CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Performance Appraisal Guidelines

27 March 2015

Purpose

To promulgate best practice Performance Appraisal Guidelines.

These guidelines are not a term of any contract, including any contract of employment. They may be varied by the Archdiocese from time to time.

Application

Diocesan departments, agencies and auspiced bodies as well as parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is a process designed to evaluate, manage and ultimately improve employee performance. It should allow the employer and employee to openly discuss the expectations of the organisation and the achievements of the employee. The primary emphasis is on the future development of the employee within the objectives of the organisation.

There is no universally accepted model of performance appraisal. However, more often than not this process is designed around the following main elements:

- Setting performance goals and objectives.

- Determining key competencies the employee is expected to possess and those behaviours that demonstrate those competencies. A range of competencies and the behaviours that demonstrate those competencies that employers may consider appropriate to their setting and select from, are set out in attachment 1.

- Measurement of performance against the goals and objectives, ie <u>what</u> is achieved.

- Measurement of performance against key competencies , ie <u>how</u> it is achieved.

- Feedback of results.

- Amendment to goals and objectives and if need be competencies.

Performance appraisal systems can assist with:

- Management development — assists in identifying and developing future management potential.

- Performance improvement — assists organisations in increasing performance and overall productivity. It works towards identifying strengths and managing weaknesses.

- Adjusting remuneration — particularly for those occupational groups such as Pastoral Associates where remuneration movement is driven either by market factors or performance.

- Feedback — it provides clarity to employees about an organisation's expectations regarding performance levels.

There are risks associated with inadequate or inappropriate performance appraisal.

- Failure to conduct regular reviews means that employers risk not being properly informed of an employee's standard of work, particularly if there are a number of managers or more senior employees whose input is required for a full assessment.

- If the employer decide to terminate an employee's employment on the basis of poor performance and the employer has not previously counselled that employee about the quality of his or her work or has failed to give the employee a chance to improve, employers run the risk of facing an unfair dismissal claim.

Performance Appraisal Practices

Employers should develop a performance appraisal policy and plan that is suitable for their particular workplace and employees. Employees should be informed about this policy when they commence employment.

All probationary employees should receive at least one performance appraisal during their probationary period.

Step by Step Guide to Performance Appraisals

Job requirements and expected standards of performance

In order to appropriately assess an employee's performance, both employer and employee need to have a clear understanding of the job requirements, including performance objectives and competencies required. The employee should be informed of these requirements:

- when they commence employment with the employer

- each time they move to a new position or role, or the role itself changes

- through each performance appraisal.

Requirements and objectives will be easier for the employee to understand, and for employers to assess, if they are:

- **Specific** - broad statements such as 'the employee is required to produce work of a high quality', while true, do not assist the employee to achieve that standard. Where relevant, employers should describe the requirement in terms of quality, quantity or time periods.

- **Performance oriented** - state the required outcome of the employee's work positively (as opposed to a simple regurgitation of what the employee does, or a negative statement of what the employee should not do).

- **Realistic** - set goals that are achievable.

- **Observable** - the required outcome should be readily identifiable and, if possible, measurable, as opposed to an esoteric or vague statement of desired standards.

If employers provide each employee with a comprehensive position description, this step will in large part already be achieved.

Prepare thoroughly

The employer should schedule a meeting with the employee for the formal appraisal interview. The employer should ensure the meeting is of a sufficient length to enable a full discussion (at least half an hour). The meeting should be private and interruptions (such as answering the phone) should not be permitted.

The employer should give the employee adequate notice of the upcoming appraisal (at least two days).

If an appraisal form is to be used, the employer should provide both the employee and the appraiser with a copy of the form, and advise them that they are required to consider the matters raised in the form prior to the meeting.

The appraisal meeting

The employer should discuss the employee's job generally. The employer should ensure that the employee is aware of the key duties or responsibilities - if not, this is a good time to clarify these points.

The employer should provide, as appropriate, both praise and constructive criticism. The employer should identify how the conduct or behaviour referred to impacts positively or negatively on the employee's achievement of the identified duties, responsibilities or job outcomes (particularly where the quality referred to is difficult to measure, for example, an employee's attitude or initiative).

The employer should encourage the employee to actively participate in the discussion.

The employer should provide the employee with the opportunity to raise any issues, concerns or queries he or she may have.

The employer should ensure all relevant issues or points are covered at the meeting, including any objections or concerns raised by the employee.

After the meeting, record the employee's comments on the appraisal form or record of meeting.

The employer should request that the employee signs a copy of the completed appraisal form or record of meeting, to indicate their agreement that the document accurately records what was covered at the meeting, including any points of disagreement. If the employee does not agree to sign, the employer should make a note of this on the documentation.

Future goals and objectives

The primary purpose of performance appraisals is to plan how the employee can improve or achieve more in the future. The employer should encourage the employee to build on strengths as well as improve on weaknesses. Employees should be assisted to reach their full potential.

At the end of the interview, the employer should allow some time to create a development plan. The employer should record specific goals, targets or benchmarks that the employee will attempt to achieve.

Both employer and employee should agree on the steps to be taken to achieve these targets, eg, alteration of work practices, training or education. Employers need to clearly identify any steps they consider mandatory and, if appropriate, any consequences if these steps are not taken, so that the employee clearly understands what is expected.

Both should agree on how the employee's progress towards these objectives will be measured and set a defined timeframe, even if this is simply the next performance appraisal.

Follow up

Follow up means more than simply conducting regular formal performance reviews once a year. To achieve meaningful results, both employer and employee should agree on a way to monitor progress throughout the year. This need not be a formal process, and may simply mean that employers and the employee have regular informal discussions throughout the year. This will enable employers to ascertain if the employee is taking the developmental steps recommended.

If employers review employees and provide feedback as part of everyday management, both employers and the employee will learn much more about their strengths, weaknesses and how employers would prefer the job to be done.

Performance assessment forms

It may be preferable to have some form of assessment documentation, particularly a record of what was discussed at the appraisal meeting.

In diocesan agencies where the human resource management function is undertaken by the Human Resources Office, a copy of any completed form is to be forwarded to it for retention on the employee's personnel file.

While no particular forms or models are prescribed, attachment 3 describes the model with its attendant forms which has been used successfully in the Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation. Working from the employee's position description, the employee and the supervisor agree on the key responsibilities and the work standards that will apply for the review cycle. It has an emphasis on ongoing clarification of the employee's role and regular discussion points. It has the added advantage of ensuring position descriptions are kept current and it is an example of best practice.

Employee Competencies

A competency is a combination of observable or measurable skills, knowledge, behaviours and personal attributes. Competency based performance management relies on the identification of specific behaviours that make up the competencies an employee demonstrates in the performance of their role. Competencies and behaviours of staff in Church settings are essentially the same as those applying elsewhere. However, a vital competency of staff working for the Church is a commitment to the mission, values and practices of the Church.

Not all of these competencies and behaviours will apply in all situations. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Competency	Behaviours
Mission inspired	• articulates the mission of the Church with confidence and comfort • strives to further understand the operations of the Church • participates in faith formation activities designed for staff and more generally in the life of the Church • conducts themselves as an example of faith in action
Innovation and Change	• constantly re-evaluates role and finds more and creative ways of doing things • gains commitment from others to change initiatives • implements change effectively • seeks to ever expand capabilities
Strategic decision making	• makes sound decisions when faced with complex or multiple alternatives • understands the impact of decisions • develops short term approaches and long term strategies for each area of responsibility
Customer responsiveness	• asks questions to clarify customer requirements • builds confidence in customers that their needs are given priority • demonstrates commitment to meeting customer expectations • manages customer expectations
Communications	• communicates the job to be done and standard of performance expected • explains broad aims and objectives • displays and encourages open and honest communication • listens and seeks to understand
Results oriented	• balances a focus on achieving task outcomes with a concern for its impact on others

	• motivates others to attain goals
	• delivers results where conflict and diverse interests are present
Teamwork	• understands and acknowledges the perspective of others
	• builds effective relationships in professional networks
	• willingly cooperates with others to contribute to achieving team goals
	• places organisation goals ahead of own interests
Leadership	• enshrines a culture of performance and learning in the workplace
	• deals with poor performers and avoids soft appraisals
	• trusts individuals with responsibilities for tasks
	• provides staff with growth opportunities
	• solicits input from team members in achieving group goals
	• gives constructive feedback on key aspects of performance
Self conduct	• accepts responsibility for decisions made
	• ensures commitments are followed through
	• inspires trust
	• treats other with consideration and respect

Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation
Performance Appraisal model

The following approach is one that has been developed to:
- Establish or clarify Position Descriptions for staff
- Ensure that Position Descriptions are updated to accurately reflect current responsibilities
- Build role clarity and ownership through the co-creation of Work Standards for areas of responsibility
- Provide a mechanism for regular review and dialogue with staff regarding their work practices and performance

Step 1 – Interview Grid
This Interview Grid (see attached form 1) has been developed for use with current staff to elicit from them, as part of professional dialogue, the purpose of their role and key responsibilities.
- The grid is distributed by the Manager to staff prior to a one-on-one meeting
- The staff member fills is out upon reflection on their role
- During the meeting, the dialogue focuses on naming the key areas of responsibility, rather than a list of tasks. This often requires some discussion and refinement.
- Reflective practice is encouraged through discussion of Energisers, Challenges, Opportunities and Goal setting

Step 2 – Position Description
The Position Description (see attached form 2) is developed by the Manager after the interview, drawing on the discussion with the staff member.
- The Position Description has four key component – Purpose of the Position, Responsibilities and Duties, Person Specification, and Relationships
- The Position Description aims to name three to five responsibilities and avoids list of tasks
- The Manager seeks confirmation from the staff member that the Position Description accurately reflects their understanding of their role

Step 3 – Work Standards
Works Standards are developed for each area of responsibility. This is a collaborative exercise between the staff member and the Manager.
- The Work Standard is 'co-created' by the staff member and Manager
- This process occurs at regular progress meetings. The frequency of these meetings is determined by the Manager as being **s**uitable for the nature of the role.
- The Work Standards provide a measure of the success in delivering in each area of responsibility
- Work Standards are not additional measures but reflect work that is actually being undertaken
- Works standards can be quantitative or qualitative
- Work standards need to reviewed and updated at regular intervals, while the broad areas of responsibility may remain unchanged

Meetings with AOFE Staff

Staff member	
Date of meeting	
Days of work/ Preferred hours	
Time with AOFE	

Areas of responsibility
Primary aim of this work **Link to the mission of the AOFE**
Key tasks/ activities
Energisers
Challenges
Opportunities for working differently
Goal for your work in 2012 **Area of focus**
Other

Position Description

Job title:

Reporting to: **Assistant Director, Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation**

Hours:

Location: **Cardinal Knox Centre, 383 Albert St, East Melbourne**

Purpose of the position

The … will support the key priority of the Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation (AOFE) by…

Responsibilities & duties

Responsibility 1 – To…
For example
- Developing…
- Presenting to…
- Supporting…

Work standard – *Determined in consultation (with Assistant Director) as part of regular progress meetings. Insert what aspect of the responsibility will be reviewed to determine how effectively the job is being done, such as time frame, number of completed tasks, number of registrations, uptake of a program/initiative, nature of feedback etc*
For example
- *Maintaining…*
- *Visiting…*
- *Completing …*
- *Corresponding…*
- *Ensuring…*
- *Documenting…*
- *Assisting…*

Responsibility 2 – To …

Work standard –

Responsibility 3 – To…

Work standard –

Person Specification

Qualifications
For example

- Relevant tertiary qualification is desirable
- Current driver license

Experience
- An understanding of parishes and the structures of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne is essential
-

Attributes and Skills
- Well motivated to work for the Church and possess a strong commitment to its mission
-

Relationships

With	Purpose
1.	
2.	
3.	

Employee Signature_____Date_____

Director's Signature_____ Date_____

Review period: *e.g. every three months as part of meeting with Assistant Director*

Next review date_____