

Guideline

DECS 0911001-2

Performance and Development

The *Performance and Development Guideline* is part of the *Performance and Development Policy*. It promotes performance and development as an ongoing process that connects the work of all employees to organisational planning, strategic objectives and relevant performance standards through individualised planning, learning and accountability programs.

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Related Legislation/Applicable Section of Legislation	Education Act 1972/Section 12 Public Sector Act 2009/Section 8 The Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	Performance and Development Policy Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline
Replaces	Performance and Development Guideline 2011
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REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision Description
September 2011	1.0	Initial document
July 2014	1.1	Minor changes to existing references and addition of language relevant to Families SA employees

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1. TITLE

- Performance and Development Guideline.

2. PURPOSE

- The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is committed to attracting, retaining, developing and recognising a high performing workforce.
- The *Performance and Development Policy* promotes and supports a culture that involves individuals and teams in transforming the capacity of DECD to provide quality services in education and care to children and young people and their families. Its continuous cycle of performance planning, professional learning, feedback, recognition and accountability measures supports the currency and continuous improvement of our highly skilled and engaged workforce.
- The ultimate goal of the policy is to maximise learning, wellbeing and standards of achievement for children and students in DECD services, preschools and schools.

3. SCOPE

- The *Performance and Development Guideline* supports all employees to provide and support quality learning and care for the children and students of South Australia by:
 - defining and clarifying performance expectations and behavioural standards
 - identifying performance objectives through performance planning
 - supporting achievement of performance objectives through professional learning
 - reviewing performance against agreed performance expectations and objectives
 - building on strengths and attending to developmental needs
 - recognising contributions and achievements
 - providing guidance, encouragement and regular feedback.

4. GUIDELINE DETAIL

- The *Performance and Development Guideline* is designed to ensure all employees are supported by ongoing processes of performance planning, professional learning, feedback and review. These processes connect the work of all employees to organisational planning, strategic objectives and relevant performance standards.

4.1. Principles

- The *Performance and Development Guideline* is underpinned by:
 - fairness, equity and trust
 - mutual respect, understanding and responsibility
 - openness to learning and change
 - performance processes that are integrated into day-to-day workplace practices
 - accountability through professional conversations and authentic feedback
 - recognition and reward
 - work-life balance
 - supportive and safe working environments
 - access to effective and relevant professional development
 - commitment to improve outcomes for children and students.

4.2. Performance Expectations

- Performance expectations are established standards of performance including ethical and behavioural standards. Sources of performance expectations may include:
 - [*Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders*](#)
 - [*Australian Professional Standard for Principals*](#)
 - [*Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*](#)
 - [*Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework*](#)
 - [*Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector*](#)
 - [*Competency Framework for the South Australian Public Sector \(ASO1 – ASO8\)*](#)
 - [*Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People*](#)
 - [*South Australian Executive Service \(SAES\) Competency Framework*](#)
 - Departmental policies, procedures or guidelines
 - Solution based casework approach (Families SA only)
 - Job and Person Specifications/Role Descriptors (and similar)
 - relevant strategic plans, improvement plans, or values statements
 - policies, procedures, frameworks or agreements that apply to relevant workplace operations.
 - previously established Performance and Development Plans

4.3. Confidentiality

- Performance and development is a positive and collaborative process that includes the open exchange of feedback between colleagues, shared learning activities and recognition and celebration of contributions and achievements. It does, however, require its participants to limit access to, and/or disclosure of, personal information where necessary, to ensure the rights and reputation of others.

4.4. Performance and Development Planning

- Performance and Development planning is a cycle of individual performance planning, professional learning and performance review that supports individual performance improvement. Leaders and employees create and sustain a performance culture, by initiating a range of activities that may include structured opportunities to:
 - share learning and practice
 - exchange authentic feedback among colleagues
 - critically reflect on performance
 - recognise and celebrate contributions and achievements.
- The primary point of engagement for performance and development planning is a performance conversation between employee and leader. Performance conversations are an opportunity to confirm performance expectations and behavioural standards, seek and receive feedback, provide evidence, and seek support, clarification and direction.
- In preparation for a performance conversation, participants prepare any necessary documentation, and clarify how the conversation will be conducted. Documentation for a performance conversation might include:
 - previously established Performance and Development Plans for review
 - a draft [Performance and Development Plan](#) to document future plans
 - relevant performance related evidence
 - relevant performance expectations¹

4.4.1. Performance Planning

- Performance planning focuses on identifying performance objectives² that:
 - are challenging and encourage creativity and innovation
 - align with relevant performance expectations, such as professional standards or job and person specifications
 - align with, and support the achievement of, organisational priorities
 - provide focus and opportunity for career aspirations
 - take account of the range and level of the employee's responsibilities.
- Well defined and effective performance objectives are SMART:
 - **Specific** – explicit, clear and easy to understand
 - **Measurable** – through quantitative and qualitative data
 - **Achievable** – realistic and require a commitment to achieve
 - **Relevant** – related to performance expectations and personal or organisational goals
 - **Time-bound** – have clear timeframes for achievement.

¹ Does the Job and Person Specification (if applicable) reflect current expectations of the role or does it need review? Refer to [Human Resources](#) for advice and support.

² Performance objectives should be agreed between the employee and leader, through open and honest negotiations. However, when such agreement cannot be reached, or when managing instances of unsatisfactory performance, leaders have the authority to determine performance objectives, and establish timeframes for expected achievement.

4.4.2. Professional Learning

- Professional learning caters for and identifies the employee's learning needs as identified through the performance planning process.
- Leaders and employees work together to identify professional learning activities that:
 - support the achievement of established performance objectives
 - further develop knowledge, skills and capabilities
 - build on existing strengths and areas for development
 - support career aspirations.
- Professional learning, planning and documentation should consider the resources required for identified professional learning activities. It may also include job embedded learning opportunities such as work shadowing, peer observation and collaborative inquiry processes.

4.4.3. Performance Review

- The performance review process identifies the contributions, achievements and measures of successful performance of the employee during the preceding review period, as well as strengths and areas for development.
- It is an opportunity to give and receive feedback about performance. Feedback should be evidence and strength based, explicit, objective and gathered from multiple sources. The performance review is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate contributions and achievements.
- It can also be used to reflect on successes, objectives that may not have been met, and how things may have been done differently. An honest and supportive performance review provides a significant learning opportunity for future activities.
- At the performance review, leaders can discuss with all employees their responsibilities in relation to the [Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector](#). Authentic two-way feedback should be sought and exchanged openly and respectfully between leader and employee in the spirit of learning and improvement.
- Note: Non-achievement of performance objectives does not necessarily equate to unsatisfactory performance, because employees are encouraged to set performance objectives that are beyond a minimum standard and that challenge and extend their practice. In addition, changing priorities and unforeseeable circumstances may mean a successful performance review includes non-achievement of some identified performance objectives.

4.4.4. Finalise the Performance and Development Plan

- When both leader and employee are satisfied with the outcomes of the performance conversation they agree to a Performance and Development Plan, and establish a timeframe for the next performance conversation.

4.4.5. Ongoing Support and Feedback

- Performance conversations are not a one-off event. Coaching, support, training, feedback and recognition provided on a regular basis throughout the life of a Performance and Development Plan are essential to achieving performance improvement.

4.5. Unsatisfactory Performance

- Unsatisfactory performance occurs when an employee is not performing the duties of their role to the required standard, or otherwise is not performing in a satisfactory manner.
- Performance and development will, from time to time, identify areas of unsatisfactory performance. In most instances it will relate to an isolated element of an employee's performance rather than the totality of their performance.
- If it becomes apparent to a leader that an element of an employee's performance is unsatisfactory the leader:
 - in a timely manner, advises the employee as to how their performance is alleged to be unsatisfactory, providing evidence and specific examples as appropriate
 - gives the employee reasonable opportunity to respond and provide details of any mitigating circumstances (e.g. personal issues, medical conditions, workplace conflict, workload issues)
 - provides the employee with reasonable support and opportunity to remedy the unsatisfactory performance (i.e. training, mentoring, counselling, infrastructure)
 - conducts regular meetings as required to monitor, discuss and document progress.
- All meetings and discussions relating to unsatisfactory performance are confidential and must be documented and maintained by the leader in a confidential file. Any other evidence relevant to the unsatisfactory performance, including correspondence to and from the employee subject to the managing unsatisfactory process (including emails), must also be stored in the confidential file and provided to the employee.
- Most instances of unsatisfactory performance will be remedied following a supportive, targeted management process particularly when issues are addressed by leaders as soon as they become evident. If, with reasonable support and opportunity, the unsatisfactory performance continues then it should be managed in accordance with the *Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline*.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Authority/Responsibility for
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining a proper standard of efficiency and competency in the teaching service and across the organisation • establishing and administering effective performance management and development systems across the department.
Leaders ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirming performance expectations and behavioural standards to be achieved by employees • establishing and maintaining an individualised planning, learning and accountability program for each employee (e.g. Performance and Development Plan) • conducting performance conversations and reviewing individual programs regularly • working collaboratively with employees to support their performance and development programs • maintaining confidential written records of ongoing performance and development

³ For the purposes of this guideline the term 'leader' refers to any employee with line management responsibilities. All leaders are also employees in the context of their own performance.

	<p>activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading a safe and supportive working environment • knowing the work of all employees and regularly observing their practice • having consideration for employee workload when creating and reviewing performance and development programs • acknowledging the contribution of all employees and providing regular encouragement and authentic feedback • incorporating employees' relevant career aspirations into their performance and development programs • ensuring appropriate training and support is provided to employees with line management responsibilities • identifying and managing instances of unsatisfactory performance • maintaining confidentiality where it is necessary to ensure the rights and reputation of employees in their area of responsibility.
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying performance objectives that contribute to personal and organisational goals • critically reflecting on their own performance and identifying relevant learning goals • being accountable for the performance expectations and behavioural standards that relate to their role/duties • striving to achieve established performance objectives within established timeframes • clearly identifying and communicating any barriers to the achievement of performance expectations and required standards with their leader • establishing and maintaining meaningful professional relationships and collaborative networks • sharing learning and practice with others • seeking and receiving authentic feedback openly and respectfully with colleagues • maintaining confidentiality where it is necessary to ensure the rights and reputation of other employees • contributing to a safe and supportive working environment.

6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- **When:** Review due July 2016.
- **How:** Ongoing consultation occurs with the field through professional learning programs, the DECD website, and consultation with external stakeholders
- **Whom:** Director, Workforce Development
- **Reporting:** The Workforce Development Annual Report includes relevant data, records of progress and initiatives in performance and development policy and practice. Implementation is led by the Performance Standards and Certification Team within Human Resources and Workforce Development.

7. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Performance	In the context of employment, the term 'performance' includes conduct and behaviour as well as the execution of the technical duties of a role. Leaders should not artificially separate employees' performance of technical duties from their overall conduct.
Performance expectations	Performance expectations are established standards of performance including professional, ethical and behavioural standards.
Unsatisfactory performance	Unsatisfactory performance occurs when an employee is not performing the duties of their role to the required standard or otherwise is not performing in a satisfactory manner. Performance expectations include employees' technical duties and the totality of conduct in connection with their role as a public sector employee.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- DECD Performance and Development Policy
- DECD Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline
- [Performance and Development Planning - Template](#)
- [Performance and Development Planning – A Guide](#)

9. REFERENCES

- [Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders](#)
- [Australian Professional Standards for Principals](#)
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)
- [Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework](#)
- [Children's Services Act 1985](#)
- [Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector](#)
- [Competency Framework for the South Australian Public Sector \(ASO1 – ASO8\)](#)
- [Commissioner for Public Sector Employment Guideline: Management of Unsatisfactory Performance \(including Misconduct\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Education Act 1972](#)
- [Education Regulations 2012](#)
- [Fair Work Act 1994](#)

- [Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People](#)
- [Public Sector \(Honesty and Accountability\) Act 1995](#)
- [Public Sector Act 2009](#)
- [Solution Based Casework Approach](#) (Families SA only)
- [South Australian Executive Service \(SAES\) Competency Framework](#)
- [Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#)
- Relevant industrial instruments.