

Unclassified Professional Staff Annual Evaluations – Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Are annual performance evaluations required for unclassified professional staff (UPS)?*

University [policy](#) requires that Unclassified Professional Staff employees receive a formal, written performance evaluation by his/her supervisor at least once a year.

2. *What are the required components for the evaluation?*

- A review by the supervisor of the employee's position description to ensure that duties are accurate and reflect any changes that have been made in the past year to the duties/responsibilities of the position. The employee also has an opportunity to contribute to the review of the position description.
- An opportunity for the employee to provide a written self-evaluation or annual report in advance of the supervisor's evaluation.
- A written evaluation of the employee's performance based upon the position description covering the evaluation period.
- Establishment, with employee input, of written goals/objectives for the coming year. The supervisor will make the final determination of goals and objectives. A discussion of professional development opportunities is strongly encouraged.
- An overall rating of the employee's performance.

3. *What type of "form" or process is used for the evaluation?*

Each unit shall develop its own evaluation process, forms, submission requirements, and related internal deadlines. Sample evaluation form templates are available at http://www.hreo.ku.edu/documents/performance_evaluations/unclassified_employees for departmental use. Upon request, HR/EO also will assist departments in developing forms and/or an evaluation process.

4. *When should evaluations be completed?*

Performance evaluations must be completed and signed by the supervisor and acknowledged by the employee prior to the annual merit recommendation process. Although each University division may set an internal deadline, Human Resources and Equal Opportunity will announce the campus deadline annually.

5. *Are evaluations necessary for new hires or employees that have not worked at the University for a full year?*

Since Unclassified Personnel Staff are not subject to a probationary period upon hire, it is reasonable to perform an evaluation if the employee has been employed a sufficient amount of time to evaluate his/her work. Such evaluations support any allocated merit assignment as well as provides an opportunity for the employee and supervisor to discuss existing performance and future expectations, goals and assignments.

6. *How are evaluation records maintained?*

Vice Provosts and Deans are responsible for their units' completion and retention of Unclassified Professional Staff evaluations. Upon request, HR/EO is willing to record and/or maintain evaluation records in the official personnel file.

7. *Are employees required to sign their evaluation form?*

It is recommended that the written evaluation be signed by both the employee and the supervisor upon the conclusion of the review. Employees which disagree with the evaluation may not elect to sign the review document; however the evaluation is still kept in the employee's personnel file. If desired by the supervisor, the evaluation may be signed by a witness to verify that the evaluation was provided to the employee. In the event an evaluation is appealed and overturned; modifications to the existing evaluation will be documented in the employee's file as appropriate.

8. *How does a staff member appeal an evaluation?*

The evaluation may be appealed through the appropriate administrative channels within 10 working days of receiving the evaluation. Written appeals must specify specific performance areas of disagreement, documentation and/or examples of the employee's performance in the defined areas (for the time period evaluated), and the desired outcome of the appeal. HR/EO may be contacted for assistance.

9. *What relationship exists between annual evaluations and merit increases?*

Annual evaluations serve as one factor in determining merit increases. Other factors may include professional conduct, additional or different duties assigned, special projects, needed market, compression or other salary adjustments, skill acquisition, etc.

10. *Does an unsatisfactory evaluation preclude an employee's ability to qualify for a merit increase?*

A less than satisfactory evaluation rating disqualifies an Unclassified Professional Staff employee from receiving a merit increase for the upcoming fiscal year. Vice Provosts and Dean's offices are required to report to the Budget Office any unclassified professional staff member that is ineligible for merit during the annual budget process.

11. *What role does HR/EO serve in the evaluations process for unclassified professional staff?*

HR/EO consults confidentially with staff and/or managers regarding performance and/or communication difficulties to identify options for resolving conflicts. Upon request, HR/EO may facilitate discussions between employees and supervisors regarding clarification of goals or conducting the evaluation. HR/EO advises supervisors and managers on the processes for addressing inadequate performance.

HR/EO must review all termination recommendations for unclassified professional staff, in consultation with the appropriate Dean or Vice Provost's Office and the Office of General Counsel.

12. *How does the evaluation process relate to possible disciplinary action or termination of employment?*

Inadequate performance as documented by an evaluation may be grounds for disciplinary action, subsequent off-cycle evaluations, or lead to a recommendation of employment termination as specified the [Handbook for Faculty and Other Unclassified Staff](#).

13. Is an employee's performance the only factor which might lead to dismissal or non-reappointment?

Not necessarily. An Unclassified Personnel Staff member may be terminated for a number of reasons which may include but are not limited to: performance, conduct, reorganization, lack of budgetary funds, program discontinuation, or because it is in the best interests of the university. Positions designated as "serve at the pleasure of" or contingent upon funding may be terminated without the usual notice period in the event of program changes or budgetary constraints are confirmed. Otherwise, as outlined in the Faculty and Unclassified Professional Handbook non-reappointments for unclassified professional staff are to be given as early as possible. Those employees with less than three fiscal years of service must be given notice no later than May 17 for a non-reappointment of the following fiscal year or no later than 30 days prior to the end of the current appointment if the appointment ends on an alternate date. Employees who have three or more fiscal years of service must be provided notice no later than March 30th if he/she is not to be reappointed the following fiscal year.

14. May past evaluations be used by supervisors when contacted as job references?

Performance evaluations are a part of an employee's official personnel record. Supervisors may refer to the evaluation if contacted as a reference for alternate on-campus employment. If providing a reference for off-campus employment, the evaluation should only be referred to with the permission of the employee.