



**Karolinska  
Institutet**

# Performance management dialogs at KI

Guidelines with supplementary instructions for performance management dialogs at KI

**Appendix 1a** Performance management dialog 1; Objectives and development – examples of questions - managers

**Appendix 1b** Performance management dialog 1; Objectives and development – examples of questions - employees

**Appendix 2:** Template for documentation

# Guidelines for performance management dialogs at KI

Dialog with employees is part of KI's process to follow up and ensure the quality and results of operations on an individual level. This process is called Performance Management. This dialog is also part of a process to ensure KI's ability to fill positions with the right person and the right expertise – both in the short and long term.

Ongoing dialog about overall operations and strategy, and about how each employee can contribute, is a prerequisite for Karolinska Institutet to maintain its position as a leading medical university. One of the most important tasks for managers is to motivate and develop their employees. This involves encouraging them to spend their energy on the right tasks and perform them in the best way possible. When all employees understand their role in the organisation as a whole and the link between results and salary, there are conditions for a culture of quality and for a positive result. Performance management dialogs are an important tool in this work.

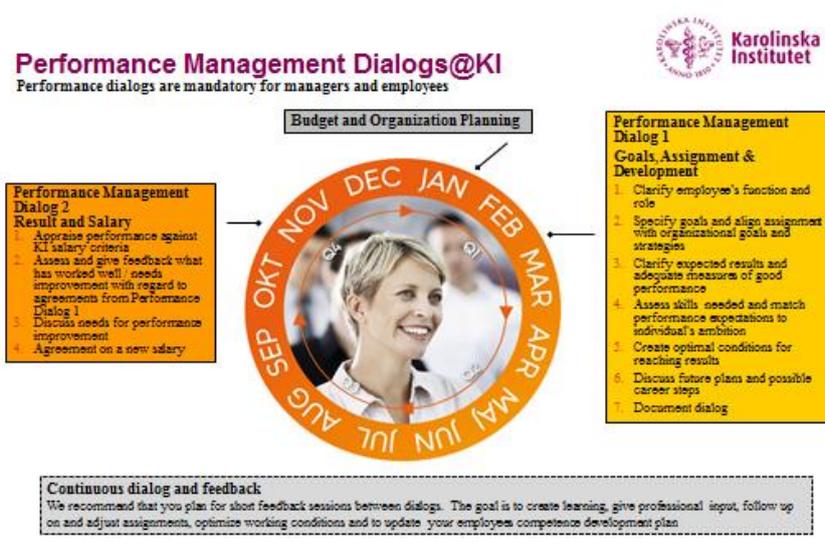
Since quality, performance and development represent a key issue for KI as a knowledge organisation, KI follows up these issues through means such as performance management dialogs and regular employee surveys.

## When shall performance management dialogs be conducted?

Performance management dialogs shall normally be conducted twice a year. The exact times depend on operational planning, budget and salary revision and should be scheduled so that there is as long a period as possible between performance management dialogs 1 and 2 (see below).

*Performance management dialog 1* shall be conducted during the period from December to March. The manager and the employee discuss what should be achieved during the year and conditions for an optimal result. The manager clarifies (in addition to ongoing dialog) what is expected of the employee.

*Performance management dialog 2* shall be conducted in connection with salary review later in the year (normally during the period September to December). This evaluates the results requested in Performance management dialog 1, i.e., how the employee has carried out the tasks in question. The evaluation is linked to salary setting.



Where there is a close relationship (e.g., marriage or partnership) between a manager and employee, careful consideration should be given to the risk of a conflict of interest. A close relationship with an employee might influence the ability to set the employee's salary on objective grounds. The risk of a conflict of interest might also exist with respect to benefits, career or financial conditions. Where a manager risks being in a conflict of interest due to a close relationship with an employee, a superior shall be notified in good time before the performance management dialog.

# Instructions for performance management dialogs at KI

## Performance management dialog 1 – objectives and development

Performance management dialog 1 is a dialog between managers and employees based on objectives and development, in which they discuss how individuals are to contribute to the organisation's objectives and their own development. Together with the employee, the manager shall discuss the individual objectives' significance to operations so that all employees understand their duties and can see their role in a greater context.

If managers are clear about objectives, duties and their expectations, it will become easier for employees to understand what they can contribute. Employees shall also have the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas on how the work can be developed and any improvements that need to be implemented.

It is always the immediate manager, and the same manager who conducts Performance management dialog 2, who is to conduct the dialog with the employee and who is therefore responsible for the dialogs being conducted in an appropriate manner. However, a full basis for assessment may require supporting material from other involved parties such as project managers/supervisors. All employees are required to participate in the performance management dialogs.

The process works best if it starts from “the top down” in accordance with the reporting patterns in the department/division, i.e., the head of the department begins with their immediate managers, who in turn conduct dialogs with their immediate employees, etc. This will reinforce the understanding of both current and strategic development needs and will clarify the vision for the entire organisation.

### Preparation

- Make sure that all employees are well acquainted with current overall objectives, the operational plan, their own areas of responsibility, guidelines for performance management dialogs and the schedule for the dialogs. Discuss this at a unit meeting or equivalent.
- It might also be appropriate to go through salary criteria at a joint meeting since the results of the objectives set will be discussed in Performance management dialog 2 at the end of the year and be linked to salary setting.
- Choose a neutral location where you will not be disturbed and where both of you feel comfortable.
- Make sure to be well prepared for the dialog. It is an advantage if both managers and employees have access to documentation from previous performance management dialogs. Other documents that may prove useful to preparation and implementation include a list of qualifications/CV, operational plans, secondary occupation reports and KI's code of conduct.

### Implementation

Establish the structure of the dialog by following the template for Performance management dialog 1 in [Appendix 1a](#) and [Appendix 1b](#).

- Set aside sufficient time for the dialog
- Encourage openness and dialog and avoid one-way communication
- Do not be afraid of differences of opinion or of talking about relationships
- Show commitment and interest
- Communicate constructively and respectfully
- Maintain a good climate for discussion and create a positive conclusion

The dialog is divided into two parts:

### Objectives and duties

The aim is to:

- a) clarify objectives, activities and duties at the overall and individual levels and the manager's expectations with respect to the corresponding results.
- b) go through the conditions for enabling the employee to achieve the expected results (organisation, resources, knowledge and ability, working climate, etc.)

This part shall mainly focus on objectives, tasks and expectations regarding results and on conditions for achieving the objectives. Managers shall communicate their expectations of employees with respect to results, expertise and quality.

This shall be followed by a discussion of the conditions for achieving good results. How is cooperation with other employees? How is the working climate? What should be prioritised? Are the necessary resources in place? Is there a need for skills development? What are the financial conditions for the work? How is the situation regarding work environment and safety?

Since expected objectives achievement and performance will be evaluated later in connection with salary review, the manager needs to ensure that employees understand which criteria control salary setting - [Salary as a management tool](#)

### Development

This section aims to ensure the long-term development of employee expertise for the benefit of operations. Which challenges do we face in the longer term and what will this require of the employee? How do employees view their future and career? Are changes needed?

### **Documentation**

The performance management dialog shall be documented in a brief development plan containing objectives and tasks at the individual level as well as other measures needed for promoting the employee's development in the work and for developing operations in general (see [Appendix 2](#) – Documentation of Performance management dialog 1. The plan is followed up in the next performance management dialog (see below).

### **Performance management dialog 2 – results and salary**

This dialog discusses the employee's results and proficiency in relation to the objectives and tasks determined in dialog 1. Based on results and KI's salary criteria, the manager and employee will agree on a new salary.

*For members of OFR/S,P,O and Seko, managers and employees shall conduct the equivalent dialog on performance in relation to requested results based on KI's salary criteria. However, the dialog does not discuss a new salary; this is set in negotiations between employers and trade unions. See alternative information on the intranet [link](#). The salaries of doctoral students are set according to the doctoral student increments, for which reason they shall not conduct Performance management dialog 2.*

The main aim of this dialog is to provide employees with a clear idea of how their manager assesses results and proficiency, i.e., how employees have performed during the year. The dialog shall focus on the employee's objectives achievement, results and how the work has been performed.

## **Preparation**

An important prerequisite for a good dialog is that both manager and employee are well acquainted with the aim of the dialog and have prepared well by means such as reviewing salary criteria and the parties' joint salary statistics. It is also important that the documentation for Performance management dialog 1 on objectives and development is available to both manager and employee. It is a matter of focusing preparations on the actual aim of the dialog, not of preparing for a negotiation. The most proficient employee should have a high wage, not the most proficient negotiator.

Where possible, matters can be raised in a plenary session for the group, including:

- KI's criteria for salary setting
- relevant salary statistics
- the manager's view on the need for salary adjustments at a general level
- preparation expected of employees

Avoid differing messages/descriptions among units/groups of what the performance management dialog involves

## **During the dialog**

Only the manager and employee attend the dialog. As the employer's representative, the manager has the greatest responsibility for the dialog being conducted in an appropriate manner. Both manager and employee shall contribute to the dialog being characterised by openness and respect. The dialog shall mostly focus on the employee's results and proficiency linked to requested results from Performance management dialog 1. Managers shall clearly present their assessment of the quality of what the employee has achieved during the year and propose a new salary based on KI's salary criteria. Employees shall have the opportunity to present their view of their performance and new salary. It can sometimes be appropriate to take a break in the dialog to then continue it again after the manager or employee has had the opportunity for reflection. When the manager and employee agree on the salary, the agreement is confirmed in writing. Where agreement on a new salary cannot be reached, the issue is settled between the employer and Saco-S. However, for non-union employees, the employer decides on a new salary in the event of disagreement. If necessary, an individual development plan can be drawn up with reference to what emerged in the dialog.

### Key points for managers

- Introduction - time frame and aim
- Encourage employees to give their view first – in order to initiate a good dialog
  - Give your view
    - on the basis of your own observations
    - use “I-based” language
    - duties in focus: works well/less well, do more of/less of
- If the dialog loses focus – bring it back to the dialog's aim
- Explain and justify your assessments clearly
- Present a salary proposal that is a confirmation of what is said about performance, etc.
- Allow the employee time to react and reflect
- Listen to arguments
- Check whether continuation is needed - be open to further dialog
- Be clear about how employees can develop and can influence their salary

How the salary is set is described in the guidelines for salary setting - [Salary as a management tool](#)