VU Develop Policy and Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose/ Objectives

(1) The VU Develop process provides a structured opportunity for staff to plan for and reflect on individual goals and professional development and is integral to the growth of staff and their accountability with the University. The process links closely to career planning and development, promotion, probation, succession planning and mechanisms for identifying and addressing poor performance.

(2) This process reflects the University's commitment to providing staff with forward-looking opportunities for personal and professional growth. Through this, organisational capacity and capabilities will be strengthened which will in turn support the achievement of the University outcomes in engaged teaching, learning and research.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(3) All ongoing and fixed term staff members will have an individual VU Develop Plan annually agreed no later than March each year.

Section 3 - Definitions

(4) VU Develop Plan – a structured, individualised approach to managing performance and developing capability in the University. The process is designed to allow supervisors and staff to create simple, effective performance and development plans and to easily review performance against those plans where performance refers to both the application of skills and conduct/ behaviour.

(5) Professional development – A systematic approach to professional and career development to ensure that all staff have the capabilities necessary to fulfil their roles, develop themselves and their careers, adapt to change and assist in developing others.

(6) Review –

a. A meeting held between the supervisor and staff member specifically to discuss performance and progress measured against their performance and development plan.
b. A document which sets out an individual's progress and performance towards their plan by way of ratings and comments by both the staff member and the supervisor.

(7) Plan - an abbreviation for the VU Develop Plan, usually referred to when discussing an individual's plan as part of the annual performance and development cycle.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

Principles

(8) The VU Develop process focuses on growth and aims to provide every staff member with personal and professional

development opportunities.

(9) The VU Develop process is based on feedback where every staff member has regular meaningful performance conversations with their supervisor and engages in a process of giving, seeking and receiving constructive feedback.

(10) The VU Develop process is intended to be a dynamic, interactive and transparent one based on the principles of :

a. shared responsibility, with each supervisor and staff member expected to make a contribution to the staff member's annual Plan, and,
b. accountability, where there is transparent documentation of staff member's goals, workload and achievements.

(11) The VU Develop process is approached in a manner that is fair and transparent, consistent with the values of the University and that encourages trust and regular, open communication.

(12) The process aligns the individual's annual objectives and performance with the University's Strategic Plan and values, setting clear goals, targets, expectations and standards for both performance and behaviour. Performance and conduct/ behaviour is then assessed in relation to these goals and targets and consistent with both the individuals' position description and with the workload allocation as agreed each year.

(13) The University encourages and supports a culture of continuous learning and performance improvement through ongoing professional and career development of its staff.

(14) The VU Develop process will encourage staff to perform at their best.

(15) The VU Develop process will assist staff who are not performing at the required level through the identification of guidance, support and professional development opportunities required for their performance to improve.

Policy

(16) Participation in the VU Develop process is mandatory for all ongoing and fixed term staff, irrespective of time fraction and/or length of contract.

(17) The process is based on an annual planning and review cycle coordinated with VU's planning to effectively align individual goals with University objectives. The involves at least two formal performance meetings between a staff member and supervisor during each cycle. However, it is expected that a staff member and his/her supervisor will informally discuss performance more regularly as a means of supporting continuous improvement practices

VU DEVELOP ANNUAL CYCLE

Time line	Action	Reference
December – March	Review prior year's objectives and consider outcomes. Set objectives for coming year. Agree professional development.	"VU Develop Round"
By end March	VU Develop plan agreed for coming year.	
July/August	Review of objectives and progress to date through the Mid Cycle Review process. Opportunity for updating objectives or re-setting priorities for second six months of the Plan.	"Mid Cycle Review"

(18) In establishing the annual Plan, supervisors and staff will set clear performance objectives reflecting workplace priorities, team and organisational plans and individual career plans. In this way the process closely links the priorities of the University Strategic direction and priorities and associated unit strategic plans to the individual's Plan.

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(19) The Plan encompasses continuous learning, improvement and individual career progression.

(20) The Plan focuses on performance standards using evidence/data (eg a portfolio approach) through such mechanisms as peer and student evaluations or other documented evaluation tools, and values staff, student and client feedback.

(21) The Plan supports the development of strategies to:

a. further encourage high performance, and
b. identify support and development to improve performance by linking to the University's industrial obligations, policies and processes for managing performance that does not meet expected standards.

(22) The Plan is integral to the University's procedures for salary increments and its policy framework on rewards and recognition; the performance review ratings will have a direct correlation with these policies and procedures.

(23) Opportunities for professional and career development, including Higher Education academic promotions processes, can be identified through the Plan. The action undertaken by both the staff member and the supervisor in relation to these opportunities, as well as the outcomes, are documented as part of the VU Develop review process.

(24) The VU Develop process is undertaken by a staff member's usual line manager ("Supervisor") unless alternative arrangements are more appropriate for the purposes of the VU Develop.

(25) If a staff member is aggrieved by the process and all efforts to remedy the situation at the local level are exhausted, the staff member may request that the Senior Officer (Supervisor) of the organisational unit reviews the situation. The Senior Officer (Supervisor) will then determine the matter. If the staff member's supervisor is the Senior or Principal Officer (Supervisor), then the relevant Principal Officer (Supervisor) or the Vice-Chancellor respectively will review the situation and determine the matter.

Section 5 - Procedures

Accountabilities

Responsibilities

(26) The Staff Member is responsible for:

a. contributing to the development of their VU Develop;
b. maintaining an up to date portfolio of evidence to support their performance;
c. actively using opportunities for personal and professional development;
d. attending relevant VU Develop training when required.

(27) The Supervisor is responsible for:

a. providing ongoing, regular and constructive feedback to staff;
b. approving plans;
c. ensuring that plans are aligned to unit goals;
d. formally meeting with the staff member to review – annually and mid cycle;
e. completing relevant training.

(28) Where a staff member has more than one supervisor, the nominated primary supervisor is responsible for consulting with the other supervisor(s) to determine the plan and review comments.

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(29) People and Culture is responsible for:

a. the implementation, maintenance and review of this Policy;
b. maintaining and enhancing the online tool;
c. providing effective training.

VU Develop - Learning and Development

(30) VU Develop guidance and support will be provided by the People and Culture (P&C) unit throughout the year and in particular during the VU Develop rounds.

(31) Additional support and assistance with the VU Develop process will be provided by P&C Business Partners and P&C Advisory Services.

Procedures

(32) The VU Develop comprises several key steps (see Appendix 1 below):

a. The University's strategic priorities set the objectives and high level key performance indicators (KPIs) which cascade into each area's strategic and operational plan.
b. The strategic plans for organisational units then identify objectives, KPIs and strategies for new initiatives and continuous improvement for these areas. These are normally made reference to in each staff member's Plan.
c. For academic staff members, the VU Standards for Academic Levels as set out in the Academic Classification Policy and Procedure are also articulated at this stage of the Plan.
d. Supervisors should complete their own Plan before they develop a Plan with their staff members to ensure overall alignment.
e. The staff member and their supervisor then develop a Plan based on clauses (26)b, (26)c, and (26)d above, the staff member's position description and consistent with the workload allocation agreed for that year. For example, an academic or teaching staff member may plan around their teaching and learning, research activity, external engagement, etc.
f. Plans will set out for each staff member:
    i. Their performance objectives for the current year.
    ii. Any VU wide mandatory training required for the current year.
    iii. Objectives related to the VU Values and Behaviours.
    iv. Their agreed professional development activities for the coming year which will support them in achieving their objectives.
    v. Their career aspirations and opportunities (optional).
    vi. The support required from their supervisor to help them achieve their objectives.
g. The Plan is then used as the basis for the formal review meetings between the staff member and their supervisor. At least two formal review meetings should take place during each annual cycle: one in July/August to review progress and update the plan (the 'Mid Cycle Review') and a review in December – March to discuss and assess outcomes.
h. The staff member is advised to collect on an on-going basis evidence /data relating to their Plan for use in the review meetings; a portfolio approach is encouraged. Likewise, the supervisor should fully prepare for the reviews collating information and feedback relating to the staff member's Plan on an ongoing basis.
i. During the planning meeting, support and development opportunities, including those for career development, are identified including, where necessary, strategies to improve performance that does not meet expected standards.
j. Once agreed, the Plan is approved online and a copy is available at any time to the staff member, their

supervisor, their supervisor's supervisor and up the line in accordance with an effective management framework.

(33) The Plan recognises that an individual's responsibilities, duties and key performance indicators may vary over time according to changing organisational needs. Accordingly the process allows for reasonable and agreed modifications to be made.

(34) An outline of the objectives of, and processes associated with, the VU Develop will be incorporated into the University's induction and orientation processes for all new staff.

(35) The Vice-Chancellor, who has online access to the plans for all staff members, reserves the right from time to time to undertake a check on the quality of individual plans to ensure consistency and quality of approach to the VU Develop process.

Appendix 1 - Summary of the VU Develop Online Process

TIME	ACTION	WHO
December - March	Staff and supervisor draft a plan in preparation for their one on one discussion	Supervisor & Staff member
December - March	One-on one meeting to discuss draft Plan and agree final Plan	Supervisor & Staff Member
July - August	Formal mid-year review of objectives and progress to date	Supervisor & Staff Member
December - March	Formal end of year review. Cycle starts again and new plans developed.	Supervisor & Staff Member

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