| CESAER Task Force Human Resources |

Report of the working group Performance Management and Appraisal Systems

February 2015

CESAER

Objectives of the working group and the working method

The objectives of the working group are to make an inventory of good practices with regard to performance management and appraisal systems among the members of the HR task force in order to inspire the member universities, to broaden the repertoire of methods used and to improve the performance management and appraisal systems where appropriate.

In order to achieve these goals, we set up several activities:

- Round table discussion on performance management and appraisal systems during a CESAER task force meeting, including a presentation of performance management and appraisal systems of all members of the HR task force (Valencia, February 2013)

- Bilateral visits between members of the task force on the topic of performance management and appraisal systems (January 2014: TU Delft- Chalmers University of Technology; March 2014 ETH Zurich-TU Delft)

- Workshop on performance management and appraisal systems during the HR conference at TU Delft (Delft, May 2014)

- Structured qualitative inventory of best practices by telephone interviews (July – August 2014)

Six members of the task force participated In this survey :

- ETH Zurich
- TU Delft
- Vienna University of Technology, TU Wien
- Aalto University
- RWTH Aachen University
- Chalmers University of Technology

Results/findings of the past period of the working group

Appraisal talks

Appraisal talks play an important part in an organisation's performance management programme and all universities engage in some kind of appraisal talks with their employees. The form and degree of formalization varies, as does the frequency of these talks as well as the staff involved (scientific / support staff). These talks generally constitute a core element of the performance management programme.

Most universities use a one year time span, but for professors it is often not annually, but once every two or three years. For tenure trackers in all systems a period of one year is used. In a minority of the universities, the appraisal talks are held in a systematic way and the process is well established; there is a standard appraisal form and appraisal talks are held with both academic staff (including full professors) and support staff. In some cases full professors are exempted from appraisal talks for legal reasons- either on the basis of privacy issues or special status. In many cases, the support staff is not included in the cycle. Where the support staff is included, the appraisal forms only differ slightly from the forms used for the academic staff.

The goals of the appraisal system may vary from institution to institution. In some universities these talks are not employed for appraisal purposes, but to discuss the development of individual staff members. There are no qualifications or scores involved. This is considered to be very motivating by the universities that follow this approach.[1] There are no legal implications to these development talks nor consequences for the salaries. The degree of formalization is rather low in these instances: varying from 'semi-structured interviews' to 'informal talks'. Other universities adopt a formalised approach where either salary or legal consequences are part of the appraisal system. Here the appraisal forms tend to be more complex and regulated. [2]

The criteria used to assess the performance of the academic staff were surprisingly similar among all members. The criteria are: research, education and 'service to the community' ; sometimes called 'good citizenship'. In addition, some universities have separate dimensions such as leadership, organization or valorisation. A minority of the universities indicate competences explicitly and attach a score to different competences but even where separate competences are not mentioned explicitly, they all contribute to the overall qualification of the individual employee. All universities have some system for counting publications and grants. The performance with regard to education is not as explicitly monitored as with regard to H-index/ publications, although some universities use student evaluations as input. These figures are taken into account in the appraisal system for the individual employee, but they are never the only indicator. 'Good citizenship', 'service to the community', valorisation and leadership are always part of the evaluation.

(1) See example Aalto University, Appendix 1

(2) See example Delft University of Technology, Appendix 2

Best practices

Delft University of Technology was cited by other universities as source of best practices.

Main features of Delft's appraisal system include:

- A complete result and development cycle centred around the annual appraisal talk. This includes preview and review meetings in which managers discuss performance criteria and reflect on the outcome of the appraisal talks in their department/ faculty.[3]

- Appraisal talks with scientific staff and support staff , using the same form for both employee groups

- A section in the appraisal form dedicated to a personal development plan (from 2016 there will be greater emphasis placed in the form on mobility and development).

- Two supervisory levels are present at the appraisal meeting (direct manager and manager above)

- A tool for 360 degree feedback. The appraisal form also prompts the staff member to give feedback to his manager/ supervisor.

- Attention paid to explicit job related competences.

- Annual evaluation of the result and development cycle leading to further innovation of the appraisal system.

Among the suggestions each university put forward as its best element in the appraisal system, the answers were:

- Very simple form (no more than 1 page)

- Similar process for all employees; no exceptions

- Supervisor has to record the rating in the centralized rating overview . Trends/ deviations in these ratings are discussed at department level and used in the feedback on the supervisor

- There are implications for salary (e.g. next salary step depends on satisfactory appraisal; appraisal talks are use as input for performance related measures such as promotion or bonuses). This connection to the salary system means that every employee has an incentive to conduct this interview.

- All is dependent on the quality of the supervisor; training, training, training! Organize specific training for supervisors on how to conduct good appraisal talks (how to motivate staff, address and tackle difficult issues, discuss development).

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(3) See example Delft University of Technology, Appendix 3

Performance management

Strategy/ direction: A majority of the universities makes sure the direction that a School/ Department/ Faculty is developing is linked to the strategy of the university by holding yearly strategic talks between the executive board and the management teams of the School/ Department/ Faculty. This is a fairly structured exercise in which the department has to show the explicit links between department activities and university-wide goals.

In some cases, the executive board can distribute (part of the) university budget along the lines of the strategic fit. In another case, the executive board could award start-up money/ seed funds. Only research topics that fit the university policy and strategy are eligible. It is not only a boost for young researchers, but also a means to steer on gender specific goals (in that case).

The performance of departments and faculties with respect to research output (publications) and acquisition (grants and funding) can also be a determining factor when allocating internal research budgets.

Summary of variations in performance management systems among universities

Features	Informal or less developed performance management	Formalised or advanced system for performance management
Frequency of appraisal talks	Irregular cycle	Fixed (mainly annual) assessment period
Process for appraisal talks	No standard procedure for executing and monitoring the appraisal process	Well established and well regulated assessment cycle
Assessment form	Simple form or no standard form	Standardised, complex form for all staff
Staff appraised	Scientific staff only (professors excluded)	Scientific staff (including professors) and support staff
Legal status of appraisal	No legal status or consequences for salary	Legal implications and consequences for salary
Goal of assessment talk	Informal talk about progress and career path	Formal performance appraisal, personal development plan, performance agreements
Participants in appraisal talk	Staff member and direct supervisor (2 participants)	Staff member, direct supervisor, manager of supervisor (3 participants)
Management Information	No central registration of appraisal results	Central registration of appraisal results, evaluation of appraisal cycle
Link between individual appraisals and university strategy	Weak	Strong (example Chalmers University)
Decisions regarding promotion and performance related bonuses	Manager has authority to promote staff/award bonuses	Proposals regarding promotion and bonus payments are discussed and decided at department level in, for example, review meetings

Policy recommendations

Appraisals: The working group is of the opinion that the quality of the performance of both the academic staff and support staff will benefit from regularly feedback- regardless of the degree to which this is formalised.

▶ We advise members of the task force to introduce a yearly appraisal system, both for academic staff and support staff.

Performance management: more reflection on the contribution of an individual to the wider organization, including the strategic fit, is encouraged.

Future outlook

Suggestions for new ways of working with regard to performance management are:

▶ Widen the exchange of knowledge and improve the quality of HR tools and strategy by extending the scope of bi-lateral visits to include CEASAER members currently outside the HR task force.

More information

Information on the TU Delft Result and Development cycle:
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/result-and-development-cycle-2014/rd-documents/

Result and development cycle:
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/result-and-development-cycle-2014/short-summary-r-and-d-cycle/

Example of Performance criteria:
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/career-development/performance-criteria/

Information on annual report
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/result-and-development-cycle-2014/annual-report/

Information on R&D meeting
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/result-and-development-cycle-2014/rd-meeting/

Information on feedback and finalisation
https://intranet.tudelft.nl/en/career-and-development/result-and-development-cycle-2014/feedback-and-finalisation/

Links to Aalto University's performance management:
Careers in general:
http://www.aalto.fi/en/about/careers/

Tenure track criteria:
http://www.aalto.fi/en/about/careers/tenure_track/evaluation/

Appendices

1. Development Discussion form, Aalto University
2. Result and Development form, Delft University of Technology
3. Result and Development cycle, Delft University of Technology
4. HR Task Force contacts for Performance Management and Appraisals

Aalto University
School of Engineering

FACULTY

DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Please fill in the form using the role-specific guide. Focus on a good discussion, clear agreements and documentation; so that the development discussion works as a practical tool for yourself, helping to define what is essential in your daily work.

BASIC INFORMATION	Employee	
	Supervisor	
	Date	
	Current position in Aalto career system	
REVIEW: Key results from past 12 months? Feedback?	Research/artistic work	
	Teaching	
	Service to the community	
PLAN: Key objectives for next 12 months?	Research/artistic work	
	Teaching	
	Service to the community	
SUPPORT: What support is needed e.g. through competence development or from supervisor & colleagues?		
LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES AND PLANS, e.g. for career and development?		
OTHER ISSUES: Any other issues related to, e.g., work community, environment or well-being at work?		
Signatures	Supervisor	Employee

Appendix 2 - Result and development form, Delft University of Technology

Summary

Name of staff member	xx	Position, profile, level, #fte	
Employee number		Scale/step	
Department		R&D period	
		Date of R&D interview	

Name of assessor		ETV-level (English Language Skills	
Name of co-assessor			
Name colleagues / stakeholders for input		BKO-level (University Teaching Qualification)	

R&D form seen[1]/ annual agreements accepted	**Agreed:**	**Agreed:**	**Agreed:**
Staff member	Assessor	Co-assessor	Assessing authority
date:	date:	date:	date:

Total score

	I	II	III	IV
	Below expected level of performance	**At basic level of performance**	**At expected level of performance**	**Exceeds expected level of performance**
Total score	☐	☐	☐	☐

The agenda for the interview

1. Assessment
2. Annual agreements last period, results & reflection on performance last period
3. New annual agreements
4. Career prospects and long term employability
5. Feedback on supervisor
6. Any other points

Annexes

- ❑ Annual teaching report
- ❑ Annual research report
- ❑ Any other relevant documents

To be added by the staff member

- Compulsory for all academic staff who teach [2]
- Optional
- Optional

PS-nr. **«Personeelsnummer»**	SSC-HR
BE «BeheersEenheid»	
Tab **R&O**	

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[1] If a staff member does not agree with the content of their assessment, they may submit a request to have it reviewed to the assessing authority, no later than two weeks after signing the report. If the staff member does not agree with the decision of the assessing authority, he/she may submit an objection in writing, no later than six weeks after being informed of the decision. For more information, see A-Z index Objections and Appeals.
[2] If teaching is a key component of your function, then you can use the Teaching Annual Report. See A-Z index R&D Cycle.

1. Assessment	To be completed by the supervisor

The key components are determined by the UFO profile, but can be adjusted if these are not in line with the agreed tasks and agreed annual agreements. Any changes should be made in consultation with the supervisor.

	I	II	III	IV
	Below expected level of performance	**At basic level of performance**	**At expected level of performance**	**Exceeds expected level of performance**
Total score	**See first page**			
Key component 1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Key component 2	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐

Explanatory notes by supervisor
Start text

2. Annual agreements for the last period: results and reflection on performance	To be completed by staff member (beforehand) and supervisor (afterwards)

The supervisor and the staff member reflect on the performance of the staff member, the way in which the set targets have been achieved and how this is evident (what went well, what could be improved?).

If annual agreements for the last period have not been realised, the staff member says why this is the case and what is needed in order to realise the agreement(s). There is also an opportunity here to state the extent to which the staff member contributes to the goals of the group/department/faculty/field/TU Delft.

Results last period	
Staff member	
Start text	
Results last period per key component (you may add an attachment)	
Staff member	
Start text	
Reflection on performance and results: what went well, what can be improved?	
Staff member	**Supervisor**
Start text	Start text

3. New annual agreements	To be completed by supervisor and staff member

Annual agreements for performance and output (per key component) and personal development
Start text

4. Career prospects and long-term employability	To be completed by supervisor and staff member

How does the staff member view his/her career prospects and personal development? This could relate to a difference balance in his/her tasks and responsibilities; an adjustment in roles; a change of job (horizontal or vertical mobility, either inside or outside TU Delft) or perhaps developing the competencies or behaviour needed for the next career move (take a look here at your UFO profile and the corresponding competencies). Consider also the how the desired profile fits in the current and future context of the department/faculty/staff division.

	Completed by staff member
Short-term perspective	Start text
Long-term perspective (3-5 years)	Start text
Personal development	Start text
Reflection on above by the supervisor (if any agreements are made with regard to career and/ or personal development in the context of the annual agreements, please fill these in under 3). Start text.	

5. Feedback on supervisor	To be completed by staff member

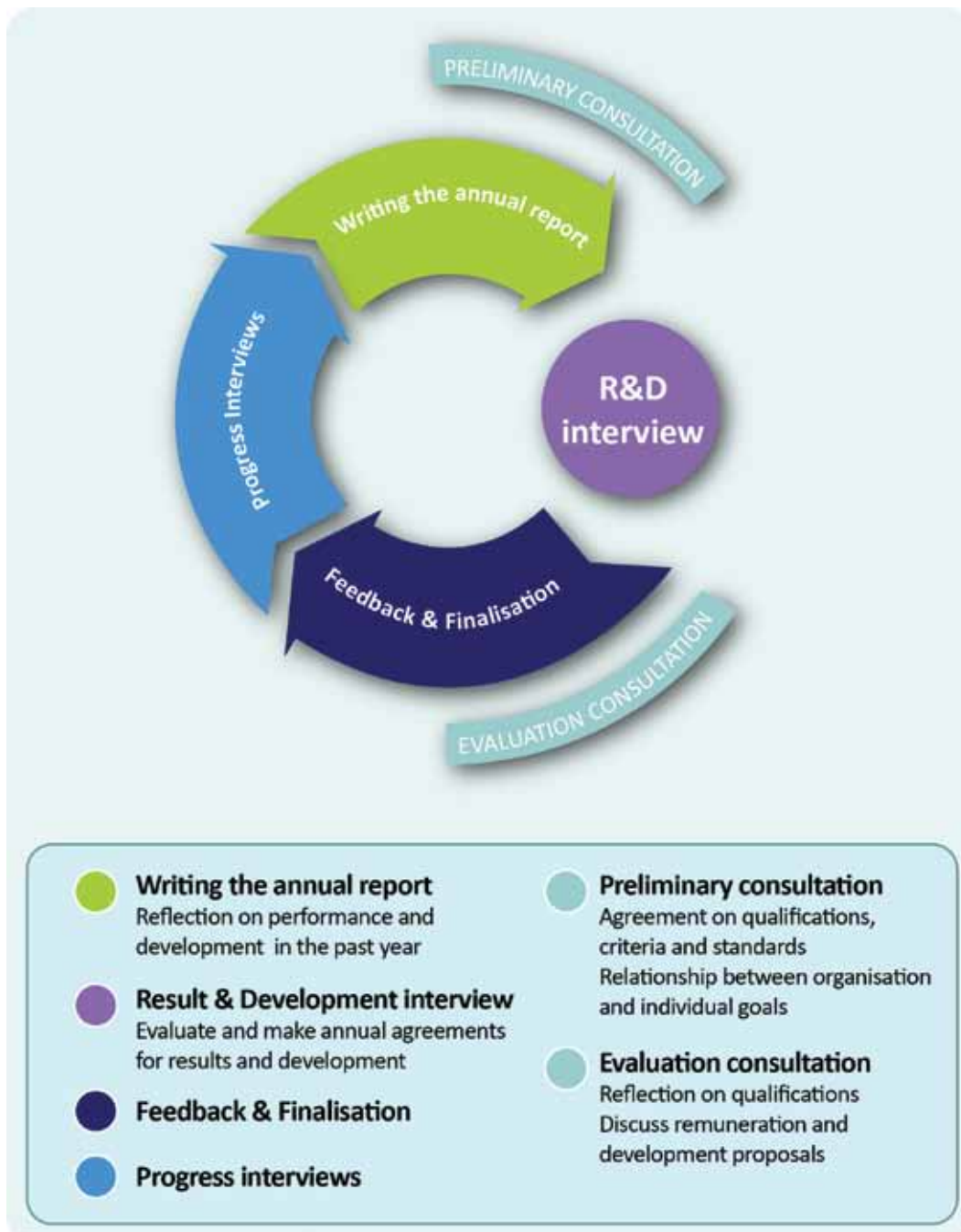What would the staff member appreciate the supervisor doing more of, or less of, or doing differently?

Start text.

6. Any other points	To be completed by staff member

Start text

Do you want to learn more about the R&D cycle? Look at www.tudelft.nl/ROpilot

Writing the annual report
Reflection on performance and development in the past year

Result & Development interview
Evaluate and make annual agreements for results and development

Feedback & Finalisation

Progress interviews

Preliminary consultation
Agreement on qualifications, criteria and standards
Relationship between organisation and individual goals

Evaluation consultation
Reflection on qualifications
Discuss remuneration and development proposals

Name	Institution	Position	Country	CESAER working group/role	Email	Telephone; Mobile
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