

Performance appraisals of ministry workers

54/22 Ministry Wellbeing and Development

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

Key Points

- Introducing regular performance appraisals for ministry workers in the Diocese will fulfil a recommendation of the Royal Commission. More than that, this is an opportunity to implement a practice that is also widely considered to be beneficial.
- Regular performance appraisals will assist ministry workers by providing appropriate encouragement and feedback as pertains to their ministry role. The impact of this feedback is to contribute to the self-awareness and appropriate grounding of a ministry worker.
- Given the polity of the Diocese, different performance appraisal tools will be needed to cater for ministry workers who have a ministry team leader, and those who do not. Feedback is sought on the proposed arrangements.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to propose a course of action in relation to Recommendation 16.5(c) of the Royal Commission for all people in religious or pastoral ministry to “undergo regular performance appraisals”.

Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report ‘Performance appraisals of ministry workers’ –
 - (a) invite members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2023 on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undergo regular performance appraisals as contemplated in the report, and
 - (b) request the Standing Committee to implement arrangements for regular performance appraisals for all ministry workers in light of feedback received.

Background

4. Recommendation 16.5 of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**Recommendation 16.5**) is as follows –

‘The Anglican Church of Australia should develop and each diocese should implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel):

 - (a) undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety
 - (b) undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision
 - (c) undergo regular performance appraisals.’
5. At its meeting on 27 June 2022, the Standing Committee resolved to form the Performance Appraisal Committee as follows –

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'Standing Committee appoints a sub-committee consisting of the Rev Mark Charleston, the Rev Dr Raj Gupta, the Rev Dr Andrew Katay, the Rev Caroline Litchfield and the Rev Craig Schafer (Committee to elect a chair from amongst its members) to propose a course of action in relation to Recommendation 16.5(c) of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse for all people in religious or pastoral ministry to "undergo regular performance appraisals".'

6. The Rev Dr Raj Gupta was elected as chair of the sub-committee at its first meeting on 28 September 2022. The Committee has met five times in total.
7. Resolution 54/22 of the 2022 Synod included, among other things, the following matters relevant to implementing this recommendation of the Royal Commission –
 - 'Synod –
 - (a) notes –
 - (i) recommendations 16.5, 16.44 and 16.45 for national mandatory standards for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of bishops, clergy, and lay personnel of the Anglican Church of Australia in any form of ministry of pastoral care or service in the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,
 - (ii) the resolution of the General Synod on 9 May 2022 encouraging dioceses to fully implement the Ministry Wellbeing and Development policy, guidelines and resources document to enhance the wellbeing and professional development of clergy and some paid church workers,
 - (iii) the [report entitled] 'Pastoral Consultation (Professional Supervision) Recommendation' dated 27 July 2022 tabled at this session of the Synod (the Recommendation), and
 - (iv) the lifelong ministry resources developed by Ministry Training & Development,
 - (b) affirms the importance of implementing a mandatory system for the professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of clergy and lay church workers providing pastoral care or service to enhance their ministry wellbeing and development,
 - (c) notes the subcommittees of the Standing Committee referred to in paragraphs 8 and 139 of the Recommendation are developing proposals for a system of mandatory professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals for licensed and stipendiary or paid clergy, and stipendiary or paid lay church workers providing pastoral care or service including any proposed legislation and policies, and requests a report be provided to the 1st ordinary session of the 53rd Synod...'

Discussion

Royal Commission Recommendation 16.5

8. Child Safe Standard 5 states that 'People working with children are suitable and supported'. Recommendation 16.5 (included at paragraph 4 above), considered as a whole, proposes a suite of tools and approaches towards this goal.
9. Performance appraisals were recommended by the Royal Commission as one mechanism to ensure people who work with children were supported (the other mechanisms being professional development (16.5(a)) and professional supervision (16.5(b))).
10. Notwithstanding some ambiguity in relation to the presence of the word 'mandatory' in Recommendation 16.5 (i.e., present in the preamble, (a), and (b), but not (c)), the Diocese has an ethical and reputational imperative to implement regular performance appraisals as recommended by the Royal Commission.

11. Further, it is considered best practice for all ministry workers to have regular performance appraisals. This is a tool that assists a ministry worker by providing appropriate encouragement and feedback as pertains to their ministry role. The impact of this feedback is to contribute to the self-awareness and appropriate grounding of a ministry worker.
12. A “ministry worker”, for the purposes of this report and its recommendations, includes both employees and officeholders.

The desired outcome

13. The Royal Commission has recommended regular performance appraisals as a means of providing support for all ministry workers, and those working with children in particular.
14. Whilst it is necessary to formally introduce regular performance appraisals because of the Royal Commission recommendations, this catalyst provides an opportunity to implement this practice that is also widely considered to be beneficial.

Performance appraisals

15. A variety of possibilities of what might be considered a performance appraisal have been considered, including how these may be connected with the underlying concerns of the Royal Commission. Both Mr Lachlan Bryant (Director of Safe Ministry) and Ms Vikki Napier (Parish HR Partner) have provided input.
16. The nature of ministry work is usually quite different to that of workers in secular organisations. This is reflected in the remuneration of those in ministry work, which is a stipend to ‘free up’ someone for vocational ministry. Accordingly, the assessment, or appraisal, of those in ministry work carries its challenges. We must remember that God is sovereign, and outcomes will always be subject to God’s blessing. It is commendable for a church, for example, to desire and pray for a goal of 20 conversions in a year. It is another thing to hold someone accountable to such a goal in the same way that a salesperson might be held accountable and assessed for achieving (or missing) sales targets.
17. Any performance appraisal tool(s) must take into account the significant theological differences between secular work and ministry work.
18. The foundational nature and priority of character in ministry is noted. This is part of the rationale for the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire (**CLQ**), which is completed upon the appointment to a new ministry, or at least every 10 years. So important and foundational is character that consideration was given to fulfilling this Royal Commission recommendation by limiting regular appraisals to character. This could have been accomplished by, for example, increasing the frequency of the existing CLQ process.
19. However, ultimately, it is felt that the Royal Commission intended more by the term “performance appraisal” than merely a character appraisal. Noting that the ultimate aim of the recommendation was to assist ministry workers to be realistically and objectively grounded, a broader form of performance appraisal is merited. A more holistic performance appraisal process provides some external feedback for a ministry worker that can assist with their confidence, security and raise a wider range of issues that may fester if unchecked. Furthermore, any process that seeks to only review character will be fraught with its own inherent challenges and limitations.
20. A more well-rounded understanding of the term “performance appraisal” would certainly include observations about character. All ministry workers should aspire to one’s progress being evident to all (cf 1 Tim 4:15). However, it would also include feedback on how they are going in their role and given their particular role description. Such appraisals should also be an opportunity for the ministry worker to provide ongoing feedback to their “ministry team leader”, both about issues the ministry worker is facing within their ministry setting, and any issues that may be percolating with regard to their ministry team leader. Building such feedback loops into ministry settings helps the ministry worker to be better grounded, fosters good communication within a staff team, and also helps the ministry team leader to continue to develop.
21. The Anglican Church of Australia’s “Ministry Wellbeing and Development” report, which was noted by our Synod in Resolution 54/22, succinctly articulates the benefits of performance appraisals: “to

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ensure support for ministry wellbeing, for achievement in the ministry to which they have been called, and for accountability.” The same report notes that a performance appraisal provides the opportunity:

- (a) to encourage and appreciate current strengths and ministry progress,
 - (b) to affirm the alignment with the mission of the church,
 - (c) to identify areas that need attention or improvement and outline pathways to address such areas,
 - (d) for accountability within the context of the leadership of the parish or organisation, and
 - (e) for identifying areas requiring improvement in their ministry support and the means to achieve those improvements.
22. These are all commendable opportunities that assist a ministry worker and the ministry. All concerned would benefit from these opportunities being provided routinely, and there is much overlap with the implied behavioural ends of the Royal Commission.
23. While the merit of providing performance appraisals stands on its own, there is also a reputational risk if the Diocese does not implement “performance appraisals”, in the common sense of the term, having been recommended by the Royal Commission.

Terminology

24. It is possible to use alternative terms to that of “performance appraisal”. The term “Ministry Review” has much to commend it. It captures something of the unique nature of ministry work, as distinct from secular work that we have already noted.
25. However, “performance appraisal” is preferred, given that it is such a widely used and understood term. The term “performance” is also already embedded in Ordinances such as the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*. This term also connects the implementation with what is regarded as best practice more broadly.

Methodology

26. Given Anglican Church polity, there are some challenges in implementing performance appraisals in the Diocese of Sydney, particularly for ministry workers who do not have a ministry team leader.
27. Rectors are a clear example of not having a ministry team leader per se. In Anglican Church polity, rectors are responsible for the ministry of the parish, and parish councils and wardens are responsible for the property and finances of a parish. This is somewhat different to a typical corporate structure, where a CEO is accountable to a Board. Whilst a healthy parish would be expected to have a healthy interplay between the two, the parish council is not the ministry team leader for a rector. Similarly, whilst bishops offer support, they are not ministry team leaders.
28. An Assistant Minister in a parish, on the other hand, is an example of a ministry worker who has a ministry team leader (their rector).
29. Accordingly, different performance appraisal tools will be needed to cater for ministry workers who do (formally or otherwise) have ministry team leaders, and those who do not.

Ministry workers with a direct ministry team leader

30. A proposed template has been developed in conjunction with the Centre for Ministry Development and the Parish HR Partner (Attachment A) which a ministry team leader may use to conduct a performance appraisal with a ministry worker.
31. The following approaches have been considered regarding changes to, or deviation from, the proposed template:
- (a) In the interests of transparency and rigour, alternative forms should be approved by the local bishop, the parish HR partner, OR parish council,
 - (b) No approval is needed should a ministry team leader wish to use an alternative form, or
 - (c) Alternative forms are permitted, without approval, provided that they cover the following areas in appropriately robust ways:

- (i) Ensuring that there is an up-to-date role description.
 - (ii) A two-way evaluation in relation to each area covered in the role description.
 - (iii) A mutual agreement on Gospel based outcomes for the next 6-12 months, depending on the appraisal cycle.
 - (iv) A two-way dialogue in areas of character and leadership development opportunities. It is envisaged this would include items such as spiritual life, leadership, empowering and developing and people, teamwork within the staff team, mission, and pastoral care.
 - (v) A celebration of achievements, and recognition of challenges, and discussion of future ministry.
 - (vi) An opportunity for feedback to the ministry team leader.
32. On balance, considering the principles both of flexibility but also accountability, option (c) is preferred. That is, variations to the template are permitted provided they cover the abovementioned areas of (i) to (vi) in appropriately robust ways.
33. Where a ministry worker has a ministry team leader, the performance appraisal should be conducted every 12 months. Ideally, the annual appraisal should contain 'no surprises', and be a culmination of regular meetings of a ministry team leader with ministry staff and continuous conversations.
34. The attached proposed performance appraisal template may be reviewed from time to time by the Parish HR partner, in the case of minor updates. More major updates should be approved by the Standing Committee.

Ministry workers without a direct ministry team leader

35. We have noted the uniqueness of Sydney Anglican Polity. Accordingly, a different approach will be required for ministry workers without a ministry team leader.
36. The preferred option is an externally administered "360-degree review". This is a tool to assist ministry workers to receive external feedback and be appropriately grounded. A trained facilitator can help a ministry worker (without a ministry team leader) process and constructively engage with the feedback. It is acknowledged that this tool involves an element of self-selection in that the officeholder must ultimately be the one to select those who participate. However, this is also necessary for the issues arising from the process to be constructively taken on board.
37. Noting the cost of such reviews (currently estimated to be approximately \$500, including debrief) and the higher commitment of time, it is recommended that these be done at least every 3 years. The parish (or equivalent 'employer') should cover this cost.
38. By mutual agreement, a "360-degree review" may replace any single 12-month review for a ministry worker with a ministry team leader.
39. The "360-degree review" should be done by a reputable organisation who has developed expertise in conducting 360-degree reviews. A list of recommended providers should be made available by the Diocese and maintained by the Parish HR partner. The initial list of recommended providers is proposed to be the Centre for Ministry Development, City to City, and REACH Australia. Noting that parishes often have internal contacts of others with such expertise, parishes are free to use providers from outside of this recommended list on "arm's length" terms, and ways that avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Frequency of appraisals

40. Further consideration is required regarding the frequency of performance appraisals, particularly for ministry workers without a direct ministry team leader if "360-degree reviews" are favoured.
41. Given the more involved nature of a "360-degree review", including the cost, and noting that many of the desired outcomes of a regular performance appraisal will be achieved by other measures being contemplated by the staff development performance appraisal of the Royal Commission, the three yearly frequency may be an appropriate minimum for those with no ministry team leader. It is yet to be determined whether some other form of review may be required in the intervening years.

42. The Anglican Church of Australia report “Ministry Wellbeing and Development” recommended a 3 yearly cycle of reviews:
- (a) Year 1: A self-review
 - (b) Year 2: A joint review between clergy and their ministry team leader / bishop
 - (c) Year 3: A facilitated review.
43. However, this approach is not considered appropriate for several reasons:
- (a) the polity of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney,
 - (b) the tendency to operate in staff teams of varying sizes,
 - (c) the improved starting place of many of our rectors in relation to church staffing practices,
 - (d) the desire to build regular two way feedback into our culture, and
 - (e) the reality of Pastoral Supervision and Professional Development working in conjunction with performance appraisals.

Recording the Performance Appraisal

44. In the interests of mutual accountability and transparency, it is proposed that the Diocesan Registry keep a record of the date of the ministry worker’s last performance appraisal, and its type (eg 360-degree review provided by xxx; internal review). This is proposed to occur through an annual online declaration from the ministry worker.
45. Ministry workers are encouraged to share the insights they have gleaned from their review with their ministry coach or pastoral supervisor.

Next steps

46. Feedback is sought by 31 December 2023 on these proposed arrangements. Additional work will be required to determine the implementation of performance appraisals in the Diocese, particularly –
- (a) the timing of the implementation,
 - (b) whether the implementation should be staged,
 - (c) communication and education that will be required, and
 - (d) whether and how the conduct of performance appraisals should be legislated in the Diocese.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS
Diocesan Secretary

14 August 2023

PROPOSED TEMPLATE

Performance Review & Development Form

Name:		Position:	
Manager's Name:		Position:	
Date of Review Meeting:			

Role Description	
Is the role description up to date?	Yes / No <i>(NB: If no, please update before proceeding with the review).</i>

SECTION 1 – REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST POSITION DESCRIPTION

Key Performance Areas	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager’s Comments
<i>A brief description of the main tasks that the employee is responsible for. This should reflect the Role Description.</i>	5 – Exceptional 4 - Exceeds Expectations 3 - Meets Expectations 2 - Improvement Needed 1 – Unsatisfactory	<i>For the staff member comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i> <i>Staff member may wish to give examples of good work, or challenges in achieving requirements.</i>	<i>For the manager’s comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i> <i>Comments should provide evidence reflecting the performance rating.</i>
Responsibility 1			
Responsibility 2			
Responsibility 3			
Responsibility 4			
Responsibility 5			
Responsibility 6			

WORK OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT 6/12 MONTHS	
Gospel Outcome(s)	Goals (should be - Specific, Measurable, Realistic, with a timeframe)

SECTION 2 - CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Character and Leadership Development	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager's Comments
<p><i>A brief description of the main tasks that the employee is responsible for. This should reflect the Role Description.</i></p>	<p>5 – Exceptional 4 - Exceeds Expectations 3 - Meets Expectations 2 - Improvement Needed 1 - Unsatisfactory</p>	<p><i>For the staff member comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i></p> <p><i>Staff member may wish to give examples of good work, or challenges in achieving requirements.</i></p>	<p><i>For the manager's comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i></p> <p><i>Comments should provide evidence reflecting the performance rating.</i></p>
<p>1. Spiritual Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You live for God, and this is demonstrated in word & prayer. Your life is devoted to serving him and growing in his likeness. The fruit of this is seen consistency in love, joy, patience, self-control, and a faithful prayer life. You are walking closely with God. 			
<p>2. Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You create and communicate a compelling vision for your ministry that motivates others. You convey the purpose and importance of the church's vision and strategy and how your ministry links in with it. You collaboratively pursue the vision, generate enthusiasm, and take responsibility to map out steps to achieve it. 			

Character and Leadership Development	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager's Comments
<p>3. Empowering and Developing People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are committed to recruiting, training and empowering people in life and ministry. You are actively calling out church members to lead and take initiative and responsibility. 			
<p>4. Teamwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As staff team member you actively seek to build other staff members up. You value them for the contribution they bring to the team and seek to quickly and graciously resolve any conflict that may arise. You always seek to assume the best of fellow team members and don't judge their motives. You positively uphold staff members externally with the church body. 			
<p>5. Mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You seek to faithfully share the gospel with people you meet. You welcome new people into church life. 			

Character and Leadership Development	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager's Comments
<p>6. Pastoral Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You genuinely care for people and seek pastorally to ensure the people you are responsible for are looked after. You care for people in a holistic way, seeking to make sure their body, mind and soul are well with the Lord. You appropriately delegate care involving others when you are unable, or it would be inappropriate for you to be the direct pastoral carer. 			

SECTION 3 – SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, & MINISTRY DISCUSSION

How have you contributed to {xxx}'s organisational culture?

What went well this year?

What would you have liked to have done differently?

How do your “significant others” feel about your Ministry?

Ministry Futures Discussion: *This is an opportunity for the staff member to discuss their future ministry desires and / or opportunities.*

SECTION 4 –DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ministry Focus Areas <i>(i.e., what are the most important ministry aims or issues going forward.)</i>	Development Goals <i>(i.e., what key skill or area do you need to develop to be more effective in this Ministry Focus Area.)</i>	Actions – How will objective me achieved, and by when? <i>(e.g., training, experience with new tasks, mentoring etc.)</i>

SECTION 5 – TWO WAY FEEDBACK

How can your manager better support you in your role?

What would you differently if you were the Senior Minister?

Would you like to provide any constructive feedback that might enhance the operations or professional working relationships in our church?

SECTION 6 – SIGNATURES

Both staff member and manager agree that this Performance Review & Development document reflects the discussions held.

This document will be filed securely and treated with confidentiality (as appropriate)

Staff Member’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Manager’s Signature: _____ Date: _____