

How to lead a great performance conversation

This guidance is to support and enable you to **reflect** on your team member's performance so far.

Performance conversations should take place throughout the year and summarised on *my HR portal* during the performance cycle windows.

During the Q3 Enabling Conversation window you will need to record an **indicative performance rating** for your team member in *my HR Portal* - you'll find information on performance ratings at the bottom of this document.

Your team member should leave the conversation...

- Feeling clear about how they are performing
- Knowing what (if anything) they need to do differently
- Feeling motivated and supported as they move forward

Here's how you can head into the performance conversation with confidence.

Before the conversation

A bit of preparation will help the conversation flow and show your team member how invested you are

You'll find guidance about viewing and updating the performance documents on *my HR portal* [here](#) or at the bottom of this guide.

- 1) Well before the meeting, ask your team member to reflect on their performance by adding their comments to *my HR portal*
- 2) Use *my HR portal* to remind yourself of your team member's goals and read the comments they've added
- 3) Reflect on the progress they've made against their goals as well as their performance more generally
- 4) Make notes and talking points of examples you can take into the meeting. Include activities where praise is due, and where constructive feedback is needed

Don't just focus on **what** your team member has achieved. Think about **how** they've achieved it and the behaviour they've displayed. You can reflect on this by using our [culture essentials behavioural expectations](#).

During the conversation

As a manager, you will naturally lead the meeting but try not to dominate the conversation. Aim for about 50/50 in terms of who is talking and use open questions to encourage your team member to own their progress.

Do this by...

- Ask for your team member's views first, before sharing your own observations
- Consider your team member's preferences (e.g. a reflector with a strong focus on feeling as well as thinking) and how you can shape your questions and style in line with this
- Always celebrate strengths and achievements. Performance conversations are a great time to recognise and motivate your people
- Frame challenges positively by encouraging your team member to think about what they've learned
- Give them constructive tips to grow
- Be clear about what action they need to take to maintain momentum or improve their performance
- Make sure there are no surprises – you should be having regular 1:1s so there shouldn't be anything your team member doesn't already know. [Click here](#) for more on 1:1's

Use the conversation guide on the next page to help you have a great conversation.

After the conversation

- 1) Add your comments to your team member's document on *my HR portal*
- 2) Add an indicative performance rating to your team member's 2021 Year-End Evaluation in *my HR portal*
- 3) Ask your team member to update their performance and development goals on *my HR portal*, if any need updating
- 4) Continue to regularly check in and review progress in each 1:1.

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How to structure your conversation

Use the suggested questions to help your conversation flow.

1 Set the scene

Remind your team member about the purpose of the conversation and invite them to share their thoughts on how things are going.

Ask

Looking back over the last quarter, what were your key achievements and successes?

What progress have you made against your performance and development goals?

2 Discuss their progress

Use some of these open questions to help you explore your team member's achievements, challenges and behaviours.

Ask

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

What did you learn from these experiences?

In what projects, tasks or situations did you display our Culture Essentials? How did they help you?

Are there any projects, tasks or situations where you could have used the Culture Essentials more?

3 Share your observations

It's time for you to share your observations from your pre-prepared notes.

Keep a balance between positive feedback as well as areas for improvement.

Always be clear, constructive and factual when you're sharing your observations.

In cases where you need to see improvement, be clear about what you need your team member to do differently in future.

4 Look ahead

Now review your team member's performance and development goals. Use some of these questions to help you.

Ask

Looking forward to the next quarter, what will your key focus be?

Do we need to adjust any of your performance goals because of changing priorities?

How are you progressing with your development goals?

Is there anything getting in the way of you achieving your goals?

Is there anything we can better support you with from an inclusion perspective (e.g. in relation to a health condition or personal circumstance)?

Tell me one thing I could do that will help me better support you as your manager?

Note: Performance goals should focus on activities that help us achieve our business goals. [Click here](#) for more on goal setting.

5 Agree next steps

Agree actions your team member needs to take in order to maintain momentum or improve their performance.

Wrap up the conversation by agreeing when you'll review progress.

Add an indicative rating into your team members Year-End Evaluation in *my* HR portal.

More information on Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) can be found [here](#).

Supporting you

We recognise that not every performance conversation will be straightforward. If this is you, then read these articles before you head into the conversation.

Brush up on your feedback skills [here](#)

Heading into a challenging review? [Click here](#)

Address poor performance with these tips [here](#)

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Performance ratings

As part of the Q3 Enabling Conversation, line managers are asked to add an **indicative performance rating** to the team member's Year-End Evaluation document in *my* HR portal. **The rating needs to be added by the end of the Q3 window – by 27 August.** For information on how to complete this step please [click here](#).

Final ratings will be shared with team members during the Year-End Conversation.

When you provide an indicative performance rating, you need to consider **what** they've done and **how** they've done it.

We expect most people to be in the 'meets expectations' category as a strong performer, delivering against objectives and living our Culture Essentials. However, there may be some individuals that are developing in role or going above and beyond.

To support you, we've made some changes to the performance ratings through simplifying the language and updating the descriptors – see the table below for information on how to apply our performance ratings.

For those that are new in role (NIR) or on any form of parental leave then the individual should be given an indicative score of 3 – 'meets expectations'. See table on the right for further details...

New in role: (NIR) is defined as either a new recruit into CUK or someone that has transferred/been promoted into that role internally, after the 31st May 2021. (E.g. the individual gets promoted into a new role on the 15th June and would be classed as NIR for the indicative performance rating purposes). Through the validation process that happens in September, this final rating will be amended if the line manager feels that a score of '3' does not reflect accurate performance and there is sufficient evidence through performance evaluation to assess (E.g. the employee is no longer considered NIR).

Parental leave: for those individuals on parental leave (maternity/shared parental/paternity), then the absence must have exceeded a 6 month period in the financial year to be given the indicative score of 3. If the individual has completed or will complete a minimum of 6 months service within the financial year (01 Dec 2020 - 30 Nov 2021) then the line manager should use their judgement and award an indicative rating based on the performance rating descriptors below.

Long term sick: for individuals on long term sick for more than 6 months of the financial year consult your HR Business Partner. For individuals who are on long term sick for less than 6 months of the financial year then the line manager should use their judgement and award an indicative rating based on the performance rating descriptors below.

Unacceptable	Developing		Strong	Above and Beyond		Outstanding
Not Met (1)	Below Expectations (2)	Sometimes Below Expectations (2.5)	Meets Expectations (3)	Above Expectations (3.5)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Outstanding (5)
Immediate improvement is required in performance and behaviours	Majority of time performance and/or behaviours not yet meeting all expectations of the role Needs immediate development to progress	Performance and/or behaviours not yet meeting expectations of the role, but is progressing Requires some development in one or two areas	Delivers expected performance against objectives and demonstrates expected behaviours	Performance and/or behaviours sometimes exceeds expectations of role On occasion, stands out from their peer group in performance and/or behaviours	A stronger performer than most other colleagues with clear evidence of going above and beyond in performance and behaviours	Demonstrates exceptional performance and behaviours across objectives and makes significantly more positive impact than other colleagues

Rating fairly and avoiding bias

How we think can be influenced by life experiences, when the way you feel about an individual (whether we like or dislike them) has an influence on the performance rating of that individual, this can be unconscious. We can all think in a way that involves unconscious bias at some point, but it's important to be aware of it and not let it influence our decisions. [Click here](#) for more information on unconscious bias.

Need further support?

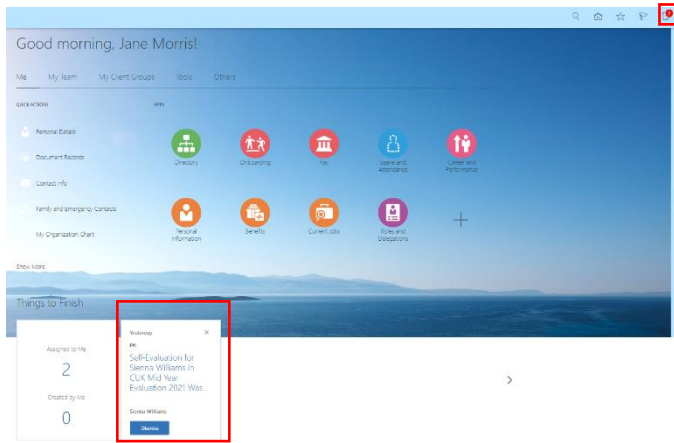
Get in touch with **People Support** or your **HR Business Partner** for advice.

Manager –Q3 Enabling Conversation

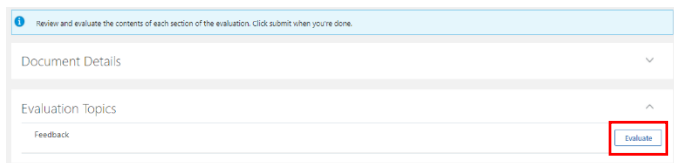
As a manager, you'll have access to review and edit the Q3 Enabling Conversation document before and after your conversation with your direct report. The document is managed in **My Team > Performance Overview** and can be found underneath the Year-End Evaluation document. You also have the opportunity to print the document if you find this useful.

Guidance on how to complete the Q3 Enabling Conversation Document in my HR portal can be found below

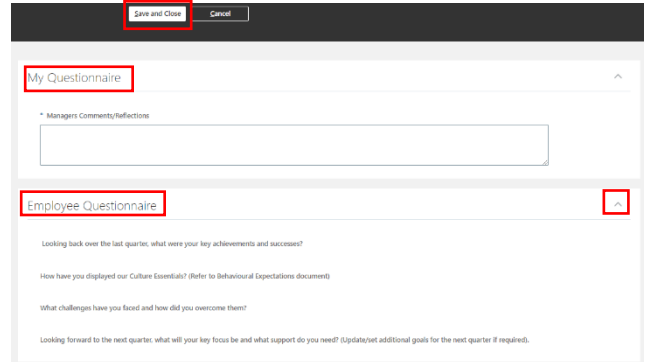
1. Once your team member has completed their comments and submitted the document, you'll receive a notification in myHR portal and via email.
2. The notifications can be found by hovering over the 'bell icon' or 'Things to Finish' at the bottom of the homepage.



3. By clicking on one of the notifications, you will be directed to the team member's performance document.
4. You can also access the team members document through **My Team > Performance Overview > Select the team member > Q3 Enabling Conversation**.
5. You'll be taken through to the below page, click **Evaluate**.



6. You'll now see the manager comments box under **My Questionnaire**. Your team member's comments can be viewed in **Employee Questionnaire**. If you cannot see the questions and comments, **click the expand arrow** on the right hand side of **Employee Questionnaire**.
7. Once you have had the conversation and added your comments, click **Save**.



8. To submit the document back to your team member press **Submit**.
 9. Your team member will receive a notification that you have submitted the document
 10. You now need to enter an indicative rating into the **Year-End Evaluation** document.
 11. Go to your team members Performance Documents and select **Year-End Evaluation**.
- Please note:** your team member **must** be in **Worker Evaluation** for an indicative rating to be entered. Please [click here](#) for guidance on how to complete this.
12. To add an indicative rating, go to the **Overall Summary**, click **Edit**:
 - a. Click on the drop down to select a rating
 - b. Put the word "Indicative" in the comment box
 - c. Click Save to complete the process

This rating will **not** be visible to employees at this stage.

