



Sussex Clubs for Young People Performance Improvement Procedure

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Signed

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Purpose

The Performance Improvement Plan is set to help employees succeed in meeting their own goals and those of the company. The Performance Improvement Plan is developed via the Performance Improvement Procedure.

We believe that there should be a fair and consistent approach to the enforcement of performance standards throughout the organisation.

We believe the fairest way to handle any issues relating to performance is to provide a well-structured performance improvement procedure to encourage all employees to maintain the company's standards on performance.

This procedure is not contractual but it aims to improve the performance of those whose performance is considered to have fallen below the standard needed. The emphasis is on encouraging improvement and supporting the individual to enable them to achieve the required standard of performance.

Whilst not the main purpose of this policy and procedure, the outcome may be dismissal in the event that the employee fails to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of performance having been given appropriate learning and development opportunities (whether training courses or on the job coaching) and time in which to improve.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees.

Related Policies and Procedures

Grievance Procedure

Principles

You have the following rights in relation to any Performance Improvement action:

- To be informed of any allegations of poor performance that is to be discussed at any performance review meeting or hearing;
- To be accompanied by a work colleague or an accredited trades union official in any improvement discussion;
- To appeal against any performance improvement action.

Stages in the Procedure

The following table shows the management level at which decisions can be made at the three stages of the procedure.

	Level of Warning	Management Authority
Informal	Verbal Warning	Line manager
Stage 1	First Written Warning	Line manager
Stage 2	Final Written Warning	Chief Executive Officer
Stage 3	Dismissal with notice	Director

Operating the Policy

Informal Action

In the first instance performance issues will be dealt with informally between the line manager and the employee. This is part of day-to-day management and is intended to ensure that an employee is aware of what is expected of them and to prevent problems arising that might need performance management. If there are issues that need to be addressed, targets should be set and a timescale set for a review. If this fails to deliver the necessary improvement in performance, formal action under Stage One of this policy and procedure will follow.

Formal Action – Stage One

The manager will arrange a meeting with the employee. The objective will be to:

- Set out why and in what way the company standards have not been met.
- Provide an opportunity for the employee to explain poor performance and ask any questions.
- Discuss measures, such as additional training or supervision, which may improve performance.
- Set targets and a timescale for improvement and a review (a fair timescale for improvement will normally be around 1 month).

The employee will be:

- Given written notification of the meeting, time and location, as well as a summary of the performance issues and the purpose of the meeting.
- Given at least two working days' notice of the meeting.
- Informed that a fellow employee or a trades union representative may accompany him/her. This meeting can be postponed by up to 5 working days if the companion is unable to attend.

At the end of the stage one meeting:

- The manager will reconfirm the performance standards required and agree a clear performance improvement plan designed to achieve them.

Following the stage one meeting:

- The employee will be given a copy of the performance improvement plan together with a first written warning, setting out the areas discussed and the consequences of failing to improve within the review period.
- A copy of the written warning will be placed on the employee's file, and will remain on file for 12 months.
- It will be made clear to the employee that if under performance persists and the requirements of the agreed plan are not met then the next stage of the procedure may be invoked.
- The employee will be informed they have the right to appeal.

Formal Action – Stage Two

The manager will arrange a meeting with the employee. The objectives will be to:

- Explain why and how the manager considers the required standards have not been met. The manager will make clear where the issues are and the reason for entering Stage Two of the process.
- Provide an opportunity for the employee to explain the poor performance and ask any relevant questions.
- Discuss measures, such as additional training or supervision, which may improve performance.
- Set targets and a timescale for improvement and a review (a fair timescale for improvement will normally be around 1 month).
- Make any necessary changes to the Performance Improvement Plan. The adjustments will be agreed at this stage.

The employee will be:

- Given written notification of the meeting, time and location, as well as a summary of the performance issues and the purpose of the meeting and the fact that Stage Two of the procedure is being invoked.
- Given at least two working days' notice of the meeting.
- Informed that he/she may be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trades union representative. This meeting can be postponed by up to 5 working days if the companion is unable to attend.

At the end of the stage two meeting:

- The manager will reconfirm the performance standards required and agree a clear performance improvement plan designed to achieve them.

Following the stage two meeting:

- The employee will be given a copy of the performance improvement plan, amended if appropriate to consider any mitigating circumstances, together with a final written warning setting out the areas discussed and the consequences of failing to improve within a review period.

- A copy of this warning will go in the employee's file and remain there for 12 months. If the employee slips back to a level of unsatisfactory performance during this period then the procedure will recommence at Stage Three.
- It will be made clear to the employee that if under-performance persists and the requirements of the agreed plan are not met then the next stage of the procedure may be invoked, which may lead to dismissal.
- The employee will be informed that they have the right to appeal.

Formal Action – Stage Three

At this stage of the procedure the manager will arrange a meeting with the employee, their companion and a nominated person for the purposes of reviewing the issues and the employees' performance against the Performance Improvement Plan.

The employee will be:

- Given written notification of the meeting, time and location, as well as a summary of the performance issues and the purpose of the meeting and the fact that Stage Three of the procedure is being invoked.
- Given at least two working days' notice of the meeting.
- Informed that he/she may be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trades union representative. This meeting can be postponed by up to 5 working days if the companion is unable to attend.
- Advised that dismissal may result from any Stage Three performance improvement hearing.

If the manager is satisfied that the employee has been provided with the appropriate training and support but has persistently failed to achieve the required standards of performance and, on balance of probabilities, is unlikely to achieve them in future, then the decision is likely to be dismissal. However, the manager may consider, depending on the circumstances, voluntary downgrading or voluntary salary reduction as an alternative to dismissal.

If the manager finds that the requirements of the Performance Improvement Plan were unreasonable, the employee has received insufficient training or there were mitigating circumstances, they can extend the process for a maximum of 3 months. If the decision is to extend then the employee will be informed in writing and the letter will include a date upon which the extension expires and the dates of regular performance reviews involving the employee and manager.

If at the end of the extended period the performance standards have not been achieved then dismissal with notice will be the likely outcome. Following the dismissal, or any other outcome, the employee will have the right to appeal.

Appeal Process

If the employee wants to appeal at any stage of the procedure they should do so in writing stating the grounds of the appeal, to the appeal manager named in the letter informing them of the outcome of that stage. This must be done within 5 working days of receipt of the letter. The original sanction will not be suspended pending the outcome of the appeal.

At the appeal hearing the employee has the right to be accompanied and will be given the opportunity to state the grounds of the appeal.

The manager hearing the appeal will consider facts and speak to such people who he/she feels fit. The manager hearing the appeal will not consult with the manager who took the original decision except

where necessary to clarify facts. An appeal would not normally involve a reinvestigation of the facts that formed part of the initial hearing but would generally focus on specific issues that could include:

- New information relevant to the case that was not previously available;
- Evidence that the policy or procedure has not been followed;
- Evidence that the decision is unreasonable.

The manager hearing the appeal will consider the merits of the appeal in private before reaching a decision. Having made the decision, the employee will be notified verbally as soon as possible and the decision will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days.

If the employee has a complaint against the behaviour of any manager during the Performance Improvement Procedure then this may be raised as a grievance with a more senior manager under the grievance resolution procedure.