

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Section B – Non Contractual Policy

Performance Improvement Process

It is our policy to ensure that you achieve and maintain a high standard of performance in your work.

There may however be times when your performance does not meet the standards that we expect. This policy sets out the way we will manage you if this situation arises. A Performance Improvement Process (PIP) is a way for us to formally communicate to you that your performance is not up to standard, as well as a way for us to help you. Ultimately, we want your performance to improve.

If we do not see any improvement, we may shorten the PIP. Similarly, if we feel that you are showing signs of improvement but have not had enough opportunity to improve, we may lengthen the PIP. This is entirely at our discretion.

Process

Whilst the final stage of the PIP is similar to our Disciplinary Procedure, under-performance is not to be confused with misconduct.

It may be necessary to begin a PIP:

- after your annual appraisal if your performance is rated as being significantly below or below expectations; or
- at any other time if we identify your performance as being below the required standards.

A PIP aims to ensure that:

- you are aware of the areas in which you have not met the required performance standards
- you are given fair and achievable standards that are clearly communicated to you;
- you are given a fair opportunity to reach those standards;
- your performance is closely monitored;
- you are given appropriate training or assistance to help you meet those standards;
- you are warned when you are not improving adequately.

A PIP normally follows a 4-stage approach although we reserve the right to vary or omit any of the stages as necessary. Please note that in serious cases of gross negligence or in any case of an employee who has not yet completed their probationary period, dismissal without previous warnings may be appropriate.

At all stages, you will be:

- given an explanation as to why your performance is not satisfactory; and
- allowed to explain why you have been underperforming;
- informed of the consequences of not improving;

Stage 1 – informal counselling

Your Line Manager will normally take an informal approach to improving your performance in the first instance.

Your Line Manager will explain what you need to do to improve your performance and set a review period within which you have to improve. Should you not improve as required, the formal stages of the procedure will be followed, as set out below.

Stage 2 – first performance meeting

If your performance is unsatisfactory and informal steps have either failed to resolve the situation or are not appropriate, your Line Manager will hold a first formal meeting with you to discuss your performance.

We will write to you setting out the allegations/circumstances leading us to contemplate taking this level of action against you and invite you to a meeting to discuss your performance and your failure to improve.

If you do not provide an adequate explanation for your poor performance your Line Manager will issue with you a first written warning and written objectives setting out:

- the areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- targets for improvement;
- any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view to improving performance;
- a time-scale to review;
- the potential consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory performance.

You have the right to appeal the first written warning if you are not satisfied with it. Please see the appeal process below.

Subject to any appeal, the warning will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period after which time it will be disregarded for the purposes of the PIP.

Stage 3 – second performance meeting

If your performance does not improve within the review period set at stage 2, or if there are further instances of poor performance while your first written warning is still active, your Line Manager will invite you to a second meeting to discuss this.

We will write to you setting out the allegations/circumstances leading us to contemplate taking this level of action against you and invite you to a meeting to discuss your performance and your failure to improve.

If you do not provide an adequate explanation for your poor performance, your Line Manager will issue you with a final written warning and written objectives setting out:

- the areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- targets for improvement;
- any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view to improving performance;
- a time-scale to review;
- the potential consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory performance.

You have the right to appeal the final written warning if you are not satisfied with it. Please see the appeal process below.

Subject to any appeal, the warning will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period after which time it will be disregarded for the purposes of the PIP.

Stage 4 – dismissal or redeployment

If your performance does not improve within the further review period set at stage 3 or there are further instances of poor performance while your final written warning is still active then we may consider a range of options including:

- dismissing you
- redeploying you into another suitable job at the same or a lower grade extending an active final written warning and setting a further review period (in exceptional cases where we believe a substantial improvement is likely within the review period).

We will write to you setting out the allegations/circumstances leading us to contemplate taking this level of action against you and invite you to a meeting to discuss your performance and your failure to improve.

If there are no satisfactory reasons for your poor performance, we will inform you of the following:

- our written decision; and
- the right to appeal against the decision if you are not satisfied with it.

Appeal

If you wish to appeal against any decision under the PIP, you must inform us in writing within 5 working days of receiving the decision, fully setting out your grounds of appeal.

We will then write to you and invite you to attend a further meeting, which you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Please note that the appeal meeting need not take place before the dismissal or disciplinary action takes effect.

Where reasonably practicable, the appeal will be dealt with by a more senior manager than attended the first meeting who is both independent and who was not involved in the original decision.

After the appeal meeting we will inform you of its decision in writing. This decision will be final.

Right to be accompanied

You have the right to be accompanied at Stages two to four and to any appeal meeting by:

- a fellow worker; or
- a trade union representative.

We reserve the right to refuse the presence of any companion whose presence would prejudice the hearing or cause a conflict of interest.