



Managing Work Performance Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Culture NL is committed to improving employees' performance at work. CultureNL and its Managers have a responsibility to set and communicate realistic and measurable standards of performance for employees and to support staff in achieving these standards.
- 1.2 Equally, employees have a responsibility to be aware of their own individual targets and goals and understand how these contribute to CultureNL's overall objectives.
- 1.3 This policy provides managers and employees with an effective structured framework for addressing work performance issues in a fair and consistent manner.
- 1.4 This policy recognises the importance of achieving a balance between providing support, training and feedback for employees who fail to meet the required standards and when to apply formal processes.
- 1.5 Where the consequences of an employee's performance at work or failure to meet the required performance standards are either due to misconduct or negligence, the matter will be dealt with under Culture NL's Discipline Policy.
- 1.6 Flowcharts illustrating the process outlined in the policy is contained in **Appendix 1.**

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Managing Work Performance Policy applies to all CultureNL staff.

3. Definition

- 3.1 Under performance is defined as a significant and/or a persistent failure by an employee to achieve the standards of performance required in their job. This could be caused by lack of ability, aptitude, experience, knowledge, skills or inadequate or insufficient training or an underlying work or personal situation affecting the employee.

4. Key Principles

4.1 Culture NL's approach to performance management is based on the following principles:

- i. This policy will be applied in accordance with Culture NL's Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy;
- ii. Employees have a right to be represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at all of the formal stages of the Policy i.e. Formal Performance Management, Formal Performance Review, Formal Performance Hearing. Where an employee has the right to representation, the representative should be involved in setting up meeting dates in order to reduce the risk of delays or cancellations;
- iii. There is no right of representation at the Informal Performance Management stage. Employees can choose to be accompanied at this stage by a work colleague or trade union representative;
- iv. Where work performance is affected by a disability as defined in the disability provisions of the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments will be considered;
- v. New recruits and promoted employees will receive planned induction training or on the job training outlining the work performance standards required for the post;
- vi. Line managers are responsible for setting measurable performance targets for employees and ensuring these are reflected in the individual employees' Performance Review and Development (PRD). The PRD meetings with individual employees normally take the form of two meetings per calendar year, an annual PRD meeting and a further six monthly meeting to review progress;
- vii. In addition to the formal PRD meetings, line managers must hold regular one-to-one meetings with employees to discuss their work performance and address any issues at the earliest possible stage;

Should any performance issues be identified, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) should be agreed between the manager and the employee detailing the necessary actions an employee must take to resolve their performance issues. This should be followed by regular meetings to monitor the progress the PIP;

- viii. Timescales set for monitoring and improvement depend on the circumstances of each case. For example, improvements to basic tasks or duties may be expected to be achieved within a month; however, improvements to more complex tasks or activities may require a longer timescale for improvement. In general timescales for each stage should not be less than 1 month or longer than 6 months;
- ix. However, where a task or activity that is identified as requiring improvement recurs over a longer period (e.g. an activity that only happens once a year) then the timescale for improvement can be extended as appropriate;
- x. Where failure to meet or sustain performance standards is due to negligence or to a deliberate act or omission on the part of the employee, this will be dealt with under the Disciplinary policy;
- xi. Where failure to meet or sustain performance standards is linked to sickness absence, this will be dealt with under the Managing Attendance Policy;
- xii. Failure to meet or maintain the required performance standards may result in dismissal on the grounds of capability due to underperformance; however, this should not take place without recorded evidence that the required improvement in work performance as set out in the Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) during the set monitoring period(s);
- xiii. Redeployment to an alternative post or duties may be considered as an alternative to dismissal at the Chief Executive's discretion. Any redeployment will be on the terms and conditions of the new post including pay. Where there are no suitable posts available, then the decision to dismiss will be implemented.

5. STAGES

- 5.1 Managing work performance is part of every line manager's role. Work performance issues should be dealt with as they arise, with guidance and support being offered to the employee to achieve and maintain improvement in performance.
- 5.2 The initial stage of the Policy must always be utilised in the first instance.
- 5.3 Where an improvement in performance is not achieved the formal stages of the Policy should be invoked.

5.4 The stages to be followed for cases of underperformance are outlined as a flow chart in **Appendix 1**.

6. INFORMAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Where work performance issues arise during normal day-to-day management, the line manager must arrange an Informal Performance Meeting with the employee to discuss the concerns.

6.2 This meeting should be used to highlight areas of concern, giving examples of underperformance and identifying the required improvements to be achieved and sustained within a six month period.

6.3 At this meeting the manager will:

- i. Explain that although the discussion is at the informal stage, it is part of a formal process, the content of the meeting will be recorded and held on file, and that a copy of the meeting note will be provided to the employee;
- ii. ensure that the required targets, standards of performance and timescales for improvement are confirmed, set and agreed with the employee;
- iii. ensure the employee is given the chance to explain why the required standards of performance are not being met, including where appropriate any equality issues identified;
- iv. agree appropriate support mechanisms to assist the employee. This may include formal and/or informal training coaching, mentoring, changing working patterns or changes to workload;
- v. give consideration to any equality issues identified;
- vi. ensure that the agreed supports are recorded in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). A blank PIP is attached at **Appendix 2**;
- vii. advise that a failure to improve may result in the Formal Stage being invoked.

6.4 Timescales for improvement can range from 1 month to 6 months.

Where a task or activity that is identified as requiring improvement recurs over a longer period (e.g. an activity that only happens once a year) then the timescale for improvement can be extended as appropriate.

- 6.5 During the review period the line manager and employee will meet regularly (e.g. weekly or fortnightly as appropriate) to discuss progress. Line managers should summarise what has been discussed in writing and share this with the employee. If the required standards have been achieved at the end of the review period no further action will be taken. This will be confirmed in writing. A record of the PIP should not be kept on file.

If after 3 months of improved performance there is a recurrence in underperformance, the employee will progress to the Formal Performance Management stage of the Policy.

- 6.6 If the required performance is only partially achieved then the review period may be extended for a further period up to 3 months duration.

- 6.7 Where the required improvement is achieved at the end of the extended review period no further action will be taken and this will be confirmed in writing. A record of the PIP should not be kept on file.

If after 3 months of improved performance there is a recurrence in underperformance, the employee will progress to the Formal Performance Management stage of the Policy.

- 6.8 Where there is no improvement in performance by the end of the extended review period, this will be confirmed in writing. This letter will detail where the performance has not improved to the required standards, all the support offered and confirmation that Formal Performance Management will commence.

7. FORMAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEETING

- 7.1 Where the required improvement in work performance is not achieved through the informal stage, or there is a recurrence in underperformance, the line manager will initiate Formal Performance Management.

- 7.2 The line manager will:-

- i. write to the employee, instructing them to attend a Formal Performance Management Meeting at a specified place and time; the employee should be given at least seven calendar days notice in writing of the date of the meeting;
- ii. detail their right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or a work colleague;
- iii. detail where the individual's work performance has fallen below the level required for the job;

- iv. provide details of all support offered to assist the employee e.g. details of formal and/or informal training, mentoring, coaching, changing working patterns or changes to workload etc.
- 7.3 Copies of previous correspondence, summaries of informal meetings, copies of the previously agreed PIP and any other documents that will be referred to at the Formal Performance Meeting must be sent to the employee.
- 7.4 At the meeting, the manager will confirm that the required performance targets have not been met.
- 7.5 The manager must establish at the meeting if there are any further underlying causes that are affecting the employee's work performance not previously identified. These will be discussed; possible solutions identified and detail any further support that will be provided.
- 7.6 A revised PIP will also be completed and agreed. This will include details of all further support, the timescales for regular progress meetings and set a date for the Formal Performance Review. The review period will be for no longer than 3 months.
- 7.7 The employee must also be made aware of the possible outcomes for their future employment up to and including dismissal if required standards of performance are not achieved and maintained.
- 7.8 The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee within 7 calendar days. A copy will be sent to HR.

8. FORMAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

- 8.1 The purpose of the Formal Performance Review is to consider the progress made since invoking Formal Performance Management.
- 8.2 When scheduling a Formal Performance Review the notification arrangements detailed at 7.2 will be followed.
- 8.3 The Formal Performance Review will take place within 7 days of the agreed review period identified in the PIP.
- 8.4 The Formal Performance Review should consider what improvements have been achieved and consider all previous correspondence, summaries of progress meetings, all the support opportunities provided and the previously agreed PIP.

- 8.5 The manager will evidence what improvements in work performance have been achieved, define the support measures provided and confirm the need for sustained improvement. The employee will consider and agree how to sustain the improvements in their work performance.
- 8.6 Where the manager can evidence that there has been partial or no improvement in work performance, the manager must seek to establish whether there are any new or continuing circumstances, which are affecting the employee's work performance.
- 8.7 The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee and any representative attending the meeting within 7 calendar days. A copy of this letter will be sent to HR.

9. OUTCOMES OF THE FORMAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

9.1 Acceptable Improvement

If there has been an acceptable improvement in the employee's work performance, this will be confirmed in writing, confirm that the improvements need to be sustained and that no further action will be taken. A copy of this letter will be sent to the HR.

9.2 Partial Improvement

- i. If there has been some improvement in work performance, but the employee is still not reaching the required standards, then a further review period will be set for 3 months.
- ii. Consideration will be given to any additional training or support that could reasonably be provided and a revised PIP agreed.
- iii. If at the end of this further review period the required improvement in work performance has been achieved, this will be confirmed in writing, confirm that the improvements need to be sustained and that and no further action will be taken. A copy of this letter will be sent to HR.
- iv. If at the end of this further review period the employee has not achieved the required improvement this will be confirmed in writing.
- v. The employee will be informed that a Formal Performance Hearing will be scheduled and that a possible outcome of the Formal Performance Hearing is dismissal. A copy of this letter will be sent to HR.

9.3 No Improvement

- i. If there has been no improvement in performance, and no satisfactory reason has been given for the failure to improve this will be confirmed in writing.
- ii. The employee will be informed that a Formal Performance Hearing will be scheduled and that a possible outcome of the Formal Performance Hearing is dismissal. A copy of this letter will be sent to HR.

9.4 Unsustained Improvement

- i. If after 3 months of improved performance there is a recurrence in underperformance, the employee will progress to a Formal Performance Hearing.

10. FORMAL PERFORMANCE HEARING

- 10.1 The Service Manager will write to the employee and give 7 days notice of the requirement to attend a Formal Performance Hearing. The Service Manager should identify an appropriate senior manager to chair the meeting. The notification arrangements detailed at 7.2 will be followed.
- 10.2 As a Formal Performance Hearing can result in dismissal it will be chaired by an appropriate senior manager with delegated authority to dismiss who will be supported by HR. The line manager who has dealt with the case up to this point will also attend the Hearing.
- 10.3 The senior manager will review all the information available and consider all the support opportunities provided to help the employee achieve the required standard of work performance.
- 10.4 The senior manager will also review the supporting evidence (including examples of under-performance; standards set; Performance Improvement Plans; details of review meetings).
- 10.5 The line manager may be asked to clarify relevant points.
- 10.6 The senior manager will specify the areas of poor work performance and the support given to the employee and will ask the employee and/or their representative to explain their continued underperformance. The employee will also have the opportunity to ask appropriate questions.

- 10.7 The senior manager will then adjourn the meeting to allow consideration of all the information provided and for a decision to be taken.
- 10.8 Normally, the senior manager will recall the employee and their representative to communicate their decision. In all circumstances the senior manager will confirm their decision to the employee in writing within seven calendar days of the hearing. A copy of this letter will be sent to HR.

11. OUTCOMES OF THE FORMAL HEARING

- 11.1 There are three potential outcomes of The Formal Performance Hearing;
- i. Dismissal, with notice, for reason of capability due to under performance of the required duties of the post.
 - ii. In exceptional circumstances the senior manager may consider redeployment to a vacant post as an alternative to dismissal. If suitable alternative employment is not immediately available, or redeployment would adversely affect other staff on the redeployment register that have priority consideration, then the decision to dismiss will be implemented.
 - iii. Exceptionally, the senior manager may decide to grant a further review period whilst considering the period of time and all assistance given to date. Granting of a further review period would take the employee back to the Formal Performance Review stage, however where a further review period is granted this will be for no longer than 3 months when a re-convened Formal Hearing will take place.

12. APPEALS

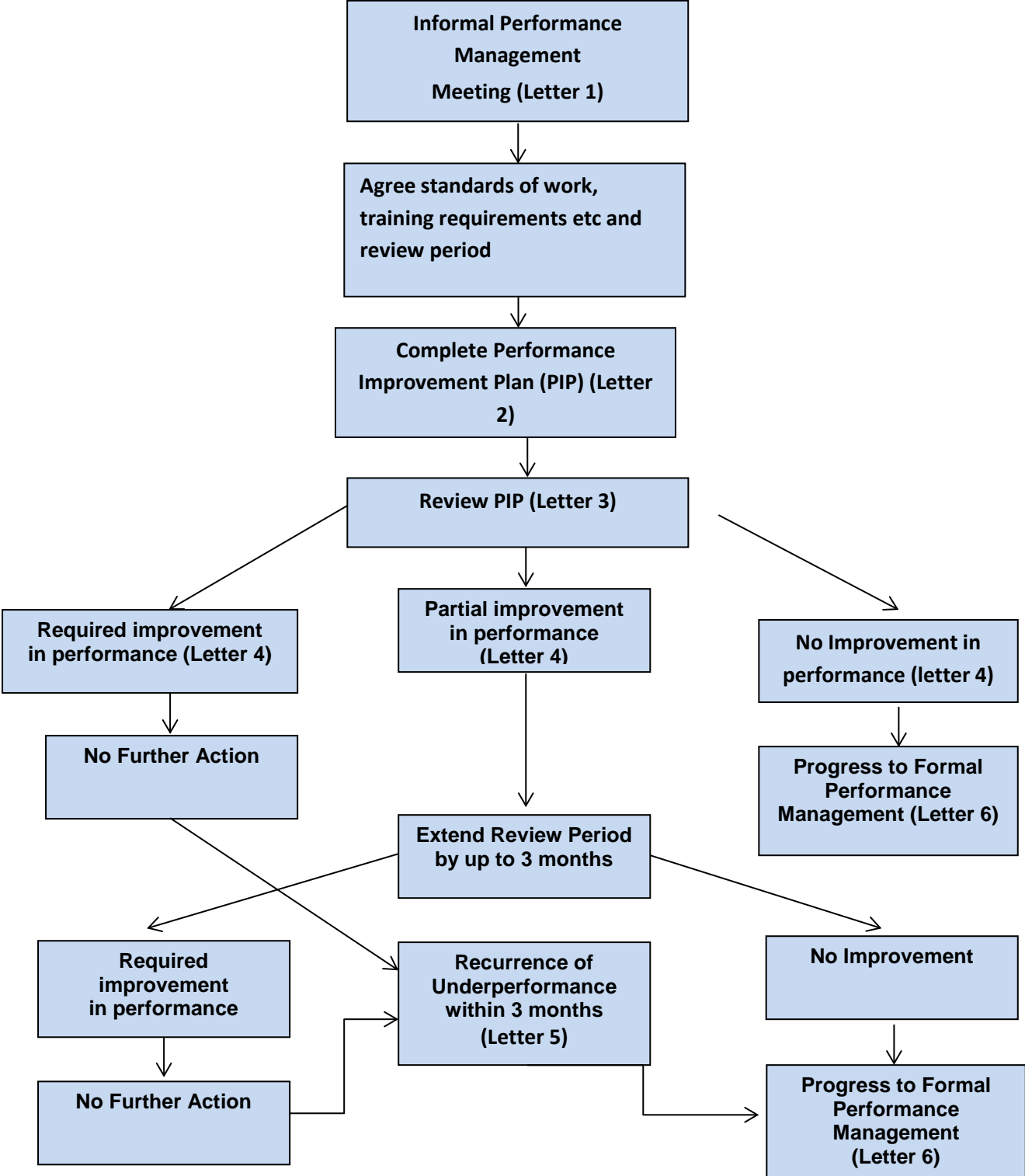
- 12.1 The employee can appeal against the decision to dismiss by writing to the Chief Executive within fourteen calendar days of receiving written notice of dismissal. Appeals will be held in accordance with the arrangements set out in CultureNL's Disciplinary Procedure.

Appendices

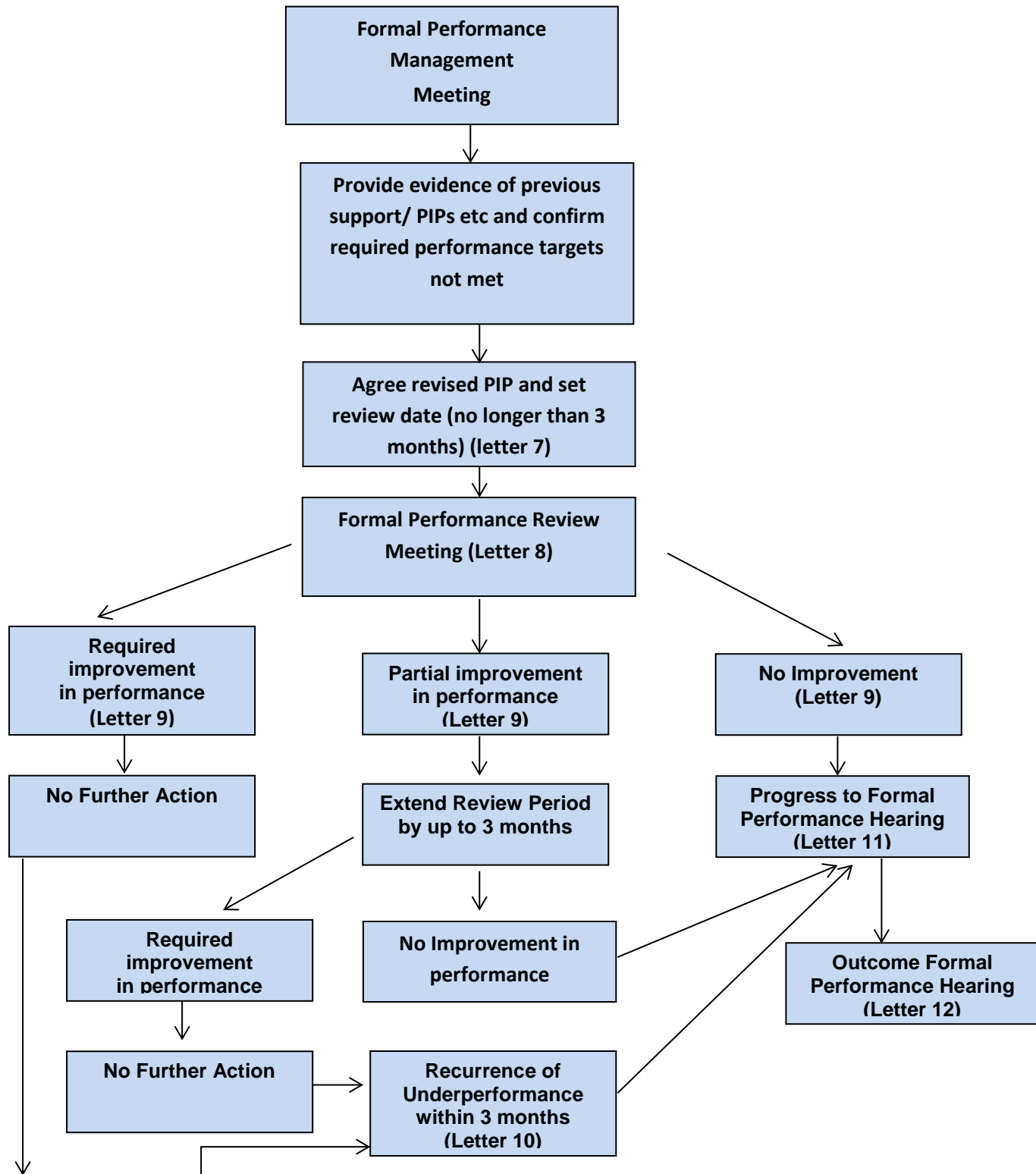
Appendix 1	Flowcharts of Performance Management Process
Appendix 2	Template for Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

MANAGING PERFORMANCE FLOWCHARTS

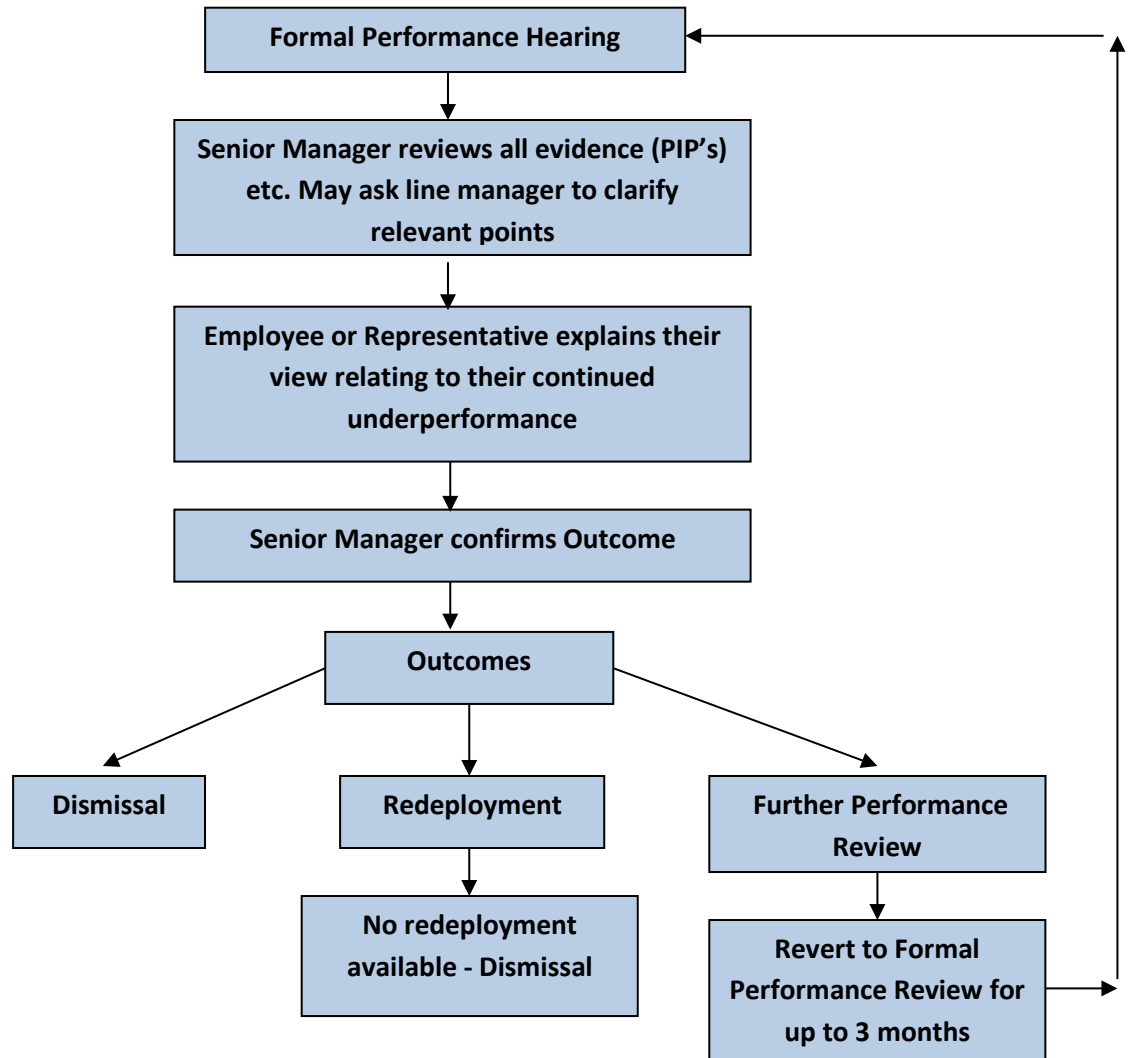
INFORMAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



FORMAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



FORMAL PERFORMANCE HEARING



APPENDIX 2

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

Informal Stage/Formal Stage (delete as appropriate)

Name of Employee	
Name of Line Manager	
Service:	
Accompanied/ or Represented by (formal stages only)	
Date of Meeting	
Date (s) of any previous meetings/ discussions regarding work performance	Summary of meetings/ discussions
(Please attach any supporting documentation) : List	

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
Specific Performance Issues which require discussion between Line Manager and Employee

Areas of Concern	Standards Required	Agreed Action to Meet Requirements	Timescale for Improvements	Support Required	Any underlying issues identified

Performance Improvement Plan

Date of Next Meeting	
Employee Signature	
Date	
Line manager Signature	
Date	

(To be completed by the Line Manager)
Any Further Comments

Cc: Employee
HR