

Supervision and Performance

Date reviewed: March 2006

Date to be reviewed: Oct 2008 - April 2008



Purpose of the policy

VAW believes that supervision is an important and valuable part of our work. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for supervision within VAW.

The purpose of supervision is to discuss and review progress of the staff member's work and performance against objectives set out in the work plan or equivalent in a supportive and uninterrupted environment. It is an opportunity for two-way communication and to develop a focus in order to meet VAW's targets and goals. This policy also outlines VAW's approach to performance improvement.

General principles

Supervision is an opportunity:

- To monitor and evaluate performance and delivery of objectives in the key work areas
- To monitor timekeeping, and absence through annual leave or sick leave
- To share information on policy and organisational objectives
- To raise and discuss any concerns about work or working relationships
- To provide a framework for agreeing changes
- To discuss the staff member's professional development needs

Process

- In the first month of employment the staff member will meet regularly with their line manager to discuss induction and identify the main areas of work and their objectives in line with the VAW induction policy. These objectives will form the basis of an annual work plan to be agreed and then discussed at regular supervision meetings.
- Supervision will be held every 4 weeks
- Additional supervision may be available where appropriate
- It is recommended that a set agenda be used for supervision sessions (see appendix 1 for an example)
- The supervisor will keep his/her notes in a locked filing cabinet

- Supervision meetings should be held in a suitable and confidential environment.

Suggested Set Supervision Agenda

- Check in (how are you?) and highlight any specific areas to discuss
- Review of the last session's action points
- Housekeeping – annual leave, sick leave, timesheets
- Key work areas
- Working relationships
- Career development and training

Performance Improvement

Occasionally, the behaviour or performance of an employee may not be up to standard. The following process aims to fulfil two roles: firstly, to ensure all staff are aware of the support which they can expect from VAW; and secondly, to provide managers with clarity as to when disciplinary procedures should begin.

First Meeting

- As soon as a line manager has a concern regarding employee performance or behaviour, the issue should be discussed between the employee and the line manager. Both parties should be given the opportunity to discuss the area of concern and to make any relevant comments. This will usually take place during regular supervision sessions.
- This meeting should be informal and constructive to allow the employee to express their opinion and the line manager to determine whether there are any factors which may be contributing to the poor performance.
- At this meeting the line manager should explore with the employee the viability of support arrangements to assist the employee in reaching the appropriate standards of work performance. This may include staff development, on-the-job training, re-induction, coaching, etc.
- A record of the performance improvement areas discussed, the objectives set and associated timescales should be made by the line manager and kept with the employee's supervision notes.
- The timescale will reflect the nature of the job and the area of concern; the timescale should be agreed by both parties at the beginning of the process – normally there will be no more than 3 months between stages.

- Following the first discussion and agreed review period, a second meeting should be conducted which should be systematically recorded by the line manager. These meeting may coincide with regularly scheduled supervisions.

Second Meeting

- The purpose of this meeting is to establish whether the performance issues previously identified have been resolved. If this is the case, no further action will be required.
- It is possible that circumstances outside the employee's control have caused or at least contributed to the reduced effectiveness of their performance over the period monitored – there must be taken into consideration. These may include health, domestic or bereavement circumstances for example. These circumstances should be recorded.
- If the line manager identifies that there are continuing shortcomings in the employee's performance, the second meeting should be used to establish an agreed action plan which could include:
 - Further training
 - Variance of workload, if appropriate
 - Agreeing realistic monitoring of standards of performance in respect of agreed objectives and the requirements of the job
 - Timescales within which the improvement in performance is required
 - Any viable support requirements which have been identified
- The employee should be informed that failure to meet the established reasonable standards expected within the agreed timescale could lead in the future to more formal disciplinary procedures being implemented.
- Notes of the meeting should be taken by the manager. A copy should be given to the employee and a copy should be kept with the employee's supervision notes. The notes will be treated as a verbal warning (stage 1 of the disciplinary policy). The action plan should include a summary of the improvement(s) required, the target(s) and the timescale(s) over which these are expected.

Third Meeting

At the end of the review period a further meeting should be arranged between the line manager and the individual. It is anticipated that in the majority of cases, no further action, other than normal follow-up during supervisions, will be necessary.

If, despite this process, the employee's work performance does not meet acceptable standards, the individual should be informed that disciplinary

procedures will begin. If the Performance Improvement Policy has been followed, then the employee would receive a written warning (stage two of the Disciplinary Policy).

A record of this meeting should be kept, highlighting areas where performance is not at acceptable standards. A copy should be given to the employee and a copy should be kept with the employee's supervision notes and personnel file.

[see Disciplinary Policy for information about appeals procedure and record keeping]