

Performance and Development Process (PDP) Guidelines – Executive Officers

CONTENTS

Overview	2
Context and Rationale	2
Executive Performance: Foundation Principles.....	3
EO PDP Cycle	4
Key Stages and Actions Required	4
EO PDP Plan	5
Developing an EO PDP plan.....	5
Executive Officer Development.....	7
Performance Reviews	8
Mid-Cycle Review	8
End-of-Cycle Review	8
Performance outcomes	8
Managing Performance Issues	9
Roles and responsibilities	10
Secretary/Executive Board.....	10
Deputy Secretaries	10
EO managers (Deputy Secretaries, Authority Heads and Executive/Regional Directors)	10
Executive Officers	10
Deputy Secretary People and Executive Services (PES)	10
Governance structure	10
Further Assistance	11
References	11

Overview

These guidelines outline the Performance and Development Process (PDP) arrangements for Executive Officers (EO) employed by the Department of Education and Training. EO performance management and development principles are outlined in this policy, EO contracts of employment, the Victorian Public Service (VPS) Executive Employment Handbook and the Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) Executive Performance Management Framework.

All VPS EOs are required to participate in the EO Performance and Development Process. School leaders are covered by separate guidelines.

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

The EO Performance and Development Process (EO PDP) is designed to align leadership, performance management and development across all corporate (VPS) areas of the Department. It translates the Department's goals into well-articulated, congruent priorities across the EO cohort, aligning individual performance and development to overall strategic direction.

The Department's corporate leaders are responsible for delivering strategic and reform priorities, including building organisational and employee capability to support the delivery of these initiatives. Our leaders are also responsible for ensuring that the Department's culture exemplifies DET's Values, and are expected to be role models in exemplifying DET's Values in their actions and decisions.

Leadership is therefore demonstrated through **what** is achieved and **how** it is achieved (Figure 1). The EO PDP not only evaluates the delivery of strategic objectives, it also ensures a continuous focus on cultural leadership and the embedding of DET's Values, ensuring our leaders are accountable for embedding these in their business areas.



Figure 1: EO PDP alignment to strategic (what) and cultural (how) priorities (adapted from Rogers, 2004)

Effective performance and development involves a continuous process of planning, implementation and review/evaluation. It promotes and measures the leadership practice required to achieve results, build capability and enable structured career planning at the executive level. Through the PDP, individual performance and achievements collectively drive and improve organisational performance to ensure the Department's priorities and strategic plans are achieved.

The PDP enables delivery of the Department's strategy through:

- clarifying business plans to ensure a consistent understanding of priorities
- aligning accountabilities to business plans through the organisation
- confirming the capabilities required to deliver successful outcomes
- ensuring all decisions and actions reinforce DET's Values
- establishing an effective performance review process, utilising consistent measurements
- providing opportunities for continuous improvement and learning.

EXECUTIVE PERFORMANCE: FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

The VPSC's foundational principles set a minimum standard for executive performance and underpin the Department's EO PDP. These principles support high performance while fostering a positive workplace culture.

The foundation principles, illustrated in Figure 2, are:

1. **Clear performance expectations:** Strategic alignment to outcomes through specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely (SMART) goals.
2. **Focus on outcomes:** Achieving organisational and government priorities.
3. **Focus on leadership behaviours:** Effective leadership behaviours, underpinned by the VPS and DET Leadership Capability Frameworks, and the DET Leadership Charter.
4. **Promote and apply public sector values (DET Values):** Demonstrating commitment, role modelling the values, supporting others to demonstrate the values.
5. **Evidence based decision making:** Data-driven evidence of outcomes to inform reward, recognition and re-appointment.
6. **Equity through standards:** Performance goals informed by work level standards and measured by a common rating scale.



Figure 2: Executive Performance management: foundational principles (VPSC, 2019)

EO PDP Cycle

KEY STAGES AND ACTIONS REQUIRED

Figure 3 illustrates the annual PDP stages completed by EOs and their managers.

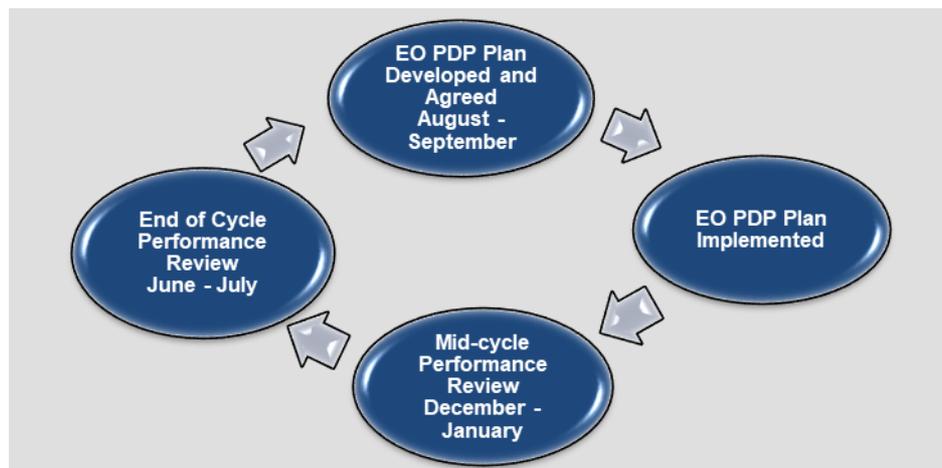


Figure 3: The EO PDP Cycle

In summary, the actions required at each stage are:

1. EO PDP Plan Developed and Agreed (August – September)

The on-line EO PDP plan template is made available to EO's and their managers on the Department's payroll system, eduPay. EOs and their managers discuss and agree relevant priorities identified in the business planning process to incorporate into each EO PDP plan.

Actions required: EOs and their managers develop and agree on each EO's PDP plan for the cycle, incorporating the following elements:

- **Section One: Performance Goals** covering the areas of Finance / People / Leadership / Business. These specify:
 - *what* will be achieved (the key business priorities in the four performance areas)
 - *how* it will be achieved (the behavioural priorities to achieve these, including leadership of DET values)
 - measures of achievement (the methods for evaluating achievements) .
- **Section Two: Career/Individual Development Plan** outlines each EO's Development plan (covering career and/or individual development).
- **Section Three: Learning section** – this is not an editable section. It provides a link to the Department's learning management system (LearnEd) to track learning and professional development undertaken throughout the cycle. Learning completion entered into LearnEd will prepopulate into Section 3.

2. EO PDP Plan implemented

Managers and EOs are encouraged to monitor progress towards achieving the elements of the EO PDP plan through regular discussions and informal reviews throughout the PDP cycle.

Actions required: The EO's manager provides regular feedback, incorporating information from a range of sources.

3. Mid Cycle Performance Review (December – January)

A formal assessment of the EO's performance and development during the cycle to date. This enables any issues to be addressed and necessary updates to the PDP plan to be made.

Actions required: EOs and managers meet to discuss progress to date, including towards achievement of performance goals (including DETs Values) and career/development goals. Mid-cycle review comments may be uploaded into the plan.

4. End-of-Cycle Performance Review (December – January)

The formal, end-of-cycle review and assessment of all components of the EO's PDP plan throughout the cycle.

Actions required: EOs and managers meet to discuss the EO's performance and achievements over the entire cycle. This review covers all EO PDP plan sections: performance goals (including DETs Values) and career/development goals. End-of-cycle review comments are inserted and managers provide an overall outcome rating in the EO PDP plan.

EO PDP Plan

DEVELOPING AN EO PDP PLAN

The template for the EO PDP plan is on the Department's payroll system, eduPay. It can be found in the *Performance and Development* tab in eduPay Self Service.

At the start of the cycle, each manager and EO develop and agree on the EO's PDP plan. Clear criteria (measures) for success are also agreed to ensure clarity of specific expectations, behaviours and goals.

Goals entered into the EO PDP plan cover:

- **Section One: Performance Goals** outlines what will be achieved in each of the following areas and how success will be measured.
 - Financial management: Development and management of approved budgets and financial plans
 - People management: Engagement and leadership of teams to deliver on strategic and cultural priorities
 - Leadership behaviour: A role model for DET's Values and embedding these behaviours within own area
 - Business management: Delivery of strategic projects and associated outcomes.
- **Section Two: Career/Individual Development Plan (EO Development plan)** agreed objectives, actions and outcomes based on:
 - the requirements of the individual's role
 - DET's leadership capability framework
 - the individual's career aspirations.

Note: "Continuous Professional Development" (CPD) points are incorporated for activities listed in the development plan (see further information in the next section).

A maximum of four performance goals and four development/career goals is recommended at any one time to ensure the EO PDP plan is achievable. However, the PDP plan is an iterative document, and goals may be updated as needed over the cycle.

Once finalised and agreed, the EO cascades their PDP plan to their direct reports. This ensures accountabilities are set at the appropriate level, and enables the EO's direct reports to set work plans for their teams which are connected to the EO's PDP plan. Note: because of differences in the EO and VPS PDP plan templates, the EO PDP plan cannot be shared in the eduPay system.

The PDP plan is reviewed regularly during the cycle to ensure continued relevance, and any necessary updates made. During formal performance reviews at the mid and end-of-cycle, the manager and EO discuss progress towards the achievement of agreed performance goals, as well as the outcomes of the EO's Development plan. At the end of the cycle, EOs are rated by their managers on the outcomes of their PDP plan. The VPSC's four point rating scale is used for this purpose (see below).

The VPSC's framework lists six good practice core elements of the PDP plan (Table 1), on which the Department's EO PDP is based. These elements are designed to promote a consistent and robust approach to the performance and development of EOs; and support a fair and transparent process that will promote ease of mobility across government.

Table 1: VPSC’s recommended good practice core elements for the PDP plan

Core Elements	Definition
Victorian public sector values and behaviours	<p>The Victorian public sector values (also DETs Values) and behaviours provide the foundation of the integrity and accountability framework for all public sector employees.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct outlines and reinforces the Victorian public sector values by describing expected standards of behaviour. The values and behaviours underpin an executive’s interaction with the government, community, suppliers and other employees.</p>
Key result areas	<p>Focussing on outcomes, the key result areas provide explicit links between individual result areas and broader organisational and whole of government priorities.</p> <p>Key result areas also take into account the executive’s position description.</p> <p>VPSC’s suggested key result areas are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholder management 2. Resource management and compliance 3. People management and capability development 4. Strategic planning and implementation
Expectations	<p>Performance expectations are observable behaviours and actions which explain how outcomes are to be achieved. Expectations must be clear and precise to everyone responsible for meeting them.</p> <p>Performance expectations vary based on the role and the organisation’s operating environment and therefore must be determined collaboratively by the individual, manager and organisation.</p>
Measures	<p>Measures are the specific indicators, relevant to each outcome, that assess achievement against performance standards.</p>
Targets	<p>Targets are specific, planned results to be achieved against measures.</p>
4 point rating scale	<p>A rating scale guide assists the employer to identify how well each target has been accomplished or fulfilled.</p> <p>A four point rating scale is recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does not meet expectations 2. Meets most expectations 3. Meets all expectations 4. Exceeds expectations

EXECUTIVE OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

DET's EO Development Strategy, underpinned by DET's Leadership Charter and the DET Leadership Capability Framework, provides the overarching framework for EO development. The EO Development Strategy sets the expectations for leadership within the Department. It positions EO development within the context of governance, public sector (ethical) leadership and the implementation of a distributed leadership model to enable and empower leaders at all levels.

The EO Development plan, in section two of the EO PDP plan, is based on this strategy. This provides focus for individual EO development and ensures priority is given to the capabilities and behaviours needed to meet the Department's leadership expectations and build a more effective and capable leadership group.

The EO Development plan contains agreed career/development goals based on the requirements of the individual's role and their career aspirations (Figure 4). Planned development actions should reflect initiatives outlined in the EO Development Strategy.

Professional learning and development undertaken throughout the cycle is recorded in LearnEd once activities are completed. LearnEd will capture course completion of those listed in the catalogue. Any additional activities (including experiential) are individually entered in LearnEd's *Supplemental Learning* section. Information from LearnEd then feeds into the EO PDP plan template (Section 3 – Learning).

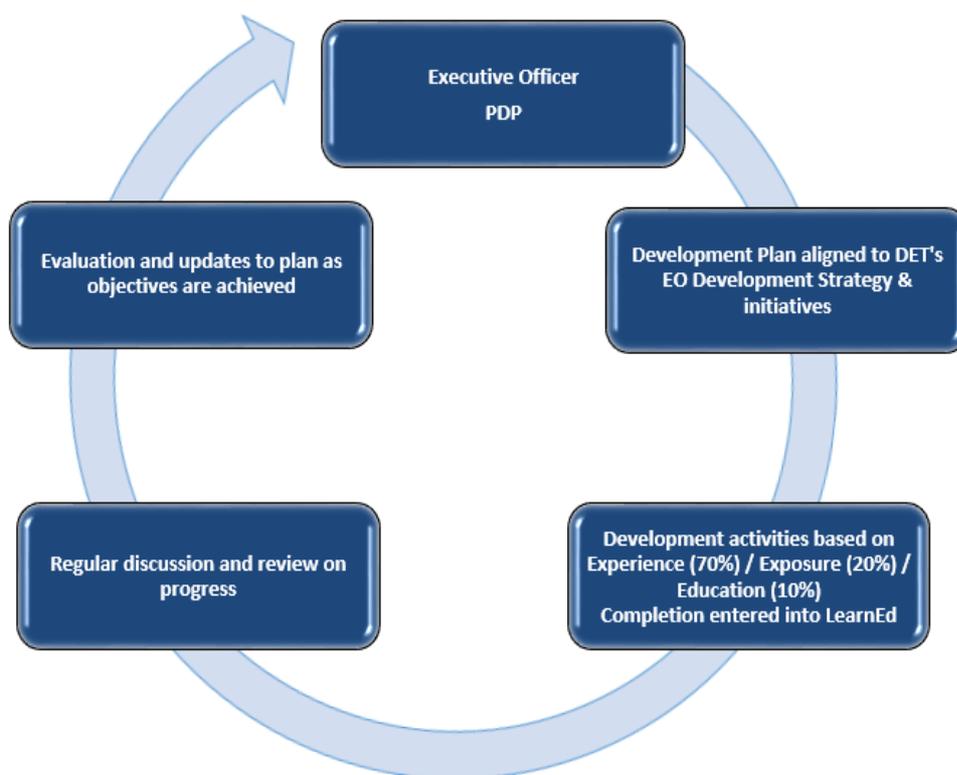


Figure 4: EO Development Planning

The EO Development Plan is supported through a “Continuous Professional Development” (CPD) system which focuses leadership development on goals and activities that are relevant to the Leadership Capability Framework.

The CPD system involves accrual of points for undertaking development activities based on the Experience (70%), Exposure (20%) and Education (10%) model. It ensures EOs have development plans in place that are current, focused on expected leadership capabilities and incorporate development activities aligned to the needs of both the individual and the Department. EOs are encouraged to accrue 25 points per performance year and record these in the EO PDP plan.

The benefits of the CPD system are:

- stronger engagement in ongoing development to support career goals
- structured and focused development planning
- a broader focus on experiential development activities to hone leadership practice.

Performance Reviews

MID-CYCLE REVIEW

The formal review stages should be a continuation of the informal feedback and coaching that occurs on a regular basis throughout the cycle.

The mid-cycle review provides an opportunity for a constructive discussion and feedback on performance and development during the PDP cycle to date. This may include suggestions for performance improvement or making required adjustments to the objectives detailed in the PDP plan. Performance and development is reviewed against the agreed plan and the outcomes of discussions recorded in the PDP plan.

The mid-cycle review is an opportunity to:

- review the currency of the PDP plan
- review the progress made in the PDP cycle to date
- consider any issues arising from the PDP plan's implementation
- review the implementation of the EO Development plan.

END-OF-CYCLE REVIEW

A formal end-of-cycle review occurs between each EO and their manager to discuss outcomes of the PDP cycle. EOs are encouraged to undertake a self-assessment and ask for feedback from direct reports, peers and stakeholders to inform the end-of-cycle performance review.

Managers are to review the EO's performance and development for the whole of the PDP cycle and make an assessment of whether the EO has met the expectations outlined in the EO's PDP plan.

The end-of-cycle assessment considers the EO's achievements against the performance goals (which includes demonstrating the DET Values) and the EO Development plan. Outcomes of the end-of-cycle review are recorded in the PDP plan. An EO's performance throughout the cycle and achievement of the goals outlined in the EO's PDP plan are assessed at the end of the cycle and then rated by the manager/s using a four point rating scale (see 'Performance Outcomes' below).

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

EO performance throughout the cycle is assessed using a defined rating scale (Table 2) to rate the EO's performance and level of achievement of the goals outlined in the EO's PDP plan.

Once ratings are finalised by managers, performance outcomes are collated centrally and provided to the Department's Executive Development and Remuneration Committee (EDRC) for review and approval. After this process occurs and outcomes are approved by the EDRC, final performance outcomes are communicated to EOs.

Table 2: Good practice four point rating scale

Four point rating scale	Definition
1. Does not meet expectations	The executive consistently fails to meet agreed expectations
2. Meets most expectations	The executive meets most agreed expectations
3. Meets all expectations	The executive meets all agreed expectations
4. Exceeds expectations	The executive always meets and sometimes exceeds agreed expectations

MANAGING PERFORMANCE ISSUES

Underperformance occurs where an EO does not meet the required standards of performance to the minimum level as set out in their position description and the PDP plan. Underperformance and unsatisfactory performance may refer to similar poor work performance. However, unsatisfactory performance refers to sustained poor work performance and/or practices which have not been able to be corrected through performance management strategies and which fall below the minimum standards of performance required of the role.

Where an EO's performance has been unsatisfactory rather than merely underperformance, pursuing an underperformance process may not be adequate. Section 8.2 of the VPS Executive Employment Handbook provides the conditions for which an EO's contract may be terminated for unsatisfactory performance. This includes where the EO has significantly failed to fulfil required duties and obligations of the role as outlined in their employment contract; or for reasons of serious misconduct.

Managers should try to ascertain why an EO is not performing to agreed expectations as set out in the PDP plan. In doing so, they should discuss the matter with the EO to try to resolve the performance concerns. It is recommended that a summary and outcomes from the discussion be documented in the EO's PDP plan.

There may be various reasons why an EO underperforms including:

- an EO doesn't know what is expected of them because performance standards are not clear (or have not been set)
- there is an inconsistency between the EO's capabilities and their job, or the EO may not have the knowledge or skills to do the job expected of them
- an EO does not know how they are doing because there is no feedback on their performance
- a lack of personal motivation, low morale in the workplace or poor work environment
- personal issues such as stress, physical or mental health problems or problems with drugs or alcohol.

The following questions may assist managers and EOs in resolving underperformance issues:

- what are the specific instances of underperformance?
- is the underperformance in terms of quantity, quality or timeliness?
- does the EO fully understand what they are expected to achieve and are the expectations realistic?
- was the EO aware that their performance was not up to standard?
- does the EO require development or training in order to meet the performance standards satisfactorily?
- have appropriate training and development opportunities, coaching or counselling been explored fully to manage the underperformance?

Where the EO is underperforming both the EO and their manager are responsible for:

- identifying and discussing the specific areas in the EO's PDP plan that are assessed as underperformance, and where possible ascertain any contributing or mitigating cause(s)
- designing an agreed improvement plan with specific and measurable performance measures and agreed outcomes (both the EO and their manager should agree to this plan)
- monitor improvement – the monitoring period should be between one and three months with regular reviews on progress.

Roles and responsibilities

SECRETARY/EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Department's EO PDP arrangements are consistent with the requirements specified by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and set out in the VPSC's VPS Executive Employment Handbook and VPS Executive Performance Management Framework.

The Secretary, together with Executive Board has the overall responsibility for setting the Department's strategic objectives, and for the quality assurance of the EO PDP.

DEPUTY SECRETARIES

Deputy Secretaries are responsible for the implementation of PDP for EOs in their Group including:

- overseeing the implementation of the EO PDP for their EOs, ensuring compliance with the requirements of the PDP policy and process
- ensuring all EOs have a completed an EO PDP plan
- monitoring the overall progress and outcomes of the EO Development plan, ensuring sufficient resources to implement agreed plans
- induction in the EO PDP for newly appointed EOs in their Group
- endorsement of the EO Development plan for each EO in their Group
- quality assurance of the indicative EO PDP outcome assessments in their Group at the end of the PDP cycle
- moderating the EO PDP outcome assessments for their Group at the end of the PDP cycle

EO MANAGERS (DEPUTY SECRETARIES, AUTHORITY HEADS AND EXECUTIVE/REGIONAL DIRECTORS)

EO managers are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the EO PDP. This includes:

- implementation of the EO PDP in their respective Group or Authority:
- ensuring an agreed PDP plan is in place for each EO at the commencement of the cycle, and it is reviewed regularly throughout the cycle
- providing continuing performance coaching and support to EOs
- providing valid and reliable outcome assessments for their direct reports
- ensuring the implementation of each EO's Development plan.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

All EOs are responsible for the implementation of their own PDP plan, including:

- participating in the PDP consistent with this policy and the associated conditions of employment outlined in EO employment contracts and the VPS Executive Employment Handbook
- demonstrating and being accountable for meeting their performance and development objectives as specified in their PDP plan
- participating in ongoing performance and development reviews and formal performance assessment meetings
- engaging in agreed professional development as outlined in their EO Development plan.

DEPUTY SECRETARY PEOPLE AND EXECUTIVE SERVICES (PES)

In addition to Group accountabilities for performance management, the Deputy Secretary, PES is responsible for providing expert advice, policy recommendations, performance reporting, and EO PDP support to the Secretary.

The Deputy Secretary, PES is also responsible for supporting EO PDP activities across the Department, ensuring appropriate training and support is provided to enable effective implementation.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- The Secretary/Executive Board is the business owner for the Department's EO PDP.
- PES, and specifically the People Division, provides the Secretary/Executive Board with policy advice, reporting, and proposals for further procedural enhancements.
- People Division ensures that the Department's leadership development initiatives and activities are effectively linked to leadership development requirements specified in the EO PDP plans and EO Development plans, and that each Group across the Department receives appropriate business support to effectively implement these.

Further Assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to EO PDP is available by:

- accessing the A-Z topic list on [HRWeb](#),
- using the [related topics list](#); or
- contacting [Corporate People Services](#)

References

Rogers, R.W. (2004): Realizing the promise of performance management. DDI Press; Pittsburgh, Penn.