Every student succeeding
State Schools Strategy 2014–2018

Queensland State Schools Annual Performance Review process for principals and deputy principals

A step-by-step guide
This guide is designed to support implementation of the Queensland State Schools Annual Performance Review (APR) process for principals and deputy principals. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Queensland State Schools Annual Performance Review process for principals and deputy principals – Overview
- the joint statements on the Annual Performance Review process for principals, deputy principals and teachers by the department and the Queensland Teachers’ Union
- the Annual Performance Development Plan for principals and deputy principals available in MyHR (online template)
- the Annual Performance Development Plan for deputy principals (DOCX or PDF template).

The three-phase process will be implemented in all Queensland state schools. The Annual Performance Development Plan (APDP) requires development, implementation and review by all principals and deputy principals in collaboration with their supervisor.

**Phase 1: Reflection and goal setting**

**School priorities**

It is important that a principal’s/deputy principal’s APDP reflects the school context in which they are working. A section is provided on the template for the school’s priorities to be articulated for the duration of the cycle. It provides an overview of key areas for consideration when the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor begin to frame up to three goals that will be the focus of the plan.

**Reflect on areas of strength and areas for development**

The Annual Performance Review process for principals and deputy principals is framed against the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles, which should be used by both principals and deputy principals and their supervisors when reflecting on areas of strength and areas for development. Useful resources for self-reflection include the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 360° Reflection Tool, the Australian Professional Standard for Principals (APSP), the Leadership Profiles, or the APSP self-reflection tool for the professional practices which can assist in determining individual areas of strength and areas for development. Goals are to be aligned to the five professional practices and reflective of systemic, professional and local priorities and context.

Once the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor have agreed on the areas of strength and areas for development, these should be recorded in the APDP template. Principals and deputy principals also have the opportunity to reflect on their career aspirations. The template provides an opportunity for this to be recorded if desired.

**Agree on performance development goals, actions to develop capability and indicators of success**

Up to three performance development goals are to be established collaboratively between the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor. In addition to these goals, principals/deputy principals and their supervisors should identify actions required to support achievement of the goals and indicators of success.

The SMART approach to developing goals is a useful model for goal and success indicator formulation. This approach provides a process for developing goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-phased.

The SMART goals framework provides further guidance on this process. The AITSL Teacher Toolkit also provides resources to support the setting of SMART goals.

Formulation of goals in this manner provides for the identification of indicators of success, which are also recorded on the template. Goals should be regularly reviewed and adjusted if circumstances change (e.g. change of school or change of school priorities). Once the goals have been established, the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor should work together to identify:

- specific actions to be undertaken
- support and professional learning required
- agreed indicators of success (evidence is required) and the means for obtaining this.
The final step of this phase is for both the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor to sign the plan to confirm agreement.

**Phase 2: Professional practice and learning**

During this phase, the APDP is put into action and is supported by professional learning to achieve the negotiated goals.

Upon agreement on the plan and goals, it is important to have regular conversations about progress. These may be both formal and informal. The plan should be a ‘living document’ that is referred to regularly. Formal reviews, identifying and reflecting on evidence, should be undertaken during the 12-month cycle to review progress toward goals and agree on further actions. Principals/deputy principals and supervisors can record reflections, comments and notes during Phase 2. No more than four formal reviews should be undertaken during a 12-month cycle.

**Phase 3: Feedback and review**

An effective approach to principal/deputy principal performance development requires a commitment to ongoing formal and informal feedback and a culture of high performance. Timely, frequent and improvement-focused feedback supports the actions of principals/deputy principals to improve their practice. It further guides choices about professional learning, and informs reflection on, and revision of, performance development goals.

In addition to ongoing informal feedback, it is important to provide an opportunity for a full reflection on a principal’s/deputy principal’s performance against their annual performance and development goals, actions and indicators of success.

At this time, the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor should discuss whether each goal was achieved or not achieved, making comments on the template where relevant. There may be many reasons why a goal is not achieved. It is important that both the principal/deputy principal and their supervisor identify these, especially where this has occurred despite the best efforts of the principal/deputy principal.

Such a review must include the provision of verbal and written feedback that provides a basis for reflection on practice to inform further improvement during the next cycle.
The template allows the principal/deputy principal to provide overall comments regarding the outcomes of the plan, including:

- significant areas of growth
- challenges which prevented achievement and the challenges overcome which allowed achievement
- learnings and future focus areas
- career aspirations and pathways available
- support and professional development needed to further develop performance
- future action required should performance development goals not be met on a regular basis.

The template also provides a section for final comments by the supervisor, who should reflect on similar points, so that the document becomes the basis for subsequent APDPs.

Finally, the document should be endorsed and dated by both the principal/deputy principal and the supervisor, and retained as an official record.