

Positive performance management

Human Resources Policy G9 (QH-POL-189)

Purpose

To support individual, team and organisational performance and help managers understand how to apply the positive performance management principles outlined in section 85 of the *Public Sector Act 2022* (PS Act) by:

- proactively managing the work performance and personal conduct of employees
- constructively engaging with employees to identify development and training opportunities, improve work performance and build expertise
- taking prompt and appropriate action to address any unacceptable work performance or personal conduct that arises
- identifying whether a performance improvement plan needs to be initiated.

Application

- This policy applies to all employees working for Queensland Health (excluding the chief executive and health executives) in the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services.
- This policy does not apply to Queensland Ambulance Service employees. Instead, Queensland Ambulance Service employees are to refer to their local policy/procedure.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the PS Act and the Public Sector Commissioner *Directive No. 02/24 - Positive performance management*.

Delegation

The 'delegate' is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority

- Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011
- Human Rights Act 2019
- Public Sector Regulation 2023
- Public Sector Act 2022
- Public Sector Ethics Act 1994
- Industrial Relations Act 2016
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Information Privacy Act 2009
- Directive No. 02/24 - Positive performance management
- Directive No. 04/23 - Appeals
- Directive No. 05/23 - Discipline
- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service
- Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work: Code of Practice 2022

Related policy or documents

- Recruitment and selection HR Policy B1 (QH-POL-212)
- Probation HR Policy B2 (QH-POL-197)
- Health, safety and wellbeing policy HR Policy W1 (QH-POL-401)
- Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3 (QH-POL-210)
- Health practitioners and dental officers – professional development allowance and leave HR Policy C42 (QH-POL-146)
- Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence HR Policy C73 (QH-POL-391)
- Discipline HR Policy E10 (QH-POL-124)
- Individual employee grievances HR Policy E12 (QH-POL-140)
- Reasonable Adjustment HR Policy G3 (QH-POL-210)
- Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) HR Policy G10 (QH-POL-223)
- Queensland Health: Reframing the Relationship Plan 2024/2025 (refer <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/groups/atsihealth/reframing-the-relationship>)
- Role of an employee support person in the Queensland Government (refer <https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/recruitment-performance-and-career/employee-management-conduct-and-performance/conduct-and-performance/employee-support-person>)
- Public sector appeal guide: Queensland Industrial Relations Commission

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Policy

1 Introduction

Queensland Health is committed to creating a positive, supportive and encouraging environment in which employees can operate effectively, achieve success and satisfaction in their work and contribute to the achievement of Queensland Health's strategic and operational priorities.

Queensland Health supports accessibility and inclusion and promotes cultural safety when undertaking processes or applying provisions under this policy.

Queensland Health is committed to ensuring best practice human resource management is promoted by applying the positive performance management principles set out in section 85 of the PS Act.

When managing employees, the positive performance management principles will be implemented by:

- pro-actively managing the personal and professional development of employees with a view to continuously building expertise within the public sector
- ensuring regular and constructive communication between managers and employees about their work performance and the personal conduct principles (see **Attachment 1**)
- recognising the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees and valuing their contributions
- recognising performance that meets or exceeds expectations
- providing opportunities and support to employees for improving performance
- continuously improving performance by providing employees with appropriate training and development
- identifying at the earliest possible stage performance that does not meet expectations
- integrating these principles into management practices and policies.

Further information to help managers understand how to apply the positive performance management principles is provided in **Attachment 2**.

How Queensland Health manages its employees is also guided by:

- the public sector principles (see **Attachment 3**)
- section 32 of the PS Act (what is a culture of respect and inclusion)
- section 33 of the PS Act (duty to promote and support a culture of respect and inclusion).

2 Performance development conversations

A fundamental component of positive performance management is achieved through mutual responsibility and participation in regular and constructive communication between managers and employees.

Key elements of performance development conversations are as follows:

1. **Establish and clarify expectations** – Establish and clarify performance expectations, including through the use of performance development plans, ensuring that employees understand what success is within the context of their role. The expected level of work performance must be relevant and appropriate to the role and the employee's level of experience.
2. **Regular conversations** – Conduct regular, two-way, constructive conversations between managers and employees to discuss work and what supports may be required, provide and receive feedback and plan development.
3. **Plan and review** – Regularly review work plans, progress and realign performance priorities to embrace change and ensure that work is aligned to overall objectives.
4. **Develop** – Identify and develop individual capabilities to meet current and future organisational needs, and provide opportunities and support to employees to continuously improve performance e.g. development and training opportunities.
5. **Recognise** – Recognise the strengths, circumstances and work performance that meets or exceeds expectations and celebrate performance achievements to support a culture where our people feel valued, respected and appreciated.
6. **Resolve performance issues** – Promptly communicate and document any gaps between actual and expected work performance of an employee and allow reasonable time for the employee to self-correct. Provide feedback in a timely manner as part of regular conversations to resolve issues and avoid potential escalation to formal performance management procedures.

2.1 Probationary period

Where an employee is subject to a probationary period, performance expectations need to be established as part of the induction process. Regular performance conversations should occur throughout the probationary period and any unacceptable work performance issues are to be addressed with appropriate support given to the employee (refer also to *Probation HR Policy B2*).

3 Performance and Development Plans (PDPs)

Ongoing support and development is to be provided to employees through the use of PDPs (or however so named, for example, Career Success Plan (CSP), Achievement Capability Plan (ACP) etc.), with regular reviews to establish and clarify expectations; promote constructive communication; reflect the positive performance management principles; and assist employees to meet and exceed work performance expectations.

The minimum mandatory requirements of the performance and development process include:

- a. All employees and managers are required to engage in performance and development conversations on a regular basis.
- b. Performance and development conversations are to be recorded in a PDP. A PDP outlining the employee's expected work performance and any agreed development

during the course of their employment, should be in place within one month after commencement in the role, and reviewed at least annually.

- c. For new employees, performance conversations should start as soon as practicable and include providing a clear statement of their work performance expectations.
- d. PDPs are to be progressively updated to reflect current tasks and work priorities, individual development needs, and recognise achievements.

For more information about what is to be included in a PDP, please refer to **Attachment 4**.

4 Pro-actively managing personal and professional development

Pro-actively managing personal and professional development is a shared responsibility of managers and employees and occurs within the context of the particular role and workplace operational needs.

4.1 Managers responsibilities

Managers are responsible for pro-actively managing the personal and professional development of employees, with a view to continuously building expertise within the public sector by:

- a. working with the employees they manage to ensure they either have or are in the process of developing a current PDP
- b. integrating a career development focus into employees' PDPs
- c. encouraging employees to take responsibility for planning and managing their own careers
- d. developing the next generation of leaders, including by supporting relevant professional development activities
- e. recognising that employees are all at different stages of their career
- f. improving workforce capability and our service delivery while enhancing job satisfaction and employees' professional growth
- g. developing employees' cultural capability to help foster a culturally capable and culturally safe workplace
- h. ensuring cultural safety when managing the personal and professional development of Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees or employees from diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. For example, if the employee is comfortable to do so, identify and discuss how an employee's spiritual practices or kinship ties can be supported by the workplace
- i. supporting employees from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds to comfortably express their diverse experience
- j. supporting people with a disability by seeking to remove barriers affecting their ability to perform their roles
- k. fostering a culture of respect and inclusion by:
 - i. supporting employees to work together to improve employee performance and wellbeing
 - ii. working with employees to help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in employment matters in a respectful, appropriate and safe way

- iii. role-modelling respectful workplace behaviours, as well as establishing and maintaining respectful conduct standards and expectations within the team
- l. actively listening to employees by processing and seeking to understand the meaning and intent behind their words.

4.2 Employee responsibilities

Employees are responsible for pro-actively managing their personal and professional development with a view to continuously building their expertise within the public sector by:

- a. working with their manager to determine their current key goals and performance indicators
- b. meeting the requirements of their role
- c. identifying their strengths
- d. early identification of any personal circumstances or workplace concerns that may be affecting their work performance
- e. ascertaining what learning and development opportunities they can undertake to develop their job specific skills and areas of knowledge
- f. developing their cultural capability to help foster a culturally capable workplace and a culturally safe workplace
- g. working with their manager to actively improve their performance, constructively participate in their development, and confirm the performance expectations of their role
- h. regularly asking for feedback
- i. identifying their career aspirations.

5 Regular and constructive communication between employees and managers

Managers are responsible for continuing to develop and further their communication skills to be successful in working with and managing others, for example, communicating with empathy and being a good listener.

Managers need to be aware of their own communication style and be able to adjust their style where necessary. Communication between employees and managers must align with the work performance and personal conduct principles in section 40 of the PS Act (see **Attachment 1**).

5.1 Regular communication

The communication between employees and managers needs to be regular with discussions and feedback being consistent, timely and constructive. Regular communication should be both formal and informal, scheduled and unscheduled.

Employees and managers should use a range of ways to regularly share information. Managers must prioritise feedback and performance management conversations must be part of business as usual, rather than a once-a-year task.

5.2 Constructive communication

Interactions and communication between employees and managers must be open, honest and respectful and culturally appropriate.

Managers must focus on what matters. Meaningful conversations with employees about their work performance, wellbeing and, where relevant, their personal conduct, will support optimal performance and help to ensure Queensland Health's productivity and quality of service delivery.

Timely, open and regular, constructive communication and feedback is the mutual responsibility of managers and employees (for tips about making communication and feedback constructive, see **Attachment 5**).

5.3 Work performance and personal conduct principles

Communication between employees and managers must align with the work performance and personal conduct principles as outlined in section 40 of the PS Act.

Section 40 of the PS Act recognises that public sector employment involves public trust, requiring public sector employees to promote public confidence in the integrity of the public sector in how they carry out their duties.

This section lists a range of matters which a public sector employee's work performance and personal conduct must be directed towards, including:

- a. achieving excellence in service delivery
- b. ensuring the effective, efficient and appropriate use of public resources
- c. giving effect to government policies and priorities.

See **Attachment 1** for the full list of work performance and personal conduct principles.

6 Recognising the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees and valuing their contributions

Queensland Health strives to be a high performing organisation, where our employees work together to build a future focused, high performing public sector that delivers a world-class health system for all Queenslanders. Employees of Queensland Health are part of a large, diverse, and highly experienced workforce making a difference to the people and communities of Queensland.

Queensland Health recognises the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees, values their contributions, and acknowledges that this will help lead to increased productivity, improved performance and wellbeing, and higher employee engagement and retention. This will be achieved by:

- a. identifying an employee's workplace strengths, incorporating an employee's workplace strengths into their PDP, and leveraging the employee's individual strengths to help achieve the team's overall goals
- b. recognising and optimising an employee's individual requirements and circumstances, including by:
 - i. committing to creating healthy and safe workplaces where employees can thrive and achieve their best

- ii. ensuring cultural safety when managing the personal and professional development of Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees including, for example, understanding, supporting and respecting sorry business and kinship ties
 - iii. supporting employees from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds when managing their personal and professional development
 - iv. recognising that an employee's health and wellbeing is multi-dimensional and linked to their physical, psychological, financial and social wellbeing and ultimately their performance
 - v. remembering that everyone is different; don't make assumptions about an employee's needs or capabilities – ask them
 - vi. understanding that workplace adjustments or accommodations may be required for health or personal circumstances, including employees with a disability, with caring responsibilities, recovering from illness or injury, managing a chronic medical condition, or who are victims of domestic or family violence.
- c. valuing, encouraging, and appreciating the work that an employee does, including by:
- i. ensuring feedback to employees is balanced by recognising positive achievements as well as aspects of work requiring improvement
 - ii. managers making it clear that they are interested in their employee's growth and also in them as individuals
 - iii. providing ongoing support and development to employees using a PDP
 - iv. managers communicating early and often with their employees
 - v. ensuring managers meet important evaluation points and markers in the PDP process
 - vi. providing development opportunities for employees
 - vii. recognising performance that meets or exceeds expectations.

7 Recognising work performance that meets or exceeds expectations

A manager's role includes valuing, encouraging, and appreciating the work that an employee does. Recognising work performance that meets or exceeds expectations has been shown to lead to increased productivity, improved performance, and higher employee engagement and retention. Our employees are more likely to give their best work if we can show them how much we appreciate their efforts and contributions.

Recognising the work performance of employees acknowledges the actions they have done, the value of their expertise and experience, and how they positively impact the workplace. The guiding values in Queensland Health is that recognising and rewarding performance that meets or exceeds expectations must be:

- a. in alignment with the public sector principles in section 39 of the PS Act (refer **Attachment 3**) and Queensland Public Sector values – Recognition should be clearly linked with the purpose of the work that employees do for Queensland Health and the Queensland government. This gives employees a clear idea of how the work they do contributes to the objectives of Queensland Health and what kinds of behaviour will be rewarded. PDPs should include information about how the employee's job contributes to

- their team's outcomes and/or its vision and objectives, as well as how the employee's expected outcomes are linked to Queensland Health's performance objectives and plans.
- b. timely – Ideally, recognition of good work performance should occur as close as possible to when the performance actually occurred. Recognition in “real time” is more likely to reinforce positive performance and provide greater impact than delayed recognition.
 - c. fair – Any form of recognition should be in line with the achievement and the degree of effort that the employee or team undertook. Using clear performance standards will help enhance perceived fairness of any recognition or reward.
 - d. specific – Queensland Health has a diverse range of employees – how they will want to be recognised will vary from employee to employee, for example, some employees may appreciate public recognition, others may prefer other forms of recognition. Make praise meaningful for and specific to the employee by thinking about what type of recognition would be motivating and important to them.
 - e. appropriate in the public sector context – In recognition that public sector organisations are entrusted with public funds to develop and deliver services to the community on behalf of government, Queensland Health reward and recognition programs are developed to appropriately recognise employee contributions towards meeting organisational outcomes and objectives.
 - f. compliant with the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* – Have regard to the Code of Conduct when considering how to recognise or reward employees
 - g. not a replacement for the PDP process – Recognising work performance that meets or exceeds expectations should not be used in lieu of a properly developed and reviewed PDP process.

8 Continuously improving performance through the provision of training, learning and development

Managers and employees of Queensland Health are responsible for pro-actively managing personal and professional development with a view to continuously building expertise within the public sector.

Managers can support this development and improve workforce capability and Queensland Health's service delivery while enhancing job satisfaction and employees' professional growth by:

- a. being committed to ongoing learning and development for our employees, including training, on-the-job learning, learning through others, mentoring, work placements or formal learning opportunities
- b. building capability around key occupations through career development, job design, performance development and workforce planning
- c. developing employees' cultural capability to help foster a culturally capable workplace and a culturally safe workplace
- d. developing employees' leadership capability to foster inclusion, equity and diversity in the workplace
- e. enabling employees to obtain skills necessary for career progression by not unreasonably refusing the employee's access to assistance under SARAS (Study and

research assistance scheme). Queensland Health will give employees appropriate and adequate training, learning and development to do their job safely and competently.

Queensland Health believes training, learning and development is a two-way process and encourages employees to participate and to highlight any gaps in their own skills or knowledge they believe they may have.

The most effective learning will often take place on-the-job and be functionally relevant and job specific. Other training, learning, and development includes, but is not limited to:

- internal on-the-job training
- coaching
- job-shadowing
- external training and courses
- self-directed training; and
- opportunities that arise through networking and partnering with others to learn from their experiences.

9 Identifying at the earliest possible stage work performance or personal conduct that does not meet expectations

Where an employee's work performance and, in some circumstances, personal conduct in the workplace (e.g. excessive absenteeism or not treating other employees with courtesy and respect) does not meet expectations, it is important this is identified at the earliest possible stage. Early identification will help ensure that positive intervention can occur as quickly as possible, so that the situation is not left to worsen and escalate, including by ensuring that the employee is afforded an opportunity to respond to any issues/concerns identified by the manager.

Managers play a critical role in early identification of work performance and personal conduct that does not meet expectations (refer to **Attachment 6** for more information).

10 Providing opportunities and support to employees for improving work performance and personal conduct

If the performance of an employee does not meet expectations, and the employee has been afforded an opportunity to respond to the issues/concerns identified by their manager, it is important to provide opportunities and support to the employee to help improve their work performance and, in some circumstances, personal conduct.

Managers play a critical role in providing opportunities and support to employees for improving work performance and personal conduct by:

- a. trying to reach a shared understanding with the employee of what areas of work and capabilities they need to develop, and support that within the employee's PDP
- b. reviewing the employee's work performance expectations to confirm they are reasonable
- c. considering whether there are any work-related factors that may be affecting an employee such as workload issues, role clarity, workplace conflict or poor communication

- d. supporting an employee's wellbeing and resilience in order for their performance to be addressed
- e. considering external matters that may be impacting on the employee and working to create a safe interpersonal environment (for example, by listening and showing a respectful interest in culture)
- f. regularly reviewing the employee's progress against expectations
- g. documenting the plan and the progress achieved.

11 When should a Performance Improvement Plan be considered?

Managers and employees are responsible for working together to achieve better outcomes and improve performance. This should be done in a way that is mutually respectful, supportive and considers the individual circumstances of each employee.

Under section 86 of the PS Act, disciplinary action against an employee for a matter relating to the employee's performance must not be taken until the manager has complied with *Directive 02/24 - Positive performance management* (the Directive).

The process for managing unacceptable work performance or poor personal conduct must be supportive, directed to the positive performance management principles, and consider work-related factors and non-work-related factors that may be affecting the employee.

It may be necessary for a manager to implement a more structured and formal process through the introduction of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) where they have:

- a. followed the steps outlined in this policy
- b. acted in accordance with the PS Act and the Directive
- c. determined that support and management action has not brought about improvement to the employee's work performance to the required standard
- d. considered whether there are any work-related factors and non-work-related factors that may be affecting the employee's performance and, if so, whether it is more appropriate to put in place relevant supports and strategies that are reasonable in the circumstances to further assist the employee, rather than commence a PIP (for example, whether medical advice should be sought, and subsequently whether a workplace rehabilitation plan may be required or reasonable adjustment/s considered).
- e. ensured the following conditions have been met:
 - i. the expected level of work performance or personal conduct for the role was documented and provided to the employee and the employee had a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate the expected level of work performance or personal conduct
 - ii. the expected level of work performance or personal conduct was relevant and appropriate to the role
 - iii. the unacceptable work performance or personal conduct, or the gap between actual and expected work performance or personal conduct, was previously raised, discussed with the employee and documented
 - iv. the employee was offered support that was reasonable in the circumstances and allowed a reasonable period of time to self-correct.

Where a manager holds a view that an employee's behaviour is not consistent with policies, expectations, public sector values or code of conduct and that the behaviour is not sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary action but is impacting on the employee's work performance or workplace:

- a PIP may be initiated in relation to the poor personal conduct, or deal with that poor personal conduct as part of a PIP, provided it is fair and reasonable in the circumstances. Examples of poor personal conduct for this purpose may include absenteeism or not treating other employees with courtesy or respect
- a PIP is not required, and may not be appropriate, for an employee's poor personal conduct, for example, if this is as a result of a medical condition, in which case medical advice should be sought to best determine how the employee could be supported.
- if a PIP is being undertaken, and if at any stage the manager believes the employee's poor personal conduct means that they may be liable to discipline for a reason other than unsatisfactory work performance, then chapter 3, part 8, division 3 (Disciplinary action) of the PS Act and the provisions outlined in the *Discipline HR Policy E10* may be applied and no further action is required to be taken under the Directive or this policy.

Managers are to consult with their local human resources teams when considering implementing a PIP.

A PIP must detail what must occur to support the employee for the duration of the PIP (for more information about PIPs, refer to **Attachment 7**).

Employees who are subject to a PIP are to be offered support options appropriate to their circumstances, including allowing the employee to bring a support person and/or industrial representative of a registered union to accompany them to discussions advising of the intention to implement a PIP and PIP review meetings, and offered EAP (Employee Assistance Provider).

12 Governance and accountability

Executives, or authorised delegates, are responsible for pro-actively managing and monitoring performance within the Department of Health/Hospital and Health Services and ensuring that all employees have a current PDP in place that is formally reviewed at least annually.

13 Human Rights

A decision maker has an obligation under the *Human Rights Act 2019* to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights. When making a decision under this policy, the delegate is to give proper consideration to human rights.

14 Equity and inclusion

Queensland Health is committed to supporting equity, diversity, respect and inclusion in accordance with Chapter 2 Part 1 of the PS Act. All delegates and employees have a duty to promote equity and diversity in relation to employment matters, which includes in the application and making decisions under the PS Act and the Directive.

15 Reframing the relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Queensland Health is committed to supporting a reframed relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in accordance with Chapter 1 Part 3 of the PS Act. All delegates and employees have a responsibility to apply these principles when implementing HR policies.

16 Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022

Queensland Health is committed to promoting and protecting the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of its workers by providing a safe and inclusive workplace with a focus on preventing harm. As an employer, Queensland Health has an obligation under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* to manage risks to employees arising through our work, work environments, systems, and practices. When applying this policy, proper consideration must be given to the *Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022*, including identifying psychosocial hazards and assessing and managing any risk. Managers are aware of workplace psychosocial hazards and how to manage them and staff wellbeing is appropriately considered and supported throughout performance management activities which are conducted in a fair, timely and constructive manner.

17 Review and appeal provisions

Concerns about the application of a performance improvement should be raised in accordance with the provisions outlined in the *Individual employee grievances HR Policy E12*.

Relevant appeal rights for employees are set out in the PS Act and the Directive. An employee may appeal a decision to take, or not take, action under the Directive under section 131(1)(b) of the PS Act.

Under section 132(4) of the PS Act, an employee may not appeal against a fair treatment decision relating to a person's work performance, other than a decision about the person's work performance that is recorded in a formal way as part of a periodic performance review.

Appeals by public sector employees are heard and decided by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) under chapter 11 of the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (IR Act).

18 Transitional provisions

This policy applies to management action, PDPs and PIPs initiated after the commencement of the Directive. A PIP initiated after the commencement of the Directive includes a PIP being contemplated, but not commenced, prior to the commencement of this Directive.

19 Records

Information about management action, performance development agreements, and PIPs must be managed in accordance with:

- a. chapter 8, part 3 (Confidentiality) of the PS Act
- b. provisions of the *Public Sector Regulation 2023* in relation to employee records
- c. relevant legislation governing information privacy i.e. the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Chief Executive	The individual appointed under the PS Act 2022 as the chief executive of the department.
Health Executive	Means a person appointed as a health executive under section 67 of the <i>Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011</i> .
Management action	A course of local action that is reasonably open to a manager to support and correct situations of employee conflict, unsatisfactory work performance or unacceptable behaviours at the earliest possible opportunity.
Natural justice	A right recognised and defined by law that involves two key elements – the hearing rule (everyone is entitled to a decision by a disinterested and unbiased adjudicator), and the bias rule (the parties shall be given adequate notice of the case against them, and a right to respond).
Non work-related factors that may be affecting an employee's performance	Includes, but is not limited to, personal circumstances such as domestic and family violence, family caring responsibilities, cultural obligations or a medical condition.
Performance Development Plan or similar plan/ agreement, however so named e.g. Performance Development Agreement, Personal Growth Plan, Individual Development Plan etc.	The documented plan/agreement, between an employee and their manager regarding the employee's expected work performance, behaviour and conduct with identified development during the course of their employment, to help the employee be successful in their role.
Performance improvement plan	A structured process, undertaken to address an employee's unsatisfactory work performance and/or, in some circumstances, poor personal conduct.
Poor personal conduct	When an employee's conduct or behaviour in the workplace is not consistent with policies, expectations, public sector values, or the code of conduct, and the conduct or behaviour is not sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary action but is impacting on the employee's work performance or the workplace. For example, absenteeism or not treating other employees with courtesy or respect.

Term	Definition
Positive performance management principles	<p>As provided for in section 85 of the PS Act:</p> <p>(1) For best practice human resource management and in recognition that public sector employees are selected based on recruitment and selection processes under chapter 3, part 3, the management of public sector employees must be directed towards the following principles (positive performance management principles)—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) pro-actively managing the professional and personal development of public sector employees with a view to continuously building expertise within the public sector; (b) ensuring regular and constructive communication between public sector managers and employees about the work performance and personal conduct principles; (c) recognising the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees and valuing their contributions; (d) recognising performance that meets or exceeds expectations; (e) providing opportunities and support to employees for improving performance; (f) continuously improving performance through the provision of training and development; (g) identifying at the earliest possible stage performance that does not meet expectations; (h) integrating the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (g) into management practices and policies.
Public sector manager	A public sector employee whose duties involve or include managing other public sector employees in the carrying out of their duties.
Union	An employee organisation registered under chapter 12 of the <i>Industrial Relations Act 2016</i> or under the <i>Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 (Cth)</i> .
Work performance	<p>Includes, but is not limited to, matters relating to an employee's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of work (accuracy, thoroughness, competence, including professional competency) • quantity of work and diligence (productivity level, time management, ability to meet deadlines) • job knowledge (skills and understanding of the work) • working relationships (ability to work with others, including communication skills).

Term	Definition
Work-related factors that may be affecting an employee's performance	Includes, but is not limited to, workload issues, workplace conflict or poor communication, poor job design, unclear expectations, or other workplace psychosocial hazards.

History

Date	Policy change
5 September 2024	Policy amended to incorporate provisions of the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> and Directive No. 2/24 – Positive performance management.
June 2021	Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amended to update references and naming conventions • amended to incorporate provisions of the <i>Public Service Act 2008</i> and PSC Directive No. 15/20: Positive performance management, applied to health service employees via <i>Public Service Regulation 2018</i> effective 1 October 2020 • amended to include a <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> statement.
July 2020	Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formatted as part of the HR Policy review • amended to update references and naming conventions • application amended as a result of changes outlined in the <i>Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019</i>.
June 2017	Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formatted as part of the HR Policy review • amended to update references and naming conventions • application extended to casual employees • updated to incorporate the online performance and development tool, Career Success Plan.
June 2014	Updated naming conventions.

Date	Policy change
November 2013	<p>Updated as part of the HR policy simplification project. Policy amendments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited the application of this policy to Department of Health employees • updated governance and accountability requirements of Chief Executives • removed duplication of childcare professional's requirements – refer to <i>Child Safety – Health Professionals Capability Requirements and Reporting Responsibilities HR Policy E7</i> • updated references and naming conventions.
June 2011	Amended to reflect Directive 21/10 including that application is to all Queensland Health employees excluding casuals. Change of terminology to Performance and Development Plan.
July 2008	Amended to reflect <i>Public Service Act 2008</i> .
June 2008	Developed as a result of the HR Policy Framework consolidation project.
Previous	IRM 8.2 Performance Appraisal and Development.

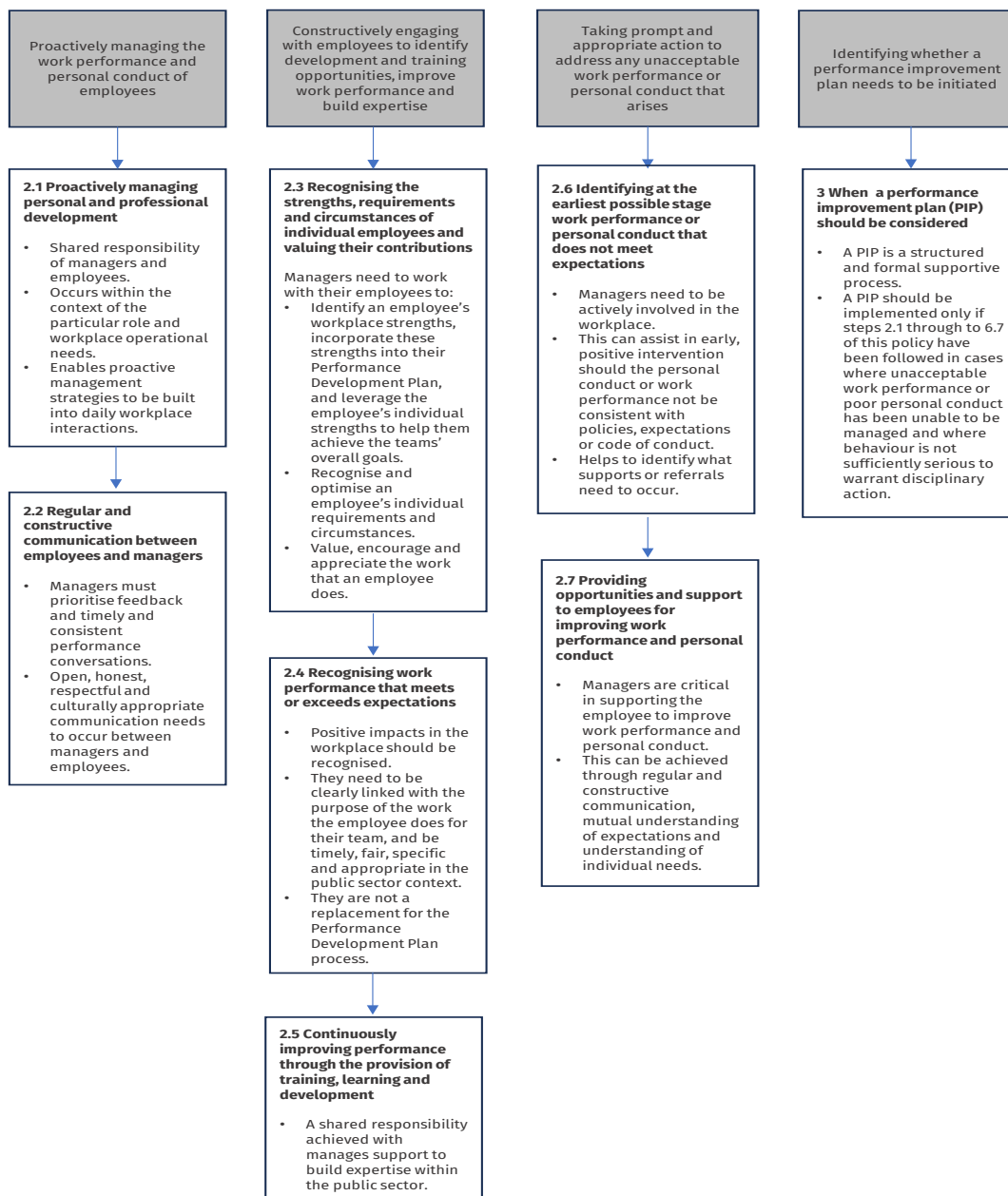
Attachment 1 – Work performance and personal conduct principles (section 40 of the PS Act)

40 Work performance and personal conduct principles

- (1) In recognition that public sector employment involves a public trust, the work performance and personal conduct of each public sector employee should be guided by the following principles (the work performance and personal conduct principles):
 - a. achieving excellence in service delivery
 - b. ensuring the effective, efficient and appropriate use of public resources
 - c. giving effect to government policies and priorities
 - d. collaborating with other public sector entities with a focus on public sector-wide priorities in addition to priorities specific to particular public sector organisations, if appropriate and while recognising the need for independence of particular public sector entities
 - e. providing sound and impartial advice to government
 - f. continuously improving work performance, including through training and development
 - g. carrying out duties impartially and with integrity
 - h. acting honestly, fairly and in the public interest
 - i. interacting with staff members under the *Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010* respectfully, collaboratively and with integrity
 - j. observing all laws relevant to the employment
 - k. ensuring the employee's personal conduct does not reflect adversely on the reputation of the public sector entity in which the employee is employed
 - l. observing the ethics principles under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, section 4
 - m. complying with an approved code of conduct and any approved standard of practice as required under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, section 12H or 18.
- (2) A public sector manager must take all reasonable steps to ensure each public sector employee under the manager's management is aware of the following matters:
 - a. the work performance and personal conduct expected of the employee
 - b. the public sector principles
 - c. the values of the public sector entity in which the employee is employed
 - d. for a public service employee—the values of the public service
 - e. what constitutes corrupt conduct under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*.
- (3) Also, a public sector manager must:
 - a. provide working environments in which all public sector employees are:
 - i. treated fairly and reasonably
 - ii. assigned work according to the employee's responsibilities as reflected in remuneration rates

- b. consider and give effect to the following matters when undertaking management responsibilities:
 - i. the public sector principles
 - ii. the values of the public sector entity in which the employee is employed
 - iii. if the manager is a public service employee—the values of the public service
 - c. ensure fairness and integrity in performing managerial functions, including when making decisions
 - d. undertake best practice human resource management, including the application of the positive performance management principles in the following ways:
 - i. pro-actively managing the work performance and personal conduct of public sector employees
 - ii. constructively engaging with public sector employees to identify development and training opportunities, improve work performance, and build expertise in the public sector
 - iii. taking prompt and appropriate action to address any unacceptable work performance or personal conduct that arises
 - e. take personal responsibility for development as a manager.
- (4) A chief executive of a public sector entity has overall responsibility for:
- a. ensuring the entity performs its functions in a way consistent with:
 - i. the main purpose of the Act
 - ii. the ways in which the main purpose of the Act is to be primarily achieved
 - iii. the public sector principles
 - b. ensuring managers within the entity perform managerial functions in accordance with the positive performance management principles
 - c. ensuring public sector employees have access to fair and independent reviews and appeals
 - d. ensuring the entity has workforce and human resource planning and practices, including systems for the regular review of employment arrangements for public sector employees.

Attachment 2 – Helping managers understand how to apply the positive performance management principles



Attachment 3 – Public sector principles (section 39 of the PS Act)

39 Public sector principles

- (1) In recognition that public sector organisations are established for a public or state purpose, and of the trust the people of Queensland place in public sector organisations, an organisation should be guided by the principles mentioned in subsections (2) and (3) (the public sector principles).
- (2) The management of the public sector should be guided by the following principles:
 - (a) achieving a spirit of service to the community
 - (b) ensuring accountability, integrity, and support of the public interest
 - (c) ensuring independence, transparency, and impartiality in giving advice and making decisions
 - (d) achieving responsiveness, innovation, and creativity
 - (e) promoting collaboration between public sector entities and other entities in providing services to the community
 - (f) achieving continuous organisational improvement.
- (3) The employment of public sector employees should be guided by the following principles:
 - (a) ensuring employment on a permanent basis is the default basis of employment, other than for non-industrial instrument employees
 - (b) supporting equity, diversity, respect, and inclusion at work
 - (c) ensuring the taking of measures aimed at implementing and promoting pay equity
 - (d) ensuring effectiveness and efficiency while maintaining a focus on the future
 - (e) ensuring fairness and impartiality in making decisions
 - (f) remunerating employees at rates appropriate to their responsibilities
 - (g) promoting equitable and flexible working environments.

Attachment 4 – Information to be included in Performance Development Plans (PDPs)

PDPs are to encompass the range of dimensions and performance indicators required to perform the role, and to include reference to the following:

- How the employee's expected outcomes are linked to Queensland Health's vision, performance objectives and plans, e.g. Queensland Health's Strategic Plans (see <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/strategic-direction/plans>), Department of Health/Hospital and Health Services strategic and operational plans.
- How the employee's role contributes to the team's outcomes, objectives and/or vision.
- Public sector ethical principles and values, organisational values and behaviours, e.g. *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service*.
- Role description and technical capability requirements, e.g. satisfactory completion of technical aspects of the role such as provision of legal advice, project management, assistance with mobility, cleaning, procurement of services, delivery of pathology services.
- Evaluation of technical aspects for clinicians' roles may be supported by credentialing and scope of practice processes for specific professional groups.
- The employee's workplace strengths and their current and future personal capability development needs including developmental aspects of the role, e.g. individual learning needs, participation in teaching and/or research, mentoring, coaching, etc.
- Current work priorities, workplans, and key deliverables, and emerging new role requirements
- Career development aspirations and goals.

Attachment 5 – Tips for making communication and feedback constructive

Ways to make communication and feedback constructive includes, but is not limited to:

- remembering that effective communication starts with effective listening
- preparing for the communication and developing a message that is clear, simple and upfront about any concerns (e.g. think about what you want to achieve by having a meeting, write some notes down, be specific with three to five key points and use examples)
- considering who you are communicating with (e.g. to enable an employee with a disability to fully participate in a discussion, ensure that you communicate information to them in a way that is appropriate to their preferred communication mode and format)
- considering your communication channel or channels (e.g. written, verbal, visual or a combination of these)
- considering your communication forum (e.g. avoid communicating sensitive subject matter in public spaces)
- clearly outlining your expectations (day to day and longer term), and give practical examples where relevant
- recognising the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees and value their contributions
- recognising performance that meets or exceeds expectations
- ensuring that communication is undertaken in a way that promotes cultural safety and supports a sense of dignity and belonging for Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees. For example, take a discrete approach and avoid discussions in open or public spaces
- understanding cultural nuances – recognise the value of diversity in the workplace and the importance of measures that promote diversity and cultural respect, in particular with regard to Aboriginal people and cultures, Torres Strait Islander people and cultures, and people from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds
- behaving respectfully – communicate in a calm and courteous manner
- supporting employees to feel safe to voice different opinions and add value by offering their own views and perspectives
- being open to receiving reciprocal feedback.

Attachment 6 – Tips for early identification of work performance and personal conduct that does not meet expectations

Managers play a critical role in early identification of work performance and personal conduct that does not meet expectations, including by:

- a. reinforcing what expectations there are for the employee's work performance and personal conduct
- b. communicating regularly and constructively with their employees about their work performance and personal conduct, and whether they are meeting the expectations set for them
- c. providing cultural safety when communicating with Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees about their work performance and personal conduct, which may include involving a cultural support person
- d. providing a safe and supportive environment when communicating with employees from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds about their work performance and personal conduct
- e. ensuring supports are available if needed for people with a disability when communicating with them about their work performance and personal conduct
- f. recognising possible warning signs (such as changes in workplace behaviours, or changes to quality or standard of work) that might indicate an employee is struggling with workplace or personal stress that could be contributing to their poor work performance or personal conduct
- g. taking the time to listen to any concerns the employee may have either immediately when they arise, or very soon after.

These steps may help a manager identify personal matters that may be contributing to work performance and personal conduct issues.

To appropriately support an employee's wellbeing needs, managers should also consider whether they refer employees to Queensland Health's EAP services.

Attachment 7 – Supporting improved work performance or personal conduct checklist

The process for managing unacceptable work performance or poor personal conduct must be supportive, directed to the positive performance management principles in section 85 of the *Public Sector Act 2022* (the Act), and take into account factors including work and non-work related issues that may be affecting the employee.

The purpose of this checklist is to assist managers in deciding if a PIP is needed to support improved work performance or, in certain situations, poor personal conduct, and to guide implementation.

Step one – early intervention

It is important for managers to recognise that performance standards can vary and should be considered only in the context of the individual employee’s work performance. Timely, open, regular, and constructive communication is the mutual responsibility of managers and employees, who should work together, in good faith, to improve work performance outcomes.

Early intervention of identified issue/s, feedback, supports, and training and development given to assist the employee to self-correct:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A performance and development plan is in place for the employee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expectations around the employee’s performance are clearly outlined, reasonable and are relevant to their role.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feedback conversations have been held with the employee about the area/s for improvement and include clearly evidenced examples of the gap between what’s expected (as outlined in the performance and development plan) and what is occurring and the employee has been provided with a right of response. <i>(Attach evidence and/or file notes to the checklist, copies of which have been provided to the employee)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feedback conversations include agreed strategies for improvement, measurable outcomes and are documented in an email or file note. <i>(Attach emails and/or file notes to the checklist, copies of which have been provided to the employee)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where an employee has indicated that non-work related issues are impacting their work performance, reasonable supports or adjustments have been explored and implemented. Non-work related issues that may be affecting an employee could include personal circumstances that may be impacting their work performance e.g. domestic violence, family caring responsibilities, cultural obligations, kinship ties or spiritual practices, or a medical condition.

	<i>(Note: where there is a reasonable suspicion that the employee's unsatisfactory work performance is caused by a medical condition and the supports put in place (for example, reasonable adjustments, training, mentoring etc.) have not brought about satisfactory improvements, consider options under section 103 of the Act and the directive relating to independent medical examinations – refer to local HR team)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The employee has been given a reasonable amount of time to implement the agreed strategies for improvement and to self-correct.

If the above boxes have been checked and the employee has shown limited progress towards achieving what is expected, it may be reasonable to consider implementation of a PIP to support further improvement. Managers are to ensure they have sought support and appropriate guidance from their line supervisor and local HR team. The Manager Assist service through the Employee Assistance Service may also be useful for support.

Step two – preparing a PIP

<p>Once all elements of step one (early intervention) have been checked to demonstrate that feedback and strategies to improve have been provided to the employee, and there is sufficient evidence to support this e.g. emails between the manager and employee, file notes of meetings etc., copies of which have been provided to the employee, and consultation has occurred with HR, a PIP can be prepared.</p> <p><i>(Note: if there is insufficient evidence of feedback being provided to the employee or strategies to improve, a PIP cannot commence until this has occurred)</i></p> <p>The following information is to be documented in the PIP, to meet the requirements of natural justice, whilst being objective, equitable, accountable and confidential, and a copy provided to the employee:</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The gaps between the expected work performance and what is occurring.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The expected work performance with agreed measurable outcomes. <i>(Measures should be specific and reasonable and provide the employee with a clear understanding of how their work performance will be reviewed against the requirements of the PIP.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support to be offered to the employee. <i>(Include the details of the Employee Assistance Provider as part of this section.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The frequency of formal feedback meetings. <i>(Formal feedback meetings must occur across the duration of the PIP. The recommended frequency is weekly or fortnightly).</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	How additional informal feedback will be provided to the employee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The duration of the PIP, with a specified start and end date.

	<i>(A 12-week PIP is standard, however this can be shortened or extended depending on the circumstances.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Specific strategies for how the expected work performance can be achieved. <i>(This can include strategies such as additional training, mentoring, increased supervision, or other reasonable strategies to support improvement.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The potential consequences if the expected standards of work performance are not met. <i>(Failure to participate in the process or to achieve the expected level of performance improvement by the date of the final review may result in consideration by the delegate of management action or making disciplinary findings under sections 90 - 100 of the PS Act and the directive relating to discipline.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultation has occurred with the local human resources team.

Before the PIP is implemented, the following should occur:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The employee is advised of the intention to implement a PIP and invited to attend a meeting with the manager for the purpose of reviewing and commenting on the contents of the PIP.</p> <p><i>(Note: Employees are to be provided with the opportunity to have a support person present to support them during this meeting and/or industrial representative of a union to accompany them.</i></p> <p><i>A support person may be a co-worker, family member, friend, cultural support person or lawyer. However, there are circumstances where it may not be appropriate for a particular person to take on this role (for example, if the support person has a conflict of interest or is a delegate in the outcome of a decision or action).</i></p> <p><i>A support person can provide emotional support, cultural support, take notes and request breaks. A support person cannot speak on the employee's behalf or directly answer questions for them</i></p> <p><i>Industrial/union representatives have a role to represent their members in accordance with, and to the extent that, industrial legislation and their union rules provide. Representatives may advocate on behalf of their members. They may also ask clarifying questions, prompt their members or give advice to ensure the process is fair and adheres to industrial legislation).</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The employee is given the opportunity to review and comment on the content and structure of the PIP before the plan is finalised. Any feedback given by the employee is considered and where possible implemented.</p> <p><i>(Attach file note of the meeting to this checklist).</i></p>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The manager and employee agree on the requirements of the PIP, and it is implemented.</p> <p><i>(Note: a PIP can proceed even if the employee does not agree with or sign the PIP, providing that the employee has been given every opportunity to participate in the process. If an employee believes that a PIP process does not comply with the directive relating to performance management, they may appeal under section 131(1)(b) of the Act).</i></p>
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Step three – during the PIP

What must occur to support the employee for the duration of the PIP:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Regular review meetings are scheduled and held between the manager and the employee (and their support person if relevant), according to the agreed upon schedule.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Manager provides feedback to the employee at each formal review meeting for each area of improvement, or the completion or progress of assigned tasks.</p> <p><i>(This should cover what was required, what was delivered or observed and any gaps between these. Attach any copies of work examples or work tasks which were required of the employee during the review period.)</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Employee is given the opportunity to raise any issues, barriers, or concerns and these are addressed by the manager.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Manager advises the employee whether their work performance is satisfactory for each area of identified improvement. If the employee has not achieved what is required, the reasons why should be clearly articulated with examples provided. In this circumstance, the employee should be advised of the possible outcomes should they fail to meet the performance expectations (e.g. management action or the commencement of a disciplinary process which can lead to penalties up to and including termination of employment).</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>A detailed record of the meeting and its agreed outcomes is provided to the employee.</p> <p><i>(Attach a copy of the record of each review meeting, along with any evidence or documents reviewed during the meeting.)</i></p>

Step four – outcome of the PIP

Considering the employee's progress across the duration of the PIP and determining the outcome:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>A final review meeting is scheduled and held between the manager and the employee (and their support person if relevant), according to the agreed upon schedule.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Manager provides a comprehensive summary of the overall assessment of the employee's work performance against the required tasks and expectations including an overall finding of whether the employee's work performance in each area of improvement is satisfactory or not.</p> <p><i>(Ensure that any copies of work examples or work tasks which were required of the employee during the PIP period are collated and attached.)</i></p>
<p>Managers have three options that can be considered at the end of the PIP process:</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Resume routine local performance monitoring and development processes.</p> <p><i>(This occurs when the employee has demonstrated the required standards of work performance. Communicate the outcome of this to the employee and monitor work performance through the usual performance and development cycle.)</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Extend the PIP period.</p> <p><i>(This may be recommended when there is significant absence during the initial PIP period, or where additional time will allow the employee to demonstrate sustained improvement, or where none or only some of the work performance standards were met. Any proposed extension to a PIP period must be for a reasonable timeframe and the reason why must be clearly communicated to the employee.)</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Refer the outcome to the appropriate delegate for consideration of disciplinary or further management action.</p> <p><i>(This occurs when the employee has not achieved the required standards of work performance. Refer to the local HR team and delegate for consideration of disciplinary action.)</i></p>