Performance for Growth

Policy Owner: UCD HR   **Approved by UMT on 29 May 2018**

1. Purpose

Performance for Growth is UCD's framework for facilitating every employee of the University to contribute fully to UCD's mission and vision and to achieve their full potential. The framework contains elements of individual and career development and performance management. The Performance for Growth (P4G) policy describes the context for the P4G framework in UCD, how this framework supports the development of individuals and the University Strategy, the key elements of the process and the roles and responsibilities of all parties.

The P4G framework is one of the key mechanisms through which UCD gives effect to the UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (draft).

2. Definitions

Reviewee: Everyone working in UCD defined to be within the scope of the policy will be a Reviewee.

Reviewer: The Reviewer of an individual is normally their direct Line Manager, although Alternate Reviewers may be appointed in certain circumstances. A Reviewer supports their Reviewees in the achievement of goals and objectives aligned with their roles and the needs of the School/Unit and University, provides them with meaningful feedback, and helps them to realise their potential and to explore their career options.

Organisational Unit: Any College, School, Institute, Administrative Unit etc. of the University of which the Reviewee is a member.

Objectives: A description of the contributions agreed between Reviewer and Reviewee, aligned with the UCD Strategy and the relevant Organisational Unit plans which the Reviewee plans to deliver during the coming year/years.

Development Plan: A set of development activities focussed on skills, competencies or behaviours that support performance in the current role, as well as consideration for future career planning. These are agreed between the Reviewer and Reviewee following a developmental conversation.

3.   Scope

The P4G Framework applies to all permanent employees of UCD. It also applies to all temporary employees, except where contracts are of less than one year in duration, or where they are covered by the Research Skills and Career Development Framework. However, employees on long term sick leave, maternity leave or career break are exempt from the process while on leave.

This Policy operates parallel with other University policies and procedures.

4.   Principles

P4G is underpinned by our commitment to ensure all of our employees should have the opportunity to:

i)   Know what is expected of them in their role, both in terms of what they will do and how they carry out their work aligned with UCD Values;
ii) Understand how their role contributes to the success of their School/Unit and the University as a whole;
iii) Reflect on their contribution and any challenges they are experiencing, and receive feedback on their contribution in a supportive and constructive manner;
iv) Discuss and be supported in their development needs for their current role and for their career aspirations;
v)   Contribute to an inclusive workplace culture where diversity and equality are valued;

P4G provides the opportunity for all UCD employees to have one formal annual conversation with their Line Manager, Head of School or Alternate Reviewer specifically tailored to achieve the outcomes listed above.

P4G is a key activity for facilitating every employee of the University to contribute fully to UCD's mission and vision and to achieve their full potential. It is informed by and supports the University Strategy generally, and in particular Strategic Objective 5 to 'attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff'.

Nothing in this policy will be used to restrict academic freedom.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Reviewers:
The role of the Reviewer is to provide context to the Reviewee for how their role and contribution links to the strategy and goals of the School/Unit and to ensure that the outcomes of the process are positive for the performance of both the Reviewee and UCD. Their responsibilities are to:

- Have completed Reviewer and unconscious bias training;
- Enquire, listen and provide to the Reviewee, meaningful and constructive feedback recognising the full spectrum of performance, together with guidance and support for enhancing performance;
- Agree clear and appropriate objectives for the coming year(s) with the Reviewee;
- Discuss how these will contribute to equality, diversity and inclusion, where appropriate, and be delivered in alignment with the UCD Values;
- Suggest development activities that will support the Reviewee's ongoing performance in their current role and opportunities that will contribute to their career development, where appropriate;
- Consider how any identified constraints can be overcome.

All policies and policy related documents and forms are subject to amendment. Please refer to the UCD Governance Document Library website for the official, most recent version.

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Reviewees:

The role of the Reviewee is to reflect on their contribution to UCD, consider their contribution for the coming year(s), and engage positively with their Reviewer to gain clarity on their role and contribution, feedback on their performance, and support and insight for their development and career options. Specific responsibilities are to:

- Engage in P4G training supports, and complete unconscious bias training;
- Reflect on their performance;
- Set objectives for the coming year(s) which support the key priorities of their School/Unit;
- Reflect on how they will deliver these objectives in alignment with the UCD Values;
- Consider carefully feedback from their Reviewer, and use this feedback to inform a development plan which supports continued performance in their current role and contributes to career development, where appropriate;
- Consider other issues which are or may affect performance or contribution;
- Reflect on how they contribute to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Participate in relevant development activities, including formal training, where appropriate.

6.   Process

6.1 Assignment of Reviewers

Each employee within the scope of this policy will be assigned a P4G Reviewer. Normally this Reviewer will be the direct Line Manager of the employee.

The Head of each Organisational Unit will inform each Reviewee within their unit of their assigned Reviewer at least 4 weeks before the commencement of the annual review cycle.

If for a valid reason, other than a conflict of interest, a Reviewee does not wish to be reviewed by their assigned Reviewer, they may discuss this with their Head of School, Line Manager or HR Partner.

In the case of Faculty members, the Line Manager and hence Reviewer is normally the Head of School. However, in some Schools the number of Faculty members may be too large for the Head of School to reasonably review. For Schools with greater than circa 12 faculty members, a Head of School may delegate some reviews to other senior faculty members within the School, for example Heads of Sections. Nevertheless, the Head of School retains ultimate responsibility for the P4G reviews conducted within their school. As a guiding principle, the Head of School will ensure the Reviewer panel complies with the University Policy on Gender Representation. The Head of School will ensure all Reviewers have completed unconscious bias training. In assigning Reviewers, the Head of School will consult with each Reviewer during the assignment process in order to avoid any conflict of interest. Potential Reviewers must divulge any situation that could lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

6.2 Conflict of Interest

A Reviewer will not be assigned to a Reviewee where there is a direct conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is a set of circumstances, relationships or events that could impact on the objectivity of the Reviewer causing them to treat the Reviewee more or less favourably than would otherwise be the case, for example through a family relationship, through marriage (civil or common law) or civil partnership, through any romantic or sexual relationship, current or past, or through any serious personal or professional conflict, with the Reviewee.

In the case that the Reviewee considers that their proposed Reviewer has a conflict of interest, the Reviewee must inform their Head as soon as possible and at maximum within two weeks of being

informed of their proposed Reviewer. In the case that the conflict of interest exists with their Head of Organisational Unit, the Reviewee should inform the direct Line Manager of the Head, also within two weeks of notification.

When a Head of Unit or Line Manager is informed by a Reviewee of a potential conflict of interest with their proposed Reviewer, they shall determine whether in their opinion a conflict does indeed exist, and if so shall assign another appropriate Reviewer after consultation with that Reviewer. The Reviewee will be informed within one week of the assignment of an Alternate Reviewer, or of reasons why a conflict of interest is not seen to exist.

If the Reviewee is still convinced that a conflict of interest exists, they may make an appeal to the member of UMT in whose line of management they fall. If this individual has already made a determination in the same case the appeal will be to another member of the UMT, which will be determined by contacting the relevant HR Partner who will raise it with the HR Director. Such appeals will be addressed within a week, and the decision of the UMT member as to an appropriate Reviewer will be final. If the potential conflict of interest is with a UMT member, the appeal shall be made to the President, and in the case of a conflict of interest with the President, to the Chair of the Governing Authority.

6.3 Attendees at the P4G review meeting

In normal circumstances the only attendees at a P4G meeting are the Reviewer and Reviewee. The employee has the right to be accompanied either by a UCD colleague or by a representative from their union (if applicable) at their meeting, by informing the Reviewer at least one week in advance of the date of the meeting. If a Reviewee is accompanied by a colleague or recognised Trade Union representative, the Reviewer may be accompanied by the relevant HR Partner.

6.4 Time and place of the P4G review meeting

Review meetings will be conducted between mid-April and end-June each year, at a time which is mutually suitable for the Reviewee and the Reviewer. If the Reviewee is on sick leave, maternity leave or research sabbatical leave during this entire period, the review meeting should be scheduled as soon as possible after the Reviewee returns to normal duties.

The Reviewer will make contact with each of their assigned Reviewees before the commencement of the review cycle in order to arrange the meetings. Both Reviewer and Reviewee will show flexibility to find a suitable time for the meeting. If no agreement is reached on a meeting time, the situation shall be escalated to the Line Manager of the Reviewer, who will resolve the issue either by directing attendance at a particular time or by approving a meeting be held outside the normal time limits.

The meeting should occur in a quiet, private location without distractions. Ideally this will be a neutral meeting room but may be the office of the Reviewer or Reviewee if mutually agreed.

6.5 Preparation for the P4G review meeting

The online P4G system (the system) is the repository in which P4G records are held.

The P4G review form on the system will include the following sections:

1. Significant achievements over the past year;
2. Significant challenges over the past year;
3. Reviewer's comments on achievements and challenges;
4. Objectives for the coming year;
5. Development plan;

At least one week prior to the review meeting the Reviewee shall complete sections 1 and 2. For faculty members achievements will be listed under the headings Research, Scholarship and Innovation; Teaching and Learning; and Leadership and Contribution.

With the exception of the first year an employee undertakes a P4G review, the Reviewee will refer to the prior year objectives and development plan when completing these sections. In the achievements section the Reviewee will list the objectives set and achieved and the components of the development plan completed. In the challenges section the Reviewee will list the objectives set but not achieved and the components of the development plan not completed, explaining the circumstances.

The Reviewee should also endeavour to draft their objectives and development plan for the coming year (sections 4 and 5), although these sections may be completed during the review meeting. For faculty members objectives should be specified under the headings Research, Scholarship and Innovation; Teaching and Learning; and Leadership and Contribution.

In the normal course of events when faculty 'share' their P4G record, this will also give their Reviewer access to see the Faculty Development Workspace until the review is marked as completed (this does not give access to any Faculty Promotion Application currently being drafted). This will enable the Reviewer to review their achievements in terms of research output, research grant capture, PhD student supervision, module teaching, etc.

Faculty have the option to select to "Opt-out", of sharing the Faculty Development Workspace. Where they exercise that option, they should arrange to furnish their Reviewer with similar relevant information to inform their P4G conversation. This should be shared at the same time as the draft form and may be included in that form.

Before the date of the review meeting the Reviewer will read and consider the review form submitted by the Reviewee, and, in the case of faculty members, this will enable the Reviewer to review their achievements in terms of research output, research grant capture, PhD student supervision, module teaching, etc. At their discretion, the Reviewer may draft initial comments prior to the meeting.

6.6 Format of the P4G review meeting

A P4G meeting commences with a discussion of the achievements and challenges of the past year from the perspective of the Reviewee, with reference to the objectives and development plan at the previous year's review where available. The Reviewer gives feedback on this performance, makes suggestions in terms of overcoming challenges, and notes any constraints on the Reviewee's performance which are outside of their control. Feedback addresses both *what* has been achieved and *how* this has been achieved (with reference to the UCD values). This feedback is entered directly into section 3 of the P4G online review form by the Reviewer during the meeting.

The Reviewer then describes the objectives of the University and/or the objectives of the School/Unit which are relevant to the role of the Reviewee, and discusses the plan of the School/Unit with the Reviewee.

In this context the Reviewer and Reviewee will, through discussion, decide on an appropriate set of objectives and goals for the Reviewee for the coming year. Both what is to be achieved and how this is to be achieved (with reference to the UCD values) will be discussed. The Reviewee edits section 4 of the P4G online review form during the meeting (which may contain the objectives previously drafted by the Reviewee) to reflect the agreed objectives.

The Reviewer and Reviewee then discuss the Reviewees longer term career aspirations, and the Reviewer may give informal guidance in terms of opportunities and development needs.

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Finally, in the context of the Reviewee's performance, objectives and longer-term aspirations, the Reviewer and Reviewee together formulate a development plan for the Reviewee which at least covers the coming year but which also may take a longer perspective. The Reviewee edits section 5 of the P4G online review form during the meeting (which may contain a development plan drafted by the Reviewee) to reflect the agreed development plan.

Ordinarily the Reviewer then signs off the P4G online review form as complete, and it is then finalised. However, in some situations it may be appropriate to allow a short period of further reflection before the form is signed as complete, and where the Reviewer and Reviewee agree to this occurring it should still be finalised within a working week.

6.7 Access to P4G reports

The plan for the current cycle will be accessible by the Reviewee and the Reviewer. In order to ensure the quality of the process is consistent and the agreed outputs are acted upon the agreed completed form will be accessible by the Line Manager of the Reviewer. Where the Alternate Reviewer model is being used, ordinarily in Schools due to the number of Reviewees, the College Principal will also have the same access as the Head of School.

The full P4G review report for each Reviewee is retained on the system until the P4G review report for the following year is completed, to allow reference to the prior year report during the process. After this time the Reviewee may choose to remove the report from the system. However, the system also provides the capability for Reviewees to retain their P4G reports for as long as they remain employed by UCD, forming a record of their career development. Employees may choose to give UCD permission to use their prior reports on an anonymised basis for research[1] purposes through ticking a box on the system. If this box is not ticked, UCD will make no use whatsoever of prior reports left on the system.

7.   Related documents

P4G Website including – FAQs, Process Diagrams, Guidelines

Managing for Success Toolkit

Performance Improvement Process

UCD Strategy 2015 – 2020

P4G UCD and Trade Union Agreement

8.   Version history

[Provide details with regard to any updates/amendments made to the policy.]

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[1] The P4G online system will include a facility in the future, whereby individuals may choose to indicate consent for UCD to use their records in an anonymised form for research purposes, such as longitudinal surveys. Details relating to this will be described separately in the system and/or be updated upon in direct communication to all employees from time to time and will at all times comply with GDPR or related legislation.