
Performance Development Program

Staff Manual

Approving Authority: President and Vice Chancellor

Established: January 2013

Date of Last Review/Revision: February 2026 (Replaces March 2019)

Office of Accountability: Human Resources

1. Policy Statement

St. Jerome's University is committed to fostering a culture where everyone can flourish. The staff Performance Development Program is designed to ensure that staff are provided with the guidance, support, and feedback they need to achieve their professional goals and serve as engaged members of the university community, while acknowledging their unique talents, backgrounds, and developmental needs.

The purpose of the Performance Development Program is to provide structure and accountability to develop staff member's performance over time in support and alignment with the University's mission, values, and strategic and operational priorities. The program creates a process to ensure that staff members are provided with clear expectations, receive regular feedback, guidance and coaching, and have the opportunity to create and implement professional development plans to support their longer term professional goals in alignment with operational priorities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all regular ongoing staff members (full-time and part-time) and staff members employed on limited-term contracts of greater than one year.

3. Application

The Performance Development Program requires all staff to set goals and objectives at the beginning of each fiscal year that are aligned with appropriate departmental and institutional goals. Staff members are required to communicate progress towards their goals and managers are required to ensure regular dialogue with their staff members throughout the year to provide guidance, support, coaching and feedback on progress toward goals. The Annual Reflection performance review is completed at the end of each fiscal year to provide a consistent mechanism to track progress, celebrate accomplishments, and identify development opportunities. The Annual Reflection incorporates feedback about how goals have been achieved in alignment with the Performance Development Program values as outlined below.

Performance Development Program Values

Mission Alignment	Aligning our actions and behaviours with SJU's mission and values.
Teamwork	Working effectively with others to achieve SJU's strategic priorities and the daily operational work of the university.
Results	Progress against annual goals and objectives and daily operational work.
Efficiency	The ability to achieve results in a productive and resource-effective manner.
Innovation	Generating and implementing creative ideas, contributing to problem-solving, and driving positive change.

4. Process Overview and Timelines

Timing	Activity
May-June	Goal setting dialogue between staff and manager
October-November	Mid year check-in (informal)
February-March	Staff members complete personal reflection (formal, through online tool)
March-April	Managers complete staff members' Annual Reflections

5. Roles and Responsibilities5.1 Managers

- Share departmental goals with staff members in a timely manner (May-June)
- Work collaboratively with each staff member to create and agree on their individual goals and objectives for the year that are aligned with departmental and institutional priorities
- Set expectations with staff members about how you wish to receive updates on their progress and how you will provide them with guidance and feedback throughout the year
- Meet with each of your staff members mid-year (October-November) to discuss their progress on goals and objectives and provide feedback; discuss any adjustments required for the rest of the year and revise goals if appropriate
- Create regular opportunities for dialogue and feedback with staff members throughout the year (e.g. one on one meetings, weekly email reporting); keep note of accomplishments and feedback to incorporate into the Annual Reflection at the end of the year

- Clearly communicate deadlines with staff members and your expectations for the process
- Guide staff members in identifying relevant colleagues to provide feedback on their experience working with them over the past year that will contribute to a fair and balanced reflection; guidance will be provided by Human Resources to select colleagues that reflect a diversity of perspectives
- Gather and review feedback from agreed upon contributors and incorporate appropriately into Annual Reflection, being sensitive to protecting confidentiality as needed
- Complete a fair reflection and evaluation of each staff member's performance in a timely manner once your staff has sent their personal reflection to you in February-March
- Engage Human Resources if any staff member's performance is not meeting expectations as early as possible and before meeting to discuss with the staff member
- Book time to meet with each staff member individually to discuss their Annual Reflection, creating an open, honest, and collaborative dialogue
- Support staff members in identifying appropriate development goals and professional development opportunities that align with departmental and institutional priorities, and plan what resources and support they need
- Finalize the Annual Reflection process by sending Annual Reflection to staff member for acknowledgement through online tool
- Participate in training on how to effectively implement the Performance Development Program, as required by Human Resources
- Get guidance from Human Resources on the development and implementation of Performance Improvement Plans as needed

5.2 Staff Members

- Work with your manager each May-June to collaboratively establish goals and objectives for the year in alignment with departmental goals and senior leadership/institutional priorities
- Work with your manager to establish a regular schedule for providing updates on progress toward goals and objectives
- Provide updates on progress toward goals and objectives to your manager in the timeline agreed to and engage in dialogue to receive guidance and feedback
- Meet with your manager mid-year (October-November) to discuss progress on goals and objectives and any adjustments needed to priorities for the rest of the year; make adjustments to goals as required
- Complete your personal reflection in the Annual Reflection in a timely manner when it has been launched in February, reflecting honestly on achievements, challenges, and alignment with SJU's values
- Work with your manager to identify three relevant colleagues that your manager can ask for feedback on their experience working with you over the past year, using guidance provided by Human Resources
- Participate actively in a meeting with your manager to discuss your Annual Reflection
- Collaboratively establish development goals for the upcoming year with your manager and identify and discuss professional development opportunities

- Acknowledge completion of the Annual Reflection process through the online tool
- Collaborate with your manager on the development and implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan, if needed

5.3 Human Resources

- Provide training and support to staff and managers on how to use the Annual Reflection online tool
- Launch the Annual Reflection online tool in a timely manner in February
- Provide guidance, tools, and resources to staff and managers to support the Annual Reflection process
- Provide any accommodations or accessibility supports required to ensure all staff can fully participate in the Performance Development Program
- Provide coaching, training, and support to managers on how to effectively implement the Performance Development program and have performance discussions
- Provide training and coaching to managers on how to mitigate biases and create psychological safety
- Provide guidance to managers on understanding and selecting performance ratings to promote consistency and fairness across the institution
- Monitor completion rates and follow up on outstanding Annual Reflections as required
- Maintain records of Annual Reflections in confidential staff files, ensuring that only those who should have access to those files do (staff member, manager(s), senior leader, Human Resources)
- Provide coaching and support to managers engaging in Performance Improvement Plans
- Provide guidance to staff and managers on how to handle situations where there is disagreement about performance

6. Performance Improvement Plans (PIP)

Performance Improvement Plans are generally required when a staff member receives an overall rating of Needs Improvement on an Annual Reflection, though a PIP may be initiated at any point during the year when a staff member is not meeting performance expectations.

The purpose of a PIP is to clarify expectations, ensure accountability and feedback, support the staff member in improving performance to required standards, and outline possible outcomes if performance is not improved to required standards. This is a structured and documented process that guides the manager and staff member to identify the specific areas of development required, outline measurable objectives for improvement, details the support and resources that will be provided by the manager, and the expected timelines for achieving sustained improvement.

The length of a PIP can vary and will be dependent on the development areas identified and the time period deemed reasonable to see sustained improvement. Managers are expected to meet with staff members at least weekly during a PIP to provide regular coaching and feedback on progress.

Step progression increases for eligible staff will be withheld until such time that a PIP has been successfully completed with sustained performance at the required level. Feedback on PIP progress must be documented to demonstrate successful completion and provided to Human Resources for filing and implementation of step progression increase, if applicable.

At the conclusion of the PIP period, the manager will meet with the staff member to review performance outcomes and determine next steps. Possible outcomes include:

- **Successful completion:** The staff member has met the required standards of performance, and the PIP is concluded and step progression increase will be effective on the next available pay date, if applicable.
- **Extension:** Additional time may be provided if there has been reasonable progress but further improvement is needed.
- **Unsuccessful completion:** If the staff member has not met the required standards of performance by the end date stipulated in the PIP, a further PIP may be initiated, or the staff member may face discipline up to and including termination of employment.

For greater clarity, the PIP is not itself a disciplinary measure. However, if the PIP is not successfully completed it may lead to discipline up to and including termination.

The University recognizes that there may be circumstances when employees will have special needs that may impact performance and which require accommodation in accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. Each circumstance will be dealt with on an individual basis. The University will work with each staff member to accommodate any individual needs and staff are expected to cooperate in the process.

7. New employees

Staff members who have successfully completed their probationary period but have worked only a portion of the fiscal year will participate in the process but will only be assessed for the period of time they have worked. Goals and objectives for new employees should be determined based on what is appropriate for their length of service.

8. Reporting concerns

Staff members are encouraged to discuss any concerns they have regarding the Performance Development Program directly with their manager, senior leader, or Human Resources, whomever is most appropriate given the circumstances and concerns.

If a staff member disagrees with aspects of their Annual Reflection, they may include a written statement outlining the areas of disagreement within their Annual Reflection when they acknowledge completion of the process. This information will be visible to their manager, senior leader, and Human Resources and will be retained within the final copy of the Annual Reflection.

9. Related information

[St. Jerome's University Mission and Values](#)

[Salary Administration](#)

[Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities policy](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)