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About the Program

Developing and renewing the job-related knowledge and skills of all University employees is vitally important to our future. As a supplement to daily work-related dialogue, the performance review process provides a systematic, valid and fair means of identifying development needs and recognizing related growth and accomplishment. It helps to ensure that effective two-way communication takes place about assigned duties and responsibilities, what is expected, the degree to which expectations are being met, and areas for necessary improvements. It can also help ensure that employees are paid fairly andreasonably in terms of their individual contributions and achievements in helping to meet University objectives.

Simplicity is a key feature of the Exempt Group Performance Review Program. At the beginning of the annual Review Period, evaluators (supervisors) and the incumbents reporting to them agree on assigned responsibilities and related performance expectations tailored to each position. At the conclusion of the Review Period, these goals are used as standards for measuring and reporting performance effectiveness. The resulting Overall Performance Ratings are a contributing factor in determining annual merit program increases and progression through salary ranges. For newly hired employees, a Performance Review is also conducted at the completion of three months’ service (i.e., mid-way through the probationary period).

Flexibility is another key feature. Given the diversity of University of Guelph Exempt Group positions, evaluators and incumbents are encouraged to be creative in tailoring performance review program requirements to reflect their particular needs. As long as meaningful, two-way communication takes place about responsibilities, performance expectations and performance outcomes for all facets of the job, and the Overall Performance Rating is perceived as fair by both the evaluator and the incumbent, the underlying purpose of the program will be satisfied.

1 Through discussions with an incumbent, responsibilities and related performance expectations may be revised during the Review Period to accommodate changing circumstances and directions.
**Fairness** is also a critical value of this program. If communication between evaluators and incumbents is regular, open and honest, the Annual Review Meeting should represent no more than a wrap-up of previous conversations about performance expectations and results. In other words, there should be no surprises for either party at the close of each Review Period.

Should an incumbent disagree with the Overall Performance Rating assigned by their evaluator, every possible effort should be made to resolve this disagreement through further meetings with the evaluator. In the event of an impasse, the incumbent may invoke the help of a member of the Exempt Executive who would attend a meeting with the incumbent and the evaluator. (See section #8 of the *Memorandum of Agreement*).
Summarizing Job Responsibilities

Changing operational objectives and departmental priorities may cause significant shifts in job responsibilities for Exempt Group staff. Accordingly, at the outset of the Review Period, the evaluator and incumbent should work together to prepare an itemized summary of key responsibilities anticipated for the year ahead. This will help to ensure that performance reviews are not only accurate, but also fair in terms of resources available to the incumbent (including time). Through discussions with the incumbent, responsibilities may be revised during the Review Period to accommodate changing circumstances and directions.

Performing regular, ongoing responsibilities. For all Exempt Group employees, major duties described in Job Fact Sheets should be included for performance review purposes. Activity headings listed under Section 2 of the Job Fact Sheet (Job Description) may be helpful in identifying these. Preparation for the review process provides an ideal opportunity for evaluators and incumbents to review current Job Fact Sheets and incorporate necessary changes.

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2 See Column (A) of the attached *Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents.*

3 Ultimately, accountability for establishing job responsibilities rests with the evaluator.
Setting Related Performance Expectations

Preparing an itemized listing of major job responsibilities will not, by itself, ensure that parties to the review process share a common understanding of performance levels expected. Miscommunication early in the process about targets for performance outcomes can result in unnecessary disagreements later about assigned performance ratings. Accordingly, at the beginning of the Review Period, the evaluator and incumbent should clarify in writing the related performance expectations for each job responsibility listed in the overall summary of duties described above. While the evaluator is ultimately accountable for establishing performance expectations, these should be developed jointly whenever possible. Through discussions with the incumbent, performance expectations determined at the outset of the review process may be revised later in the Review Period to accommodate changing conditions.

Targets for performance are frequently well-described in Exempt Group Job Fact Sheets. In such cases, for the sake of brevity in listing performance expectations, parties to the review process may choose to use cross-references to the Job Fact Sheet.

Performance expectations listed for each job responsibility should include related Actions for Improvement which are decided at the close of the previous Performance Review.

In general, performance expectations should be:

- Conducive to fostering the incumbent’s continuous renewal and intellectual growth. (They should challenge the incumbent’s capabilities in terms of current knowledge, skills and abilities).

- Realistic and achievable within the actual limits of the incumbent’s authority, responsibility, control and available resources.

- Defined in terms of expected results, outcomes or conditions to be achieved rather than in terms of activities to be performed.

- Stated in positive terms, that is, in terms of what is to be done rather than what is to be avoided.

- Written forcefully, beginning with such terms as “achieve”, “complete by” and “replace”, which suggest results and encourage a sense of accomplishment.

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4 See Column (B) of the attached Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents.

5 For example, see Column (B) of the Sample Worksheet presented in Appendix A.

6 See Column (G) of the attached Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents.

7 In keeping with the human resource management philosophy recommended by the University’s Strategic Planning Commission.
Setting Related Performance Expectations

Forecasting Workloads

Job responsibilities and related performance expectations planned for the Review Period should be realistic, achievable and fair in terms of conflicting priorities and limited working hours available to the incumbent. It is therefore important that the evaluator and incumbent discuss and agree on an anticipated workload percentage for each assigned responsibility. Like other decisions reached during the performance review planning phase, these workload projections may be revisited later and adjusted if necessary.

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8 See Column (C) of the attached *Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents*.

9 For examples, see Column (C) of the *Sample Worksheet* presented in Appendix A.
Conducting the Annual Review

Step #1: Preparation

To help ensure that annual review discussions are meaningful and productive, adequate preparation by both parties is required. (The attached Suggested Worksheet will prove useful for these purposes). Prior to the meeting, the evaluator and incumbent should:

! Consider the incumbent’s achievements for the past year in relation to pre-established job responsibilities and related performance expectations, and prepare a preliminary summary of performance ratings.

! For the coming year, prepare a proposed listing of key job responsibilities, corresponding performance expectations, and respective workload allocations.

Step #2: The Annual Review Meeting

During the meeting, the evaluator and incumbent should:

! Discuss the incumbent’s accomplishments during the past year, with specific reference to job responsibilities and performance expectations established earlier for the Review Period. For all employees, discuss the degree to which the incumbent attained expected results in completing regular ongoing (Job Fact Sheet) responsibilities.

! Acknowledge achievements, identify shortfalls, and ascertain needs for performance improvement. (Performance expectations for the period ahead should incorporate development needs identified.)

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10 Normally, the probationary period for Exempt staff is six months. In keeping with legal requirements and established University policy, a formal review should be conducted with probationary employees at the completion of three months’ service.

11 Not required for the initial review cycle.
At present, forwarding a copy of the finalized Worksheet to Human Resources is not necessary.

Document the outcome of these discussions and rate performance. (Again, the attached *Suggested Worksheet* will be helpful for these purposes.) Whenever possible, the evaluator and incumbent should seek agreement on performance ratings. However, authority for deciding these ratings ultimately rests with the evaluator. Once completed, the Worksheet should be signed by the incumbent, the evaluator, and the person to whom the evaluator reports. For future reference, the evaluator and incumbent should retain a final copy.¹²

Seek agreement on key job responsibilities, performance expectations and workload allocations for the period ahead. Through discussions with the incumbent, these decisions may be revised during the Review Period to accommodate changes in operational objectives, departmental priorities or resources available to the incumbent.

¹² At present, forwarding a copy of the finalized Worksheet to Human Resources is *not* necessary.
To help ensure that performance is rated fairly and consistently across the University, the following descriptors should be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance rating</th>
<th>Use of this performance rating implies:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds expectations(^{14})</td>
<td>Performance of the responsibility \textit{substantially exceeded} related performance expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rating: 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets expectations fully</td>
<td>Performance of the responsibility \textit{fully satisfied} related performance expectations. While improvements are to be encouraged (as always), the evaluator has no reason to complain if these are not forthcoming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rating: 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets most expectations</td>
<td>Performance of the responsibility \textit{satisfied most related performance expectations}. Some actions for improvement are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rating: 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
<td>Performance of the responsibility \textit{satisfied several related performance expectations}, but substantial actions for improvement are required for key elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rating: 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Performance of the responsibility \textit{satisfied few related performance expectations}, and substantial actions for improvement are required for most elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rating: 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Rating Overall Performance} \(^{15}\)

Ratings assigned to performance of individual job responsibilities (above) are multiplied by the respective workload percentages. The resulting scores are totalled to provide an Overall Performance Rating for the incumbent \textit{which cannot be less than 1.00 or greater than 5.00} \(^{16}\). As an informal means of helping to ensure that individual judgements made in

\(^{13}\) See Column (D) of the attached Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents. Normally, performance ratings assigned to individual responsibilities should be whole numbers, (e.g., 1 to 5). In rare circumstances, the evaluator and incumbent may agree to use fractional ratings, (e.g., 3.5). However, averaging differences of opinion on ratings to arrive at these fractions is strongly discouraged, as this may preclude meaningful and important discussions about performance.

\(^{14}\) Use of this rating is normally reserved for a small proportion of the employee population who perform “with distinction”.

\(^{15}\) See Column (F) of the attached Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents.

\(^{16}\) For example, see Columns (C), (D) and (F) of the Sample Worksheet presented in Appendix A.
arriving at the Overall Performance Rating are fair and reasonable, the following guidelines are offered for consideration by the evaluator and incumbent in finalizing the Overall Performance Rating\textsuperscript{17}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Performance Rating</th>
<th>In terms of the incumbent’s overall job performance, scores in this range normally imply:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4.51 to 5.00\textsuperscript{18} | - Performance \textit{substantially exceeds all basic job requirements} on a regular basis. The incumbent \textit{consistently surpasses performance expectations} for the position.  
- The incumbent takes unusual initiative in exploring new and improved methods for achieving results, implementing challenging tasks, and is able to take on extra projects without defaulting in the performance of basic responsibilities.  
- The incumbent is generally recognized as a true expert in this position and is contributing outstanding worth to the University. Outsiders commonly seek out the incumbent for assistance in solving problems.  
- The incumbent rarely, if ever, requires supervision or follow-up. (Performs independently in planning, anticipating problems and taking appropriate action. Shows a good grasp of the “big picture” and thinks beyond the details of the project at hand). |
| 3.51 to 4.50 | - Performance is \textit{fully effective in all basic job requirements} on a regular basis. The incumbent \textit{consistently achieves performance expectations} for the position.  
- Performance is what can be expected of a fully qualified and experienced person assigned to the position. (The evaluator feels secure in assigning any kind of work within the scope of the incumbent’s job).  
- While performance improvements are to be encouraged (as always), the evaluator has no reason to complain if these are not forthcoming.  
- The evaluator receives few complaints from others with whom the incumbent’s work interfaces. Errors in judgment are rare and seldom repeated.  
- The incumbent does not spend undue time on unimportant items, neglecting problems or projects that should have priority.  
- Under normal supervision and follow-up, projects/initiatives are completed on schedule and in keeping with expected results. |

\textsuperscript{17} These guidelines have been developed with longer-service incumbents in mind and may not be as applicable in other circumstances. As with other elements of the Program, flexibility in interpreting and applying these guidelines is encouraged.

\textsuperscript{18} Normally reserved for a small proportion of the employee population.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Performance Rating</th>
<th>In terms of the incumbent’s overall job performance, scores in this range normally imply:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.51 to 3.50              | • Performance satisfies most basic job requirements on a regular basis. The incumbent is meeting many performance expectations reasonably well, but improvement is needed in some areas.  
• The incumbent shows drive, but needs more know-how (or vice versa).  
• The evaluator receives occasional complaints from others with whom the incumbent’s work interfaces.  
• On occasion, the evaluator or others have to “carry” the incumbent to help ensure that performance expectations are met.  
• The incumbent sometimes requires close supervision, including step-by-step guidance on projects/initiatives. Occasionally, the evaluator does not feel secure in assigning certain kinds of work within the scope of the incumbent’s job, including work requiring effective collaboration with others. |
| 1.51 to 2.50              | • Performance is not effective in several basic job requirements on a regular basis. Significant actions for improvement are needed in key areas of the position.  
• Complaints from others with whom the incumbent’s work interfaces are not uncommon. When informed of these complaints, the incumbent takes corrective measures to avoid repeated errors in judgment.  
• The incumbent often requires close supervision, including step-by-step guidance on projects/initiatives. For several kinds of work within the scope of the incumbent’s job, the evaluator does not feel secure in assigning tasks.  
• Having been clearly informed of shortcomings and given a reasonable opportunity for improvement, the incumbent is showing significant signs of progress and willingness to improve, but still needs growth in key elements of the job. |
| 1.00 to 1.50               | • Performance is not effective in most basic job requirements on a regular basis. Significant actions for improvement are needed for most areas of the position. There are major shortfalls in meeting established performance objectives. The incumbent just doesn’t seem to get things done.  
• The incumbent lacks the drive and know-how to achieve most results expected of the job.  
• The evaluator receives frequent complaints from others with whom the incumbent’s work interfaces. Errors in judgment are common and often repeated, even when brought to the incumbent's attention.  
• The incumbent almost always requires close supervision, including step-by-step guidance on projects and initiatives. The evaluator does not feel secure in assigning most kinds of work within the scope of the incumbent’s job.  
• The incumbent has been clearly informed of shortcomings, has been given reasonable opportunity to improve, but performance worsens or shows no significant signs of improvement. |

19 Hopefully, reserved for a small proportion of the employee population.
## Exempt Group Performance Review Program

### Suggested Worksheet for Evaluators and Incumbents

(For your convenience, a WordPerfect file for this document is available at www.uoguelph.ca/HR/download)

**Review Period:**

**Evaluator:**

**Incumbent:**

**Position title:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date agreed:</th>
<th>(A) Responsibilities</th>
<th>(B) Related performance expectations</th>
<th>(C) % total workload</th>
<th>(D) Perf. rating (1 to 5)</th>
<th>(E) Incumbent’s Self-rating</th>
<th>(F) Score (Cols C x D)</th>
<th>(G) Comments, Actions for improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Totals: 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall rating:** (Max. 5.00)

**University/community service (optional and not rated).** If disclosed, also state how it may enhance work performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluator:</th>
<th>Overall comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incumbent:</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Supervisor of Evaluator: | |

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1. See *Exempt Group Performance Review Program Guidelines* (Conducting the Annual Review), page 6.
2. As above, pages 6-7.
3. As above (Summarizing Job Responsibilities), page 3. For all employees, responsibilities should include regular Job Fact Sheet duties. Through mutual agreement, responsibilities may be revised during the Review Period to accommodate changing circumstances and directions.
4. As above (Setting Related Performance Expectations), pages 4-5. Performance expectations described in Column (B) help to clarify expected results for each responsibility listed in Column (A). For regular responsibilities already clarified in a job description, performance objectives should state, as a minimum, “as per Job Fact Sheet”. Where appropriate, performance objectives should also specify milestones for achievement, together with any related Actions for Improvement identified and specified in Column (G) for the previous Performance Review. See Appendix A for examples.
5. As above (Rating Performance of Individual Job Responsibilities), page 8.
6. Completion of this column is *required* for performance ratings of 3 or lower in Column D.
## Appendix A: Sample Worksheet - Exempt Group Performance Review Program

(For your convenience, a WordPerfect file for this document is available at www.uoguelph.ca/HR)

### Review Period:
Incumbent: J. Doe
Evaluator: Position title: Animal Health Technician

### Completed Prior to Review Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Related performance expectations</th>
<th>(C) % total workload</th>
<th>(D) Perf. rating (1 to 5)</th>
<th>(E) Incumbent’s Self-rating</th>
<th>(F) Score (Cols C x D)</th>
<th>(G) Comments, Actions for improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Animal Nursing Care</td>
<td>As per Job Fact Sheet: Observe, evaluate, record health status of animals - general patient management. Administer prescribed therapeutic treatment/drugs to animal patients. Calculate and prepare drug and fluid regimes. Provide supportive nursing care, e.g., grooming, sponge-cleaning, etc., for animal patients. Feed animals when specialized diets are required.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>Animals fed and watered appropriately, cages cleaned, and environmental hosdhtfoyhdsf are rotated through most housing units. Displays sound knowledge of normal animal behaviour and physical health. Properly assesses emergencies, reacts appropriately so as to minimize distress. Performs complete physical examinations and inoculates animals for immunization. Administers medications using appropriate methods and techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Technical Procedures</td>
<td>As per Job Fact Sheet: Set up equipment / supplies and assist with various medical procedures. Collect blood for whole blood/plasma bank.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>Pays careful attention to quality/quantity of specimens. Keeps abreast of new developments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Completed Prior to Review Period**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Related performance expectations</th>
<th>% total workload</th>
<th>(D) Perf. rating (1 to 5)</th>
<th>(E) Incumbent’s Self-rating</th>
<th>(F) Score (Cols C x D)</th>
<th>(G) Comments, Actions for improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3) Instruction and Coaching | As per Job Fact Sheet:  
Set up and instruct bandaging techniques for 4th year students.  
Set up and participate in undergraduate clinical medicine labs. | 20 | 4 | 4 | .80 | Prepares appropriate teaching materials.  
Keeps up-to-date with current developments in teaching techniques; uses approved guidelines/manuals/procedures; uses available instructional aids fully and effectively; provides appropriate amount of information at appropriate time. |
| 4) Additional tasks | As per Job Fact Sheet:  
Record-keeping, billing, purchases. | 10 | 5 | 5 | .50 | Consistent accuracy and great attention to detail. |

**Totals:** 100%

**Overall rating:** (Max. 5.00)

***

4.10

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**University/community service (optional and not rated).** If disclosed, also state how it may enhance work performance.

University: Member of Health and Safety Committee - have become more aware of possible workplace hazards.

Community: Coach Junior Hockey three times a week - has helped me to develop my leadership skills.

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**Overall comments**

**Evaluator:** Very good performance! Thank you for your effort.

**Incumbent:**

**Signatures**

Evaluator:  
Incumbent:  
Supervisor of Evaluator: