April 2024

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April 2024

1. What is Performance for Growth (P4G)?

P4G is a framework that provides the opportunity for all UCD employees to have at least one annual conversation with their line manager, Head of School or alternate reviewer, within which

- achievements and challenges of the previous year are reflected on;
- objectives for the coming year are agreed;
- a development plan is discussed and agreed;
- career aspirations are explored and supported where possible.

2. Why is P4G needed?

Performance for Growth supports UCD in delivering the mission and achieving the vision expressed in our 2020-2024 University Strategy. P4G is informed by and supports the University Strategy generally, and in particular, our mission to 'provide a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential' and Core Objective 4 to 'attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff'·

This framework will:

- Help all employees achieve their potential;
- Provide clarity on objectives and performance expectations;
- Provide feedback on achievements;
- Help in career development and progression.

3. Does P4G cover all UCD employees?

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

In line with UCD's Probationary Period Policy, all employees should engage in the probation process during the first year of service and must be successfully completed before moving on to P4G.

4. How do P4G and the probationary process operate?

The probation policy and process are separate to P4G, but as the probation process encompasses several elements of P4G (objectives, feedback and development supporting performance in role), and as it must be successfully completed, it takes precedence over P4G until it is successfully concluded. The probation process requires meetings to be held on commencement of the role and during the probation period. All eligible employees should either be engaged in a probationary process or P4G. Where the probationary process is still underway for an employee it should continue until its full completion and thereafter P4G will apply. The full Probationary Periods Policy is available on the HR website.

5. If probation is completed can I start P4G immediately or do I have to wait for the next Review Year to come around?

Once a probationary process is completed successfully, participation in P4G can commence. The only difference will be that the objectives and development plan will reflect a shorter time frame adjusted to align with the next P4G cycle.

6. What if I move School/Unit during the P4G Review Year?

If the Reviewee moves to a new School/Unit during the P4G review year, a P4G conversation should be scheduled in the new School/Unit as soon as possible to set objectives in line with the relevant strategy. Objectives and development planning should be adjusted to relate to the timeframe remaining in the current P4G review year.

7. What will I experience in P4G?

You will be assigned a Reviewer, normally your line manager, Head of School or an Alternate Reviewer. You will meet with them for a conversation to:
- Review how the previous year has gone for you;
- Agree a set of objectives related to your role which support the overall objectives of the School or Unit in the coming year;
- Agree a development plan, identifying skills and competencies you wish to develop or enhance over the coming year and how you will achieve this development. The plan may include activities like involvement in new projects within or outside your School/Unit, representing your School or Unit on a committee, mentoring, coaching, or a formal training programme.
- Explore your career options and aspirations. (This discussion will help inform your development plan.)

8. What if I'm happy in my role and don't want to progress my career any further?

The P4G process will benefit everybody. Even if you are happy in your role it will still help you to have clarity around your role and feedback on your contribution, and to have the opportunity to further develop skills that support your performance in your current role.

9. Where is the conversation recorded?

Your reflective review, agreed objectives and development plan will be recorded in an online system (located in InfoHub) which you and your Reviewer will be able to access.

10. What happens to the objectives and development plan once they are agreed?

The P4G process involves a reflective process of reviewing progress on both the objectives and development plan each year, and then updating them for the following year.
However, both you and your reviewer are encouraged to have regular check-ins to explore progress, consider obstacles and ways of dealing with them, ensuring that the end of year review process is straightforward with no surprises.

11. What is a Reviewee?

Everyone within scope of P4G working in UCD (see Q3) will be a Reviewee and participate in this process to align their work activities with the needs of the School/Unit in which they work, receive feedback on their performance and contribution and explore their career and development potential.

12. What is a Reviewer?

A Reviewer is someone who is there to support colleagues in the achievement of objectives aligned with their role and the needs of the School/Unit, to provide them with meaningful feedback, to help them to realise their potential and to explore their career options. The Reviewer of an individual is normally their direct line manager, and for Faculty is normally the Head of School.

13. How many Reviewees should any Reviewer have?

Research suggests the optimum ratio is somewhere between 1:8 and 1:12, and so we are adopting this as a guideline. However, this is not a rule, and flexibility exists for Heads of School/Unit to use their judgement and discretion.

14. What is an Alternate Reviewer?

In some Schools where the Head of School is the line manager for many of the employees in the School, the Head of School would have too many Reviewees for this process to be effective. In these cases, the Head of School will form a panel of Alternate Reviewers who will have delegated authority to carry out the P4G conversations.

15. How will the Alternate Reviewer approach work?

The Head of School will remain the manager of the Faculty and Professional Staff in the School. The Head will bring their team of Alternate Reviewers together at the start of the process to discuss the School's strategic priorities and objectives and explore how these may be supported through individual objectives. They will also consider the Academic Workload Model and how commitments within it would have relevance in a P4G context.

16. What should a Line Manager consider when selecting an Alternate Reviewer?

The Head of School/Unit will propose pairings between Reviewees and Alternate Reviewers based on their respective experience and the quality of their relationships. Alternate Reviewers will often, but not necessarily, be in a more senior role than the Reviewee.
In identifying the Alternate Reviewer, the Line Manager should consider that they:

- understand the role the Reviewee is responsible for carrying out,
- are aware of the strategic priorities and objectives of the School/Unit and

- are interested in supporting colleagues in identifying development opportunities.

It is recommended that clear and timely communication is maintained with them throughout this process which will contribute to a successful pairing. The Alternate Reviewer relationship with the Reviewee, for the purposes of support in the context of P4G, may continue throughout the year if advised by the Head of School/Unit.

17. What Training will Reviewers receive?

All Reviewers will be fully briefed and prepared for their role with a view to ensuring that they have a full understanding of and can effectively manage and contribute to the process. All Reviewers will be provided with a focussed half day workshop on the P4G process, objective setting and how to give constructive feedback.

Many will also have had the opportunity to participate in the RISE Leadership which cover some materials that are relevant to supporting good feedback conversations with colleagues.

18. What training will Reviewees receive?

As a Reviewee you will be comprehensively briefed in the P4G framework to ensure that you will benefit fully from the process. There will be a range of supports provided for Reviewees to ensure that everyone has full understanding of what the P4G process entails and is well prepared for it.

19. Who maintains the Reviewer/Reviewee assignments list?

The assignments of Reviewer to Reviewees on the online P4G system are maintained by local P4G Administrators who are appointed by the Head of School/Unit within the School/Unit.

The local P4G administrators are responsible for keeping the P4G system assignments updated throughout the year.

20. Who can see my documents in the P4G online system?

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

For the purpose of confidentiality there is no print option in the P4G system however, if a hard copy is used for the purpose of facilitating the meeting, this must be destroyed immediately after it's intended use.

21. How long are records retained in the online system?

The full P4G review report for each Reviewee is retained on the system until the P4G review report for the following year is completed, to allow reference to the prior year report during the process. After this time the Reviewee may choose to remove the report from the system. However, the system also provides the

capability for Reviewees to retain their P4G reports for as long as they remain employed by UCD, forming a record of their career development.

22. What sort of 'personal' data will be contained in the online system?

The P4G online system will include the minimum necessary information for the individual to be identified and to support the process. Therefore, it will include name, current grade or level, unique personnel number, job title, Job Family Indicator for professional and administrative roles, and length of time in current role.

23. When will P4G happen?

The annual P4G review year runs from 1st May through to 30th April. Conversations will start in April and should be completed i.e., objectives agreed for the coming year, development plan created, and future career aspirations discussed by the end of June.

24. What happens if I am on leave or due to commence leave (other than annual leave) during the P4G Review Year?

If the Reviewee is on sick leave, family related leave or research sabbatical leave when P4G conversations are due to take place i.e. April to end-June, the conversation should be scheduled as soon as possible after the Reviewee returns to normal duties.
If the Reviewee is due to take family related leave or research sabbatical leave during the annual P4G Review Year the P4G conversation can be scheduled in the normal manner i.e. April to end-June, with objectives and development planning adjusted to relate to the timeframe up to the commencement of the leave.

25. What happens if my Reviewer changes when I have already initiated or shared my form?

If you have initiated your form, any saved text within the form will be retained. If you have already shared the form with your Reviewer, and then your Reviewer changes, the status of the form will revert back to 'Draft Initiated' and you will need to re-share your form with your new Reviewer.

26. What happens if I initiated a form in the previous P4G cycle, but the review was never clicked as 'Complete'?

If a form relating to a previous P4G cycle has a status of 'Draft Initiated' or 'Review Shared', you will be able to access a Read-only version of this form. Your Reviewer will see the status of your form but will not be able to access it. Once you have initiated and shared your form for the current cycle, your Reviewer will see this new form as normal.

27. Who decides what the objectives are?

Objectives are set jointly and agreed by the Reviewee and Reviewer. The P4G framework enables links to be created between the University's objectives, the School/Unit's strategic plans/priorities and the skills, experience and development needs of the individual, within the context of their career objectives.

28. How many objectives should I agree with my Reviewer?

No matter what your role, you should have three to five key objectives which align with your School/Unit plan and UCD values.

They should also appropriately reflect responsibilities within your role to support equality, diversity and inclusion at UCD.

29. Are there specific headings under which my objectives should be categorised?

Yes, details of the specific headings under which objectives should be categorised are outlined below;

FACULTY

For Faculty, the objectives must be listed under the designated headings: Research, Scholarship and Innovation; Teaching and Learning; and Leadership and Contribution, with at least one in each category. For those Faculty members who manage people, in addition to the designated headings, one of your objectives should relate to the development of your team.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

For Professional Staff one objective must be under the heading of Leadership and Contribution. This heading is intended to recognise the many types of activities that staff members may engage in from time to time, that demonstrate leadership and contribution in line with the parameters of the role occupied. For those Staff members who manage people, one of your objectives should relate to the development of your team, this objective may either be categorised under the heading of Leadership and Contribution to fulfil this requirement or recorded as a separate objective.

TECHNICAL STAFF

For Technical Staff one objective must be under the heading of Leadership and Contribution. This heading is intended to recognise the many types of activities that staff members may engage in from time to time, that demonstrate leadership and contribution in line with the parameters of the role occupied. The Development Framework for Technical Staff will support the development for the other objectives. For those Staff who manage people, one of your objectives should relate to the development of your team, this objective may either be categorised under Leadership and Contribution to fulfil this requirement or recorded as a separate objective.

30. What type of things might be included in a development plan?

A development plan is focussed on skills, competencies or behaviours that support performance in the current role, as well as consideration of future career planning needs. It should reflect the 70/20/10 model for development. That is 70% of development is typically achieved through experience - projects, special

assignments, committee membership, secondments or rotations; 20% is typically through other people – coaching, mentoring, feedback, communities of practice; and 10% through structured courses – formal training and eLearning.

31. How can the P4G framework align with Academic Workload Modelling practices?

Where Academic Workload Modelling (AWM) practices are in place, these can be discussed as part of the P4G conversation regarding planning and agreeing priorities for members of faculty. The AWM and the P4G conversation can complement each other in the context of objective setting and capacity management. The Head of School is the manager of faculty within a School, and for the purposes of P4G where there is an Alternate Reviewer in place, discussing the AWM as part of this conversation may not always be possible.

32. How is performance going to be reviewed?

Performance will be reviewed against the objectives set by both parties during the planning and objective setting meeting at the beginning of the Review Year. Regular check-ins between Reviewers and Reviewees over the course of the year will make this review process easier.

33. How is development progress to be reviewed?

Development progress will be reviewed in the same way as performance. It will be reviewed against the development objectives agreed by the parties at the beginning of the Review Year.

34. How often will P4G meetings take place?

The formal P4G meeting will take place once a year; however, we recommend regular check-ins between Reviewers and Reviewees over the course of the year.

35. What about Academic Freedom?

P4G does not interfere in any way with the principle of Academic Freedom.

36. Is P4G compulsory?

Yes, participation in P4G is compulsory. The Performance for Growth Policy defines the scope of the framework which is applicable to all permanent employees of UCD. It also applies to all temporary employees, except where contracts are of less than one year in duration, or where they are covered by the Research Skills and Career Development Framework. However, employees on long term sick leave, maternity leave or career break are exempt from the process while on leave.

Individuals on temporary, fixed term contracts with less than one year remaining to their end date may agree, in discussion with their manager, that a close-off conversation would occur in place of a formal P4G conversation.

37. Is there any connection between P4G and pay or promotion (For Faculty or Professional staff)?

The Performance for Growth process provides a framework which, amongst other things, is explicitly intended to support members of faculty who are considering promotion. It includes reviewing readiness using the criteria laid out in the Development Framework for Faculty, and where necessary putting a development plan in place in order to address any gaps. In this context it is intended that applicants will utilise the P4G framework to support their preparation and related development.

Apart from this, P4G is not linked directly or indirectly with pay, incremental progression or promotion.

38. What, if any, connection does P4G have to discipline or IR issues?

P4G is not linked with formal disciplinary or grievance procedures. It is not an appropriate forum to address disciplinary matters, raise grievances or lodge complaints.

39. Is there another process for dealing with ongoing, serious underperformance issues?

Yes, there is a Performance Improvement Process which is used to provide greater support and focus on these cases. This process is separate to P4G and details of how it operates are available separately from your HR Partner. If serious underperformance issues are identified the matter will be referred to the Performance Improvement Process. The PIP process is published on the Managing for Success Toolkit in the section on underperformance.

40. What happens if there is a conflict of interest with my Reviewer?

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

41. Can I request an Alternate Reviewer?

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

42. What happens if agreement is not reached on objectives and development plans?

We expect that in the vast majority of cases agreement will be reached. In any cases where this does not happen, the case will be referred to next level line manager (in the case of an Alternate Reviewer, the Head of School).

43. Can my Trade Union representative accompany me?

In normal circumstances the only attendees at a P4G meeting are the Reviewer and Reviewee. The employee has the right to be accompanied either by a UCD colleague or by a representative from their

union (if applicable) at their meeting, by informing the Reviewer at least one week in advance of the date of the meeting. If a Reviewee is accompanied by a colleague or recognised Trade Union representative, the Reviewer may be accompanied by the relevant HR Partner.

44. Where can I get more information?

You should speak to your line manager/ Head of School in the first instance. Additional information is available at Performance for Growth website. In the meantime, you can also use the channel P4G@ucd.ie for submission of queries, which we will endeavour to answer and build into further FAQs.

April 2024

I. Roles within P4G

What is my role as Reviewee?	What is my role as Reviewer?
✓ Contribute to the creation and establishment of your own performance objectives in conjunction with your Reviewer	✓ Provide context to the Reviewee of how their efforts links to the activity and strategic objectives of the School/Unit's activities/priorities and UCD's strategic vision
✓ Identify and share any training and development needs you might have in relation to the future achievement of the agreed objectives	✓ Agree clear and appropriate priorities, directions and performance standards with the Reviewee
✓ Be prepared to receive relevant feedback on performance	✓ Give feedback on performance and jointly agree performance objectives for coming year
✓ Discuss any other issues which may impact on performance	✓ Provide guidance to the Reviewee
✓ Reflect on your own performance	✓ Discuss relevant performance development and career development (optional) opportunities as agreed with the Reviewee
✓ Maximise your potential and help meet your career aspirations	✓ Discuss not only the "what" for the year ahead but the "how" also i.e. UCD's six Values: excellence, integrity, collegiality, engagement, diversity and creativity

II. What is the role of the Head of School/Unit?

The Head of School/Unit is fully responsible for the successful rollout of P4G in their area. All Heads of School/Unit will be fully briefed and prepared to ensure that colleagues can get maximum benefit from the process. The key responsibilities of the Head of School/Unit are to:

 Ensure that the operation of P4G in academic areas is compliant with the principle of academic freedom.

 Ensure objectives established by the Reviewee and Reviewer are in line with the strategic objectives and priorities of the School/ Unit and the College (subject to the principle of academic freedom).

 Assign Reviewers to Reviewees in the online system and keep them updated throughout the year (Local P4G Administrators are appointed from within the School/Unit to maintain the Reviewer/Reviewee assignments in the online system).

 Oversee the role of Reviewers in relation to the process.

 Hold a Pre P4G meeting to brief the panel of Reviewers/Alternate Reviewers on the School/Unit plan and how this impacts on the setting of individual objectives.

 Hold a Post P4G meeting with the panel of Reviewers/Alternate Reviewers to get feedback on key trends and themes that emerged from the conversations and insights into School/Unit/College/University obstacles that might exist which could impact an individual's achievement of their objectives. This should be at a thematic level, and individual details should only be discussed in separate one-to-one meetings with the Head of School.

 Evaluate effectiveness of P4G in their School/Unit.

 Ensure P4G in their School/Unit is conducted fairly and equitably.

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