

# DWP briefing

Department for Work & Pensions Group

To: All Members in DWP, GEC  
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Public and  
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Services Union

## DWP People Performance for 2015 - 2016: Objectives & Shared Performance Expectations

### Start of performance year process

The People Performance process for 2015-16 starts with setting objectives and standards for shared performance expectations. Whilst PCS has not agreed this policy the emphasis on standard-setting, for a *shared understanding of performance expectations*, provides a basis for fair, objective, evidence-based outcomes.

DWP People Performance Policy, Procedure and Advice, with "How to" guidance, is published on the DWP Intranet and includes:

- *"How to: Set Performance Expectations Consistently at the start of the Year"* (SPEC guide)
- *Setting Smart Objectives Guide*
- *"How to: Hold Regular Performance Discussions"* (HRPD guide)

At the initial performance discussion, the manager and the employee should:

- Agree objectives and competencies
- Agree the personal development needs of the employee and update the development plan
- Agree the number and timing of performance discussions that will take place throughout the year - there must be a mid-year-review as a minimum
- Record what has been discussed on appropriate forms. (Procedures 5.2)

### Shared performance expectations

Managers must also explain what the performance expectations are in the employee's own work context so that *there is a shared understanding of performance expectations for the employee's peer group*. (Procedure 5.3 /SPEC guide 16 & 17)

### SMART objectives

The employee and their manager should agree who will be responsible for preparing the first draft of objectives. If employees choose not to, then managers should set appropriate objectives for the employee.

The manager will be responsible for ensuring that the objectives are relevant to the job role, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable Realistic, Timed), and written using simple language about what is expected. (See Setting Smart Objectives Guide)

Objectives should be reviewed across the year particularly when objectives are achieved, amended or new objectives are required. Usually 4-6 objectives are sufficient. (Procedure 5.5, 5.7 & 5.9)

### What and How

Objectives will state not only "what" needs to be achieved but also "how". The manager and employee should agree which competencies are most relevant to the employee's job role. (SPEC guide 6-13 and Setting Objectives Guide)

## **Civil Service Competency Framework**

The Civil Service Competency Framework will be used for setting objectives for 2015-16. Use the link in the DWP intranet HR A-Z to access the Civil Service Learning (CSL) portal.

## **Regular Performance Discussions**

Regular performance discussions are vital to ensure that employees are aware of their performance against the “*What*” delivery of objectives and the “*How*” impact of behaviour, competencies and values. Managers should give feedback and the opportunity to raise any issue/concern about their work/ development. Regular discussions and consistency checking during the performance year should ensure consistency at the end of the year – i.e. that the employee’s performance has not been over or under-estimated in relation to other employees in their peer group (Procedure 7 & *HRPD* guide)

## **Generic Objectives**

DWP targets or generic objectives should not be automatically set as work objectives. Individual factors such as experience, knowledge, any reasonable adjustments needed and working pattern must be taken into account. *Objectives connected to a business plan target should state the employee’s contribution to the overall target.* Generic or department-wide objectives should be tailored to the employee, so they understand their contribution to the team/department. (Procedure 5.6, 5.8 & SPEC guide)

## **Stretching but achievable**

Stretching objectives are qualified by the SMART criteria expectation for all objectives to be *achievable*. A stretching objective must be within the employee’s control and capability. (*Achievable/ Setting Objectives Guide*)

## **Are you DD Ready?**

***The DWP is ending check off, the deduction of union subs from your wages, on 31 March 2015. To keep yourself protected at work you need to get ready to switch to pay your union subs by direct debit. It's easy. Get a form from your union rep or go to [pcs.org.uk/dddः](http://pcs.org.uk/dddः) and do it online.***

## **Attendance Objectives**

DWP has accepted that an attendance objective, should only expect compliance with processes, application of policy and an understanding and commitment to overall business targets. (Advice Q 26)

## **Numerical Targets**

Numerical targets which are not within the employee’s personal control should not be agreed. Objectives must be within the employee’s capability. (SPEC guide, Setting Objectives Guide/Achievable)

## **Disability and Objectives**

Disabled people must have objectives set which provide the same opportunity to meet or exceed objectives as any other employee. Reasonable adjustments must be made for their disability if that affects their performance. (Procedure 5.11 & SPEC Guide 9))

## **Part Time Workers**

Part time staff must have the time taken for learning, reading and keeping up to date etc. taken into account, for example, a member of staff working half the hours of a full time member of staff should expect to have objectives set at less than half that of the full timer to allow for these activities.

(Procedure 5.11 & 5.12 & Spec Guide 9)

## **Retrospective work objective**

A manager cannot unilaterally set a retrospective work objective but it is possible to do so in agreement with the employee. (Advice Q&A 28)

## **People Survey objectives**

Completion of the People Survey is voluntary and anonymous. A work objective cannot be set for completing the People Survey. (Advice Q&A 29)

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