | Good Performer: | | Top Performer: | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|

Appendix 3

The Performance Grid

The Performance Grid demonstrates how the extent to which you achieve the 'what' (outcomes and targets) and the 'how' (effective behaviours) of your role impacts on your performance rating:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Exceeding ↑ 'What' ↓ | <p>Good Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; behavioural standards just met Exceeding a challenging set of outcomes and targets, need further development as has only just met the full range of behaviours expected</p> | <p>Good Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; behavioural standards met Exceeded a challenging set of outcomes and targets; demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses</p> | <p>Top Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; exceeded behavioural standards Exceeded a challenging set of outcomes and targets; strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p> |
| | <p>Not Fully Effective: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; behavioural standards must improve Met outcomes and targets; must improve as has not yet demonstrated the full range of behaviours expected. Please refer to Section 6.1</p> | <p>Good Performer: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; behavioural standards met Met outcomes and targets and demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses</p> | <p>Good Performer: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; exceeded behavioural standards Met outcomes, strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p> |
| | <p>Not Fully Effective: delivery of outcomes and targets / behavioural standards must improve May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target. Must also improve as has not yet demonstrated the full range of behaviours expected. Please refer to Section 6.1</p> | <p>Not Fully Effective: delivery of outcomes and targets must improve; behavioural standards met May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target. Demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses. Please refer to Section 6.1</p> | <p>Good Performer: outcomes and targets just met; exceeded behavioural standards May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target – requires further development in this area. Has strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p> |
| | Less Than Effective ←————— | 'How' —————→ | Exceeding |

Appendix 4

Special Circumstances

If there is a change of circumstances during the performance year, the following will apply:

1. New role / reporting officer

1.1 New role at the same pay band

You will have a performance discussion with your original reporting officer. They will complete your [FJP](#) and give an indicative performance rating for the year to date. This will be passed to your new reporting officer. You will agree a new [FJP](#) with your new reporting officer.

Your full year's performance will be considered when recommending your performance rating. At the end of the performance year, your performance will be assessed in your current role, but with input from your previous reporting officer as appropriate.

1.2 New role in a new pay band or TRA

You will have a performance discussion with your original reporting officer. They will complete your [FJP](#) and give an indicative performance rating for the year to date. This will be passed to your new reporting officer. You will agree a new [FJP](#) with your new reporting officer.

Your full year's performance will be considered when recommending your performance rating. At the end of the performance year, your performance will be assessed in the role where you have spent the greatest part of the performance year, with input from other reporting officers as appropriate.

1.3 Secondment or loan to the FC

If you assume the FC's terms and conditions of employment, this will normally include being managed by your FC reporting officer using the FC's performance management system. If you retain the terms and conditions of your home Department or organisation, you will continue to be assessed by your original manager under their performance management system, with input from your FC reporting officer.

1.4 Secondment or loan out of the FC

If you assume the new organisation's terms and conditions of employment, this will normally include being managed by their performance management system. If you

retain your FC terms and conditions, you will continue to be assessed by your FC reporting officer under the FC performance management system, with input from your line manager in the new organisation.

1.5 New reporting officer

You will have a performance discussion with your original reporting officer to summarise your performance to date, which will form part of a handover to your new reporting officer. Your existing objectives and competencies may remain the same or your new reporting officer may wish to amend these during a performance discussion with you.

2. Absence

2.1 Less than 60 working days attendance (pro-rata)

At the end of the performance year, your performance will not be assessed and your [FJP](#) will not be completed.

2.2 Maternity / adoption leave

If you have more than 60 working days performance (pro-rata) in the performance year, your performance will be assessed and your [FJP](#) completed. When assessing your performance, your reporting officer will consider the effect the period of leave has had on your objectives.

If you have less than 60 working days performance (pro-rata) in the performance year due to a period of maternity / adoption leave, your [FJP](#) will not be completed at the end of the performance year. You will automatically receive a 'GP' rating.

2.3 Extended period of sickness

Your objectives will be reviewed when you return to work and adjusted if required.

If you have more than 60 working days performance (pro-rata) in the performance year, your performance will be assessed and your [FJP](#) completed. When assessing your performance, your reporting officer will consider the effect the period of sickness has had on your objectives.

If you have less than 60 working days performance (pro-rata) in the performance year due to pregnancy or a disability covered by the Equality Act 2010, your [FJP](#) will not be completed at the end of the performance year. You will automatically receive a 'GP' rating.

2.4 Extended period of special leave

Your objectives will be reviewed when you return to work to ensure they are still relevant. If you have undertaken any formal or informal training during your leave, your reporting officer may wish to discuss this with you and explore how to make best use of the any transferable skills you have acquired. When assessing your performance, your reporting officer will consider the effect the period of leave has had on your objectives.

2.5 Absent reporting officer

The reporting officer role will be undertaken by your confirming officer or an appropriate nominee. Where your confirming officer performs this role, their role as confirming officer will be undertaken by their reporting officer or an appropriate nominee.

3. Leaving the FC

3.1 Transferring to another Government Department

You will have a performance discussion with your original reporting officer. They will complete your [FJP](#) and give an indicative performance rating for the year to date. This will be passed to your new manager upon arrival at your new Department.

3.2 Retiring, resigning or dismissal

If you retire, resign or are dismissed before 31 March, your performance will not be assessed and your [FJP](#) will not be completed. However, if you are dismissed under [HR Policy and HR Procedure – Performance Improvement](#), you will automatically receive a 'NFE' rating.