

Aspire is the new performance management framework in AIB designed to reward positive contributions and behaviour consistent with AIB's Brand Values.

The Financial Services Union (FSU) has concluded an agreement with AIB management on Aspire. Previous arrangements with the employer on performance reviews have been incorporated into this new agreement.

This all-encompassing framework replaces all previous performance review processes and is now the sole process for performance reviews throughout AIB Group.

It is as relevant for managers who are members of the FSU as it is for all other grades. So it is important that you read this document outlining the Union's guidance at this time.

In this new arrangement all objectives need to be fairly balanced:

- they need to be achievable: there is no point setting impossible targets.
- they need to be within your power to deliver and take into account any relevant external factors outside your control.
- they need to be directly based on your own roles and responsibilities: your performance should be rated on the basis of your agreed objectives.

This guide is designed to help you through Aspire. If you have any issues about the process, as it affects you, you should refer to this guide and, if necessary, seek further guidance from the Union.

The FSU provides support through your local representatives – your Workplace Point of Contact, your Area Co-ordinator and your Sector Committee as well as through the Union's full-time professional staff.

We recommend that you read these guidelines to ensure that you receive an appropriate rating for your contribution; and, as a consequence, secure proper recognition in terms of pay and career progression.

This guide is also available on www.fsunion.org/my/aib/

making ASPIRE work for you

The Financial Services Union Guide to Performance Management in AIB

June 2016

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safeguards:

The Union has secured many protections for you on a range of issues in AIB. The protections provided in the agreement on Aspire are important for you as you carry out your performance review. The key protections are as follows:

- the process must be managed in a fair and reasonable fashion;
- your performance rating shall be determined on its own merits: it shall not be decided in order to conform to a pre-determined pattern of distribution (such as a bell curve) either for a specific category of staff or for all of the bank's workforce;
- people who are new to the role will be provided with appropriate objectives and will be assessed against these objectives;
- reviewers should be at least of management grade and in a direct reporting relationship with you;
- there should be equal weighting to both what you achieve and how you achieve it;
- there is no change to the existing practice concerning specific numeric targets;
- your participation in Aspire is voluntary; and
- the Union and the employer have agreed a robust appeals mechanism which you may avail of, if you believe your rating is unfair.

objectives:

Objectives must be jointly agreed between you and the reviewer.

training and support:

The employer has provided training for reviewers and reviewees. Reviewers and reviewees will also be provided with guidelines on how to prepare for their review process. Apart from the information, available on the AIB intranet, the Union will also provide support to you if you need assistance during the process. This guide will also help you to prepare for your review.

appeals mechanism:

The Union and management have agreed an appeals mechanism designed to provide a fair, effective and speedy route for the resolution of any issues relating to the performance review process.

review and sharing of information:

The agreement between the Union and the employer also provides for the sharing of generic information on ratings (including figures for the number of employees attaining each rating level). This data will provide the background to a joint review of the Aspire process which will take place annually.

be prepared

This is your review – not your reviewer's. It is your career and you are best placed to evaluate the tasks you undertake, the challenges you face and how you perform. Make the most of your review by preparing thoroughly and ensure that you get your point across.

Talk to your colleagues or to one of your FSU representatives – your Workplace Point of Contact, your Area Co-ordinator or your Sector Committee member – who can assist you in preparing for the process.

The Aspire performance management process has a number of elements. Take it step by step; prepare well in advance and seek clarification from management, whenever necessary. Make sure that adequate time is allocated during the working day to enable you to prepare for and complete all of your reviews.

When you are preparing for your performance review meetings, read any guides, training materials, newsletters or templates on Aspire provided by the Union and the employer. Make a note of:

- relevant information;
- questions you need to ask;
- points of clarification; and
- any supports or resources you need to carry out your role effectively.

When you are considering your objectives for the future or when you are assessing your own performance against previously agreed objectives, make a note of the points you wish to raise or have noted by the reviewer. Bring your preparatory notes to the review meetings and take additional notes, as necessary, during the course of the planning and review meetings.

In particular, you should discuss any areas of disagreement or areas that require further clarification and record them on the on-line performance review form.

This could include clarification on:

- your role profile, specifically accountabilities and competencies;
- your objectives and role requirements;
- key result areas broken down by the "How" and the "What";
- how the circumstances outside your control will be factored in;
- what you need to do to achieve a particular rating; and
- the resources and supports that will be available to you.

be assertive

Humility is not a virtue in the performance review process [especially if your salary or future career development depend on it]. So do not agree objectives which are unrealistic or unachievable – remember that the ‘A’ in SMART means “Attainable.”

Do not underestimate your achievements. Do not allow the reviewer to mark you down for spurious reasons. Speak up for yourself and, if necessary, adjourn the meeting if you want more time to consider any objectives or other aspects which cause you concern.

setting and agreeing objectives

- Objective setting is a critical part of the performance review process and both the reviewer and reviewee should devote the proper time and attention to it.
- Read this document as well as documentation from your employer before drafting objectives as it is very important that you understand the process that is being planned. Make sure you are familiar with your own role profile and that you have seen the relevant part of the business plan for your area. If this information has not been made available to you, you should ask to see it now.
- You should be given sufficient time in the working day to prepare for your performance review meeting. Be familiar with the timetable in the performance management process – timings are included in the employer’s documentation.
- Familiarise yourself with any useful information, such as your job description, your role profile, last year’s performance review, the business plan for your branch or area and discuss possible objectives with colleagues.
- The employer’s guide to Aspire contains some sample objectives under the key result areas, which might be helpful. However, you should not feel obliged to restrict yourself to these areas.
- Remember that objectives must be *jointly* agreed.
- Objectives should encompass those aspects of your job which are under your control. If the achievement of objectives depends on factors outside your control, then you should insist that this is fully reflected in the objective being set.
- Objectives should be realistic and attainable. While objectives may require special effort, be careful that you are not in a position where you are doomed to fall short because you have bitten off more than you can chew.

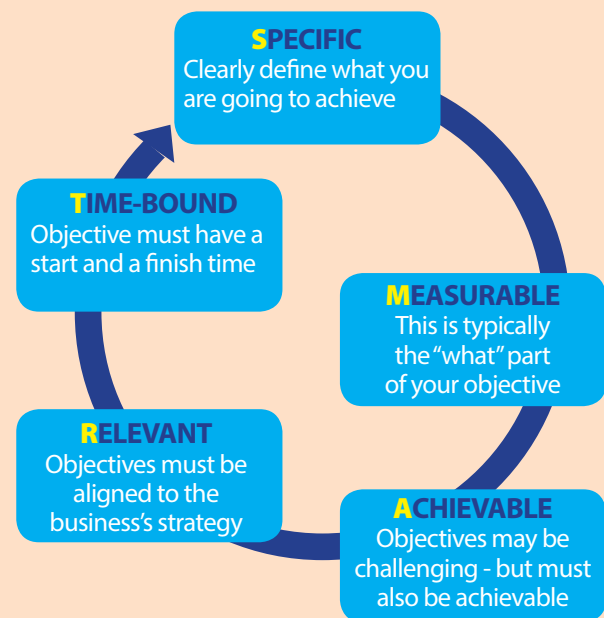
the smart way

It is always advisable to ensure that your objectives fall within what is known as the SMART way.

The objectives should set out:

- What is to be accomplished - **the goal**
- What will have been delivered as part of the achievement of the goal - **the what**
- How it will have been achieved specifically referring to the AIB brand values - **the how**

In what way will you achieve it? What is important in how you go about this? What AIB brand values will particularly aid your success and how will you apply them? Use the brand values documentation and descriptions on the next page to help you.



- As your employer recommends that there should be commitment to continuous learning and development through setting and completing agreed learning and development goals, you should try to ensure that this commitment is reflected in the objectives, wherever appropriate.
- Submit your proposed objectives to your reviewer before the performance review meeting.
- Make sure your preparation for the meeting is put to good use in the performance review meeting.
- Bring any notes or other documentation you want to the meeting. Make notes, as necessary, during the meeting.

Do not let yourself to be persuaded or pressured into accepting objectives which are unrealistic or cause you concern.

- Tell the reviewer what support you need to achieve your objectives and any learning and development goals, and make sure that this is noted on the form.

remember...

Objectives must be agreed.

Your Union has negotiated an agreement with the employer that numeric targets will only be acceptable if you agree them voluntarily.

behaviours in aspire – the “how”

Under Aspire, there is an equal emphasis on your performance being about behaviours – the “how” – as well as results – the “what.” The employer says that how you go about your work – your behaviours – is as important to overall performance as what you achieve – the results. So make sure that your review reflects this equal emphasis by focussing on behaviours as well as results.

Sample measurable objectives of behaviours are available in the employer’s intranet materials. You should review these in advance of agreeing any how objectives.

keep your own record

The performance review process provides for the inclusion of evidence to back up the appropriate assessment of your performance, such as complimentary letters or comments from customers. So it is essential that you keep a record of your personal achievements on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis. You should use your personal log or diary for this purpose. Your employer’s documentation on Aspire has attached useful forms that can be used for this record keeping.

The tasks you undertake may change:

- you may help out a colleague on a particular week;
- you may be “pulled away” unexpectedly from your job because of staff shortages; or
- you may change roles or locations during the year.

So it is vital that all incidents of this kind are recorded. It is important that you understand at the start of the year how your performance will be measured at your year-end appraisal, so that you can collate the evidence during the year.

aib brand values

The Aspire process is designed to build on and measure performance that encompasses AIB brand values. It is, therefore, imperative that all of your discussions with your reviewer builds on these values and measures your attainment of these.

We put customers first – This is about getting to know, listening to and understanding your customers’ needs. Can you show that you have made decisions based on what’s most useful to customers and take accountability for follow through on these?

We are empowering – This is about believing in your colleagues, trusting them to do what’s right and ethical and finding ways to build their confidence. This also allow for an environment where mistakes are treated as opportunities for learning and development – rather than sources of fear leading to inertia.

We are building trust and appreciation – This is about you being open, honest and ethical with your colleagues and your customers. You should keep your promises – but if you can’t, then you should manage expectations.

We are better together – This is about you showing that you are working collaboratively as part of one team for the common good of AIB. You can actively seek new ideas and show that you are open to ideas that come your way.

We keep it simple – This is about you showing that you actively look at ways of making the customer experience easier and better. You should show where you have tried to make complex matters simpler for your customers.

In the employer’s booklet, *Aspire the Power of Values*, pages 62 and 63, each of the performance statements includes measures that reflect how you can achieve the objectives while measuring your performance against the AIB brand values.

It may often be difficult to remember all of the work you have undertaken between each performance review meeting. So you should make a habit of recording all your achievements along with any change in your work circumstances, any specific challenges you have faced and how you managed to cope with them. A record along these lines can be a valuable aid to you and your reviewer when it comes to assessing your performance.

your performance meeting template

Name	Date	Action Required	Who (You or Your manager)?	By When?	Done?
Successes "I am proud of"	When having the conversation, ensure you start with this.				
Goals Update Progress on current goals including "How" and "What" Goals to change	You could include agreed objectives here and give an update on progress				
Brand Values Positive examples displayed Examples for development					
Personal Development Plan Progress Additions	Update on agreed PDP and also any further development you have undertaken				
Work in Progress Highlights (including delivery over and above goals) Issues (including areas of under delivery)	This is the main area for discussion. Be sure to think of both long and short term progress				
People Issues Team issues Personal issues Holiday/Absence Issues	Highlight how your manager can support you. Specify in your notes any support you seek.				
Great Place to Work Rate 1-5 identify any specific areas to address if score under 5	Indicate how engaging you find work at the moment. If you think engagement does not rate a 5, what needs to change to make it 5?				
Working Hours Issues	Highlight any concerns you may have about working hours.				
Any Other Business Questions and answers Feedback Anything else	Any relevant issues which are outside your control should be highlighted here.				

factors outside your control

Make sure that your reviewer takes into consideration any factors outside your individual control which may affect your ability to meet your objectives. This is important both for setting objectives for the future and for reviewing performance in the past. If these external factors are not recognised properly, then your ability to meet your objectives may be diminished.

Your objectives may need to be adjusted at interim reviews to take account of these factors, especially if they are subject to significant change. Some common examples of factors outside your control, which could affect your ability to meet objectives, are:

- change in local business environment, such as closure of major employer, loss of key customer;
- insufficient staff resources – either in terms of numbers, skills or experience;
- new products or services offered by other institutions;
- the introduction of a new procedure or policy (either by the employer, the regulator or the Government) that affects your ability to meet your objectives;
- prolonged absence from work through maternity leave or sick leave;
- change of role or location during the year under review;
- the non-availability of training or development plans previously agreed with the reviewer; or
- change in general economic conditions.

If you fall short of meeting your objectives because of external events, this may affect your rating. So it is important that you talk to your line manager/PR reviewer on a regular basis about any external changes that may affect your ability to deliver your objectives.

If you think your rating does not accurately reflect your performance, you can challenge the rating and, if necessary, lodge an appeal against it – through the agreed appeals procedure.

agree your learning and development needs

Make sure that your learning and development goals are noted and acted upon. An important element is the support you should be given in your job.

Appropriate training and other supports to assist you develop your career should be agreed and reviewed on an on-going basis.

AIB Competencies and Technical Competencies are an integral part of Aspire. You should concentrate on the competencies and level of achievement relevant to your role profile. Your manager and/or reviewer should agree the development plan that will allow you to achieve the level required for your role.

the 6-step approach to establish objectives

1. Understand the priorities for the year and the part you play in achieving success. You will need to know the business plans for the year and your part in their delivery.
2. Identify your overarching goals: what are you aiming to accomplish? Ask for your line manager's objectives so that you can identify your part in delivering these objectives.
3. Consider what criteria will be used to measure the achievement of the objectives. Remember numeric targets cannot be imposed on you against your will.
4. Consider also "how" you deliver these objectives. How you behave in achieving your objectives is as equally important as the results.
5. Identify your development requirements. Will you need support from the employer to develop further skills in order to achieve your goals?
6. Share and Delegate: If you are dependent on others to achieve your objectives, you should share these, where appropriate, in order to identify how this interdependence would work in practice. As a result of these conversations, you may need to revise your objectives.

If your role profile changes subsequently, this may mean that the competencies and level may also change. If this is the case, then a revised development plan should be agreed to support you in achieving your objectives.

clarify your rating expectations

According to your employer, one of the key principles of Aspire is that it clearly sets performance expectations so that employees know what is required to achieve a particular performance rating. So make sure that you clarify with your reviewer exactly what is required of you.

So you need detailed information on the precise results that would merit the following in terms of the "What":

- 1: Outstanding Performance
- 2: Very Strong Performance
- 3: Strong Performance
- 4: Scope to develop
- 5: Under Performance

rating performance

WHAT

1: Outstanding performance

- Consistently achieved exceptional results
- Overall performance significantly exceeded required standard
- Quality of work consistently exceeded required standard
- Performance was consistently and significantly ahead of peers
- Significantly higher contribution to team than peers
- Delivered across objectives and exceeded most of them despite challenging circumstances

2: Very strong performance

- Achieved very good results compared to objectives
- Overall performance exceeded required standard
- Quality of work exceeded required standard
- Performance was typically ahead of peers
- Very strong contribution to team
- Delivered across objectives and exceeded some

3: Strong performance

- Achieved good results compared to objectives
- Overall performance met required standard
- Quality of work good and met required standard
- Performance was in line with peers
- Valuable and positive contribution to team
- Delivered all objectives

4: Scope to develop

- Achieved some good results but not consistently
- Overall performance did not always meet required standard
- Quality of work did not consistently meet required standard
- Performance was below that of peers
- Showed capability to contribute to team's delivery but requires extra support or prompting to deliver
- Demonstrated efforts to develop skills
- Achieved some objectives but not all

5: Under performance

- Missed many opportunities to achieve results
- Overall performance failed to meet required standard
- Quality of work did not meet required standard
- Performance was significantly below that of peers
- Showed very little if any capability to contribute to team's delivery – requiring significant supervision and guidance to deliver role objectives
- Failed to deliver on majority of objectives

HOW

A: Inspiration to others

- Exemplifies brand values all the time through an 'aligned' attitude
- Inspires others to drive good customer outcomes
- Proactively seeks and creates opportunities to lead and drives improvements in customer and colleague experience
- Role model coach with evidence of sharing best practice and leading change
- Utilises and leads network/stakeholders to engage proactively and deliver results

B: Very strong role model of brand values

- Strong and consistent demonstration of brand values and behaviours through an 'aligned' attitude
- Consistently takes action to drive good customer outcomes
- Takes and creates opportunities to lead drive and implement improvements in customer and colleague experience
- Strong evidence of coaching and of sharing best practice
- Takes the lead and consistently works collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders

C: Strong role model of brand values

- Committed to brand values, visibly living the underpinning behaviours through an 'aligned' attitude to brand values
- Takes action to drive good customer outcomes
- Takes opportunities to improve experience for customers and colleagues
- Good coach with evidence of managing change well
- Works collaboratively with customers, colleagues and stakeholders to deliver results

D: Scope to develop

- Occasionally inconsistent with brand values and underpinning behaviours. Attitude 'misaligned' to brand values
- On occasion takes action to drive good customer outcomes
- Further contribution required to improve experience for customers and colleagues
- Limited evidence of helping others to 'live' values
- Inconsistent approach to working collaboratively with immediate or wider team

E: Not living the brand values

- Behaviours not consistent with brand values or underpinning behaviours. Attitude frequently 'misaligned'
- Rarely takes action to drive good customer outcomes
- Made no effort to improve experience for customers or colleagues
- No evidence of helping others to 'live' values
- Rarely works collaboratively with immediate or wider team

You also need clarification on how you have to behave to achieve the following statements on the “How”:

- A: “Inspiration to others”
- B: “Very Strong Role Model of the Values”
- C: “Strong Role Model of the Values”
- D: “Scope to Develop”
- E: “Not living the Brand Values”

Remember: your rating will determine part of your salary increase.

no surprises

There should be no surprises in the performance management cycle. Under Aspire there is an emphasis on high quality two-way performance review meetings with a focus on regular “adult to adult conversations.”

At each review meeting seek feedback from your reviewer about your performance so you understand how you are doing. If you get any unpleasant surprises, then the process is not being carried out properly. If you are unhappy with the process at any stage, seek advice from your Union.

the performance year

In its documentation the employer sets out the journey you take through the year in terms of measuring and agreeing performance milestones.

December to January – This is the time of year that you and your reviewer finalise your end-of-year performance measure or statement and agree your objectives for the coming year. These should all then be uploaded into the My Career system.

February to May – Agree your personal development plans and have regular conversations with your reviewer about your own performance. You also need to have informal conversations around your direct reports and their performance.

June - Interim self-reviews are prepared and submitted to your line manager. Calibration sessions take place. Proposed ratings reviewed by Senior Management Team and Leadership Team.

July – Interim performance review conversations take place. Interim performance ratings awarded. Objectives reviewed and revised as necessary. Interim discussion and updated objectives recorded on My Career system

August to September – Personal development plans are reviewed and revised if necessary. Regular performance conversations between your line manager and you need to take place. Informal feedback gathered.

October to December – AIB Strategy cascaded. Team strategies/plans cascaded. Employee objectives drafted. Annual self-reviews prepared and submitted. Calibration sessions and proposed ratings reviewed by Senior Management Team and Leadership Team.

End-of-year performance statements are agreed under the “What” and the “How.”

If following discussions with your reviewer, you still cannot agree your performance statement, then you can initiate an appeal under the Aspire appeals procedure, as outlined in Appendix 1. Your Union will provide assistance to you, if you decide to appeal.

standard for the role

When agreeing objectives, the standard for the role identified through the accountabilities is discussed to ensure the requirements are fair and consistent so that staff in the same role are working towards the same requirements.

Personal objectives will reflect individual skills and experiences and also focus on the priorities for individuals for the year ahead.

Role requirements and objectives should be jointly agreed: progress should be measured against them throughout the year. During the evaluation phase, you will be measured against a number of factors including:

- The extent to which you have met the role requirements and objectives;
- Your personal contribution and any key achievements over the year;
- The challenges that may have been overcome in meeting your objectives; and
- Any other relevant roles you may have fulfilled during the year.

The assessment will be summarised through use of the performance statements listed in the section ‘*clarify your expectations*’ above.

calibration sessions (consistency meetings)

The calibration process provides for a forum for discussion about your performance with the goal of ensuring that your reviewer applies similar standards to all of your peers being reviewed. The employer’s reasoning for this aspect of the process is to ensure:

- fairness and equity in the assessment of employees;
- a consistent approach to the application of performance ratings;
- enhanced discussions on performance with reviewees
- transparency of evaluation

- objectivity of the process
- clear differentiation of performance ratings based on performance

The calibration sessions will take place twice a year – a few weeks before the interim review and the end-of-year performance discussions.

training for the review process

All reviewers and reviewees should be trained in the Aspire process as otherwise it is unfair to both parties. In addition, reviewees will be provided with the employer guides and information to assist in the process. If you require further briefing or training as either a reviewer or a reviewee, then request this from your line manager. Information on role profiles, AIB competencies and technical competencies are available on the AIB intranet.

seek advice

If you need advice, if you feel that you have been treated unfairly, or if you just want to talk things over, then contact your FSU Area Co-ordinator, your FSU AIB Sector Committee member or the Union's Head Office as soon as possible.

In line with the Alliance principles agreed between the Bank's management and the Union, local dialogue is encouraged and it may be possible to resolve your concerns locally with the Union's assistance.

safeguards

Ensure that your reviewer adheres to the safeguards negotiated by the Union and to the commitments made by the Bank's senior management when Aspire was introduced, namely:

- Objectives should be *jointly* agreed.
- There should be an equal weighting for the "How" and the "What."
- There is no change to the existing practice concerning specific numeric targets
- Non-attainment of one objective does not, in itself, lead to a downgrading of your rating.
- At review meetings, consideration should be given to changing or unforeseen circumstances. Appropriate allowances should be made.
- Reviewers have discretion to amend the objectives to take account of points made by the reviewee and any relevant changes in circumstances.
- The introduction of Aspire is not expected to lead

to a deterioration of positive performance statements.

- The bank's senior management will share the performance review statistics with the Union on an annual basis.
- The Aspire process will be monitored continuously by your Union and will be subject to an annual joint review between the Union and the employer.

right of appeal

If you do not agree with the way in which your review has been conducted, or with the rating proposed, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly, tell your reviewer and seek a reconsideration of your review.

If you are unhappy with your performance statement or any part of the review, do not sign off on it until you have discussed your concerns with your reviewer.

If your concerns are not resolved satisfactorily, you have the right to appeal. Your Union can assist you in your appeal.

The agreed Aspire appeal process is outlined in Appendix 1.

summary

- Prepare well.
- Keep records of developments relevant to your performance throughout the year.
- Specific numeric targets are voluntary: they cannot be imposed.
- All objectives have to be jointly agreed.
- There is an equal weighting to the "How" and the "What."
- You can only be assessed on the basis of objectives that were previously agreed.
- Failure to achieve one objective does not automatically result in a "Scope to develop" rating under any of the measures.
- It's your review: be assertive.
- You have the right to appeal if you are not satisfied with the outcome.
- The Union is ready to help, if you need it.

These guidelines are designed to assist all FSU members in AIB to undertake their performance reviews under the Aspire process. If you require further assistance or guidance, please contact your local Sector Committee member or FSU Head Office at 0(0-353-)1-4755908 or 0(0-44-)2890-200130 or by e-mail to info@fsunion.org marking AIB Aspire in the subject line.

appendix 1: aspire appeals process

The Aspire appeals process has been designed to ensure that you have access to a fair, effective and speedy appeals mechanism where matters arising from your annual performance review process can be dealt with and resolved satisfactorily.

The appeals process applies where you believe that:

- your Aspire objectives do not fall within the scope of your role; or
- your performance evaluation statement or discussion record does not accurately reflect your performance for the period under review.

Stage 1

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your review discussion, you should in the first instance, raise your concerns with your reviewer and seek to resolve the matter through these discussions.

Experience shows that where concerns are addressed informally through local dialogue and discussion, this is more likely to result in a mutually satisfactory outcome and a more timely resolution of the issue.

Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of these discussions, you may seek a formal review by writing to your reviewer's line manager within 10 working days of the issue arising. The written request for a review must contain full details of the reasons why you are dissatisfied.

Your reviewer's line manager will conduct a review and make recommendations. The review will take your written submission into consideration. As part of this process, a face-to-face meeting may be held in order to discuss the issues.

Your reviewer's line manager will normally issue his/her decision – including reasons for the decision – and recommendations in writing within 15 working days of the request for a review being received.

Stage 3:

If you are dissatisfied with the operation of this review, then you can seek to have the matter examined by a person independent of your business area.

The independent person will be appointed from the Aspire Leadership Team and s/he will examine your case to determine whether the process was fair, reasonable and objective. The request for this review should be in writing and contain full details as to why you remain dissatisfied.

The reviewer appointed by the Aspire Leadership Team will be provided with a copy of the recommendations from Stage 2 along with your written submission.

The review will take into consideration your written submission and your reviewer's line manager's recommendation. As part of this process a face-to-face meeting may be held to discuss the issues.

If the Aspire Leadership Team member concludes that there is an issue of concern, s/he may opt to refer the matter back to an earlier stage with guidance as to the reason for concern.

The Aspire Leadership Team member will normally issue his/her decision and recommendations in writing within 15 working days of receiving the request for a review. This decision will be final and there is no further internal right of appeal.

Note:

You are entitled to representation by your Union representative or a work colleague at any formal meetings which may take place during Stages 2 and 3 of this process.

This Aspire appeals process is the sole mechanism for dealing with matters relating to the annual performance management process.

The operation of the Aspire appeals process will be reviewed in January 2017.

appendix 2: performance improvement process

Introduction

As part of the Aspire process, the employer has confirmed that the Performance Improvement Process (PIP) will continue. The declared aim of the PIP is to address issues of underperformance so that acceptable standards of work performance are achieved and sustained, while also providing feedback and support to an employee whose performance falls below the required level.

You should ensure that you are fully aware of the PIP, as you could be under threat of dismissal if you fail to reach the employer's desired level of performance. If this transpires, the Union will represent you through all stages of the process, as required.

Definition of Underperformance

The employer has outlined the following definitions of underperformance under the PIP:

- an employee is failing to meet the standard of work performance required of them;
- an employee does not meet agreed performance objectives; or
- an employee does not fulfill accountability for the role.

Scope

The PIP will not be used to manage the following:

- underperformance serious enough to amount to gross negligence (which will be addressed through the Disciplinary Procedure);
- misconduct;
- absence from work due to sickness; or
- failure to maintain qualifications or satisfy legal requirements associated with the ability to perform a role (such as MCC accreditation or matters relating to Fitness and Probity).

The process applies to all employees who have successfully completed their probationary period.

When a line manager is considering putting in place a PIP, s/he should endeavour to agree the content of the process with you. If you do not agree with the content, you should note this in the relevant section of the PIP.

Stages of the Performance Improvement Process

There are five stages in the process:

- Initial Stage
- Formal Stage 1 (Verbal warning)
- Formal Stage 2 (Written warning)
- Formal Stage 3 (Final written warning)
- Dismissal Stage

Notice of Meetings

Before any meetings under any stage of the PIP, your line manager must give you at least 48 hours' notice of the meeting. You should contact the Union for advice and guidance before the meeting takes place. You should also gather as much relevant documentation and evidence of your performance before the meeting.

performance improvement process - step by step

Union members should exercise their right to be represented by the Union at every stage of the process. At each stage, the member is entitled to at least 48 hours' notice from the employer of any meeting scheduled within the process.

Initial Stage

Informal meeting with line manager – performance improvement plan developed – 4 weeks to improve. *Outcome:* Either improvement is achieved or line manager invokes Formal Stage 1 by issuing verbal warning.

Formal Stage 1 (Verbal warning)

Formal meeting with line manager – performance improvement plan developed - 4 weeks to improve. *Outcome:* Either improvement is achieved or Formal Stage 2 is invoked with issuing of a written warning.

Formal Stage 2 (Written warning)

Formal meeting with line manager – performance improvement plan developed - 12 weeks to improve. *Outcome:* Either improvement is achieved or Formal Stage 3 is invoked by issuing of a final written warning.

Formal Stage 3 (Final written warning)

Formal meeting with line manager – performance improvement plan developed - 12 weeks to improve. *Outcome:* Either improvement is achieved or management moves for dismissal.

Dismissal

Formal meeting with nominee of Head of Human Resources.

Outcome: Either dismissal is confirmed or manager substitutes another action sort of dismissal (which usually involves employee remaining within PIP).

If you fail to attain the required improvement in the standard of your work performance during this process, you may be dismissed within a period of 28 weeks.

Right of Appeal

You have the right to appeal any of the outcomes of the formal stages of the process. Since the final outcome could lead to dismissal, you should seek advice about appealing any stages of the process where the employer finds that you have not achieved the required improvement .

your union's advice

Know employer policies and procedures: Ensure you are fully aware of and understand the PIP.

Gather evidence: The best person to prove your level of performance is you. Gather as much evidence as possible in advance to show this performance as well as any impediments to performance.

Seek representation: The Union will represent and guide you through all stages of the process.

Appeal: We encourage you to appeal all stages of the process. Ultimately this process could lead to dismissal: therefore, your future in the Bank depends on a good outcome from the process.