

Our Performance Framework

Working together for the people of Edinburgh

About this framework

What is it?

Having great performance conversations is a skill you develop over time. This framework is designed to support you in having these conversations. It offers a blend of templates, tools and tips to be used flexibly to suit your needs and situation.

Who's it for?

All City of Edinburgh Council employees.

At the heart of everything we do, you'll discover Our Behaviours

Our Behaviours

Our Behaviours show how we do things when we are at our best. They're at the heart of everything we do and the core of who we are and who we want to be. Talking about our behaviours in our performance conversations will help us to celebrate what we do well, how we can be at our best and where we might want to develop.

Respect

We're inclusive, we promote equality, we treat people with fairness, understanding and kindness and we consider others in all our decisions and actions.

Integrity

We're open and honest, we take responsibility, we build trust and we pull together to do what's right for our residents, colleagues and city.

Flexibility

We're open minded, we keep it simple, we adapt to provide great service and find better ways of doing things, and we embrace opportunities for shared working and learning.

Everyone should demonstrate Our Behaviours at all times

- to help with relationships, working practices, leadership and colleague engagement.
- to build an inclusive culture, and to support our organisation achieving its goals and purposes.

Our Behaviours – Respect

I'm at my best when:

- I actively listen to others opinions
- I seek opportunities to collaborate with others and share ideas and information, even if they are outside my scope or team
- I'm professional and I openly recognise the strengths, worth and value of everyone
- I practice self-awareness and I know how to check my behaviours when having a bad day
- I'm reliable and I build strong and positive relationships with colleagues

I'm not at my best when:

- I give greater importance to my own opinions and views over others
- I prefer to work alone and I don't share ideas with others
- I talk negatively about people and the Council and I show favouritism towards certain colleagues
- I let my mood affect how I treat others
- I focus solely on the task and process, not the people

Our Behaviours – Integrity

I'm at my best when:

- I behave ethically on a daily basis
- I play my part in helping my team act with integrity in everything we do together
- I take responsibility when a mistake happens, work with others to find a solution, and learn from it
- I speak up when faced with unfairness for you or others
- I speak up to positively challenge others in a way that is constructive, specific and appropriate
- I think about how our actions will impact our residents and colleagues

I'm not at my best when:

- I hold back for fear of being judged when making decisions
- I play power games to drive forward my own agenda and undermine the people I work with
- I blame the "system" and/or others by not taking responsibility for my actions
- I look the other way when I see unhelpful behaviours towards others
- I give the impression I agree with service improvements but I don't help to achieve them or I even quietly undermine them
- I put off the necessary conversations

Our Behaviours - Flexibility

I'm at my best when:

- I try new approaches to work and do not get defeated easily
- I look for solutions when presented with problems and I am happy to help others
- I accept that change is part of our day-to-day and use it as an opportunity for growth
- I look for new, simple and effective ways to do things
- I go above and beyond my job duties to find better ways to do things

I'm not at my best when:

- Because it didn't work last time we tried to change something, I don't make an effort again
- I create obstacles when others need my skills and involvement to help
- I work within my own rigid parameters
- I have a 'yes but' for every solution suggested
- I ignore problems and don't use my initiative

Our Behaviours – people leaders

By living Our Behaviours, leaders can provide a more positive and inclusive experience at work for all colleagues. We ask leaders to:

Be Respectful

- Leading with fairness, treating everyone equally
- Recognising and celebrating employee's differences
- Creating a space where everyone's voice can be heard
- Providing regular and constructive feedback, showing appreciation for efforts and results achieved

Show Integrity

- Promoting a sense of ownership, choice, and trust
- Encouraging innovation, open and honest communications within teams
- Nurturing individual talents
- Supporting an ethical, wellbeing focused and eco-friendly working environment

Be Flexible

- Driving change, working sustainably, and planning for the future
- Leading through challenging situations, coaching employees to deal with different demands
- Demonstrating and encouraging flexible mindset
- Creating environments without barriers

Performance elements

The performance framework is made up of five elements. We'll explore each element and give you access to a variety of templates, tips, and additional tools to use to support your conversations.

- [Annual conversations](#)
- [One-to-one check-In](#)
- [Team check-In](#)
- [Performance improvement conversations](#)
- [Timely and regular feedback and appreciation](#)

Annual conversations

This is a conversation once a year between us and our people leader. A chance to step back and take stock. We reflect on the year that's been and what we've accomplished and we get prepared for the year ahead and what we want to achieve.

Looking ahead – setting the course

Why

- What are we trying to make happen in our service area this year and why?
- What's the difference I want to make in this?

What

- What does this mean for my contribution in the year ahead?
- What will I need to do? And how will I know that I've been successful?
- What does 'good' look like? What will the measure of good be?

How

- How will I go about it?
- How do I want to approach my work this year in a way that I'll be most proud of?
- What will great look like in terms of my approach?

My support and development

- What does this mean for my development and the support I need in the year ahead?
- Where do I want to go longer term and what support would help?

Outputs

Agreement on the expectations for the year ahead

- What do I do? – my goals and/or performance measures
- How do I do it? – Our Behaviours and relevant professional standards
- My development priorities/knowledge, skills, behaviour

Looking back – reflecting on my achievements

My impact

- So, all in all, what's the impact I had this year on our outcomes, service, and colleagues?
- And how does this relate to what we're trying to make happen in our service?

My learning and development

- What are my reflections on what I learned this year?
- In what ways did I develop and stretch myself and the service this year?
- And how does that fit with the development priorities set?

How I went about it

- What are my reflections on the approach I took this year – on the good days and the more challenging days?
- How does that fit with our behaviours?
- And did I feel supported to bring my best?

What's been accomplished

- What's the best of what I've achieved or accomplished this year?
- And how does that stack up against my goals and measures?

Outputs

Agreement on my performance

- What did I deliver?
- How I go about it?
- Implications for my development

Annual conversations – question bank: looking back

Some suggested questions from both an employee and people leader perspective that we can choose from to prompt a good annual conversation.

Your people leader

- When you think about the last 12 months, what do you feel really proud of?
- What have you enjoyed working on most over the year?
- What strengths or approaches did you use that helped you achieve that?
- What have you done to support your wellbeing this year?
- What has been challenging or had you feeling out of your comfort zone?
- What is something new you learned in the past year?

Yourself

- What impact has my contribution made on our service area?
- What do you feel my key achievements have been over the last 12 months?
- How do you feel I've demonstrated Our Behaviours in my work this year?
- In what ways do you think I could further improve?

Annual conversations – question bank: looking forward

Some suggested questions from both an employee and people leader perspective that we can choose from to prompt a good annual conversation.

Your people leader

- Where do you think you could focus your energies over the next 12 months that would make the biggest impact?
- How do you want to stretch your skills or further grow your impact this year?
- What support do you need – and from who?
- How can we be clear on what good looks like in all key areas of the role?
- What goals are we looking at this year that interest you and present an opportunity to develop?
- What do you need to support your wellbeing in the year ahead?

Yourself

- What are some of the big priorities coming up for our team that I might contribute to and how do these relate to the bigger picture?
- What support and development opportunities are available to help me achieve my priorities?
- What aspect of Our Behaviours would I like to focus on?
- What are the standards we're striving for in our service?

Annual conversations – record form

A form to record the key points and actions arising from the annual conversation

Name of employee:		Name of people leader:	
Employee number:		Performance period:	
Performance goals and/or measures (This is the place to make sure you have a clear and tangible agreed picture of what good looks like for the employee in the year ahead, both in terms of what needs to be achieved and how and if relevant by when.)		Personal development priorities (This is the place to make sure you have a clear agreed picture of what the priorities are for the employee's personal development in the year ahead, with clarity on the development need or ambition as well as how and when the development will happen.)	
Review of the year: employee reflections		Review of the year: people leader reflections	

One-to-one check-in

A one-to-one catch-up that takes place regularly (frequency to be agreed between you and your people leader) throughout the year. These might be pre-arranged meetings or just a quick touch base. You'll also be able to share and receive feedback.

This tool suggests some topics that can be used to focus the conversations. Pick those that feel the most important to talk about at the time.

- **Challenges and support**
- **Life and wellbeing**
- **Goals and performance measures**
- **Tasks and activities**
- **Personal development**
- **Feedback and what I do well**

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Challenges and support

A conversation around what challenges, barriers & obstacles are being experienced and how these could be overcome and what support we might need to overcome them.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- What's your biggest challenge right now?
- What approaches are you taking to address it and what have you learned in the process?
- What other approaches could you consider?
- What support could help you?

Employee

- What approaches could I take to address my biggest challenge?
- How can I get support with...?
- Who can help me with...?
- Who needs support from me in the team?

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Life and wellbeing

A conversation about us as a person. A chance to discuss how we are in general, how we're feeling, any time off we've had and anything in our personal life that might be impacting on our working life or vice versa.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- How are you?
- How do you feel about your work/life balance right now? How can I help?
- What worries or concerns do you have?
- What changes could you make to improve your thinking time or "headspace"?
- What do you spend your time on that doesn't add value that you could stop doing?
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Employee

- How might I get the right balance between work and life in my role?
- What changes could I make to get more headspace?
- How can I create space to do some of the Wellbeing events or resources?
- What do I need to support me?

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Goals and performance measures

A conversation to ensure that goals are on track.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- How do you think your goals are progressing and how do you feel about that?
- How are you achieving your goals and how are you living Our Behaviours?
- What approaches are you taking to achieve your goals and the standards for your role?
- What's getting in the way of you achieving what's needed in your role?

- Are you getting the support from me or others? What could I do more of to support you?

Employee

- How do you see my goals are progressing?
- How close do you think I am to hitting my agreed measures of success?
- Am I delivering to the standard you're looking for?

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Tasks and activities

A conversation around recent and up-coming tasks and activities.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- What's taking up most of your time at the moment?
- How well prioritised do your various tasks feel?
- What's gone well for you recently? What is it about the approach you're taking that's helped?
- What are you trying to make happen in the next month? Who do you need to involve in that?

Employee

- What do you see as being some of my recent highlights?
- What's one bit of feedback you could give me to help my development?

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Personal development

A conversation about our personal development needs and an opportunity to explore how we might want to expand our knowledge, skills and experience and reflect on career aspirations.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- How are you progressing against your personal development priorities? Where do you feel you'd like to grow?
- What might be one area for development that would help you to perform even better or have more impact?
- When thinking of your long-term career, what's important to you?

Employee

- What personal development opportunities are there that could help me with...?
- How could I learn more about...?
- Who might I be able to shadow to learn more about...?

One-to-one check-in – question bank

Feedback and what I do well

A chance to use feedback to reinforce good practice or behaviour, recognise where we've gone the extra mile or highlight where improvements are needed. Feedback and recognition should be two-way.

Some suggested questions to choose from and personalise to help start a good one-to-one check-in conversation.

People leader

- What's your sense of how well you're performing?
- What feedback have you sought recently and what have you learned from this?
- What makes you feel valued at work?
- Do you have any feedback for me?
- Can you share examples of how you've lived Our Behaviours?

Employee

- What's your sense of how I'm performing?
- What's your sense of the best of my strengths?
- What nudge would you give me that would help me be more effective?
- Can you give me some feedback on what you saw from me during...piece of work?

One-to-one check-in – preparation tool

An optional tool for both a people leader and an employee to use, if helpful, to prepare for a one-to-one check-in. We could use it to jot down reminders of what we'd like to talk about and/or make a note of some good questions to ask.

Topic	What would we like to talk about?
Challenges and support	
Life and wellbeing	
Goals and performance measures	
Tasks and activities	
Personal development	
Feedback and what I do well	

One-to-one check-in – record form

A form to record the key points and actions arising from a one-to-one check in meeting.

Name of employee:	Name of people leader:
Date:	
Main topics discussed:	
Actions (who will do what, by when):	

Team check-in

Regular team catch-ups that take place throughout the year. A chance to discuss and reflect on our team priorities, goals, challenges, ideas and opportunities. It's also a chance to share our learning, discuss the wider context and celebrate our achievements.

Frequency will vary between service areas. This tool suggests some topics that can be used to focus team check-in conversations. Pick which ones feel the most important to talk about.

<p>Challenges and ideas</p> <p>A conversation about challenges we're facing, any team tensions and obstacles to us achieving our goals and priorities. A chance to explore solutions and ways forward together and ways of supporting each other.</p>	<p>Team learning</p> <p>A chance to share what we're learning with each other, e.g. feeding back after attending an event or sharing something we have read or seen.</p>	<p>Bigger picture and news</p> <p>A conversation about our wider context – what's going on in our organisation, city or beyond that could impact our performance. What changes and news do we need to touch base on as a team?</p>
<p>Team goals and priorities</p> <p>A conversation to get clear on our team goals and priorities. What does 'good' look like?</p>	<p>Celebrating achievements</p> <p>A chance to celebrate what we're doing well as a team, where we've gone the extra mile and reflecting on our impact.</p>	<p>Current performance</p> <p>A conversation to get a sense check about how we're currently performing.</p>

Performance improvement conversations

As and when issues arise, we may need a conversation about resolving a performance issue. This tool suggests a way to structure a one-to-one performance improvement conversation to dig deeper into the reasons for a performance issue, to get clear on what the issue is and to agree a way forward together.

1. What is the purpose of the conversation?

Your people leader will state that they want to talk to you about your performance and the intention is to resolve the issue.

2. Sharing feedback about the issue

Your people leader will

- give honest and constructive feedback about the issue, with specific examples.
- describe the impact of the issue on others.
- clarify what will happen if nothing changes.
- recognise what's working well that can be built on.

3. Exploring the reasons behind the issue

Your people leader will:

- explore what you think about the issue.
- explore possible reasons for the issue.
- try to learn what is going on from your point of view.

4. What can and will we do about it?

Work towards a resolution to find a way forward together, being clear about what happens next and who will do what.

Top 3 Tips

- Choose the time and place for the conversation carefully
- Ask open questions and actively listen to the responses
- Keep focused on moving towards a resolution

Performance improvement conversations - questions

Some suggested questions for people leaders to choose from and personalise to help explore reasons behind a performance issue and what we can do about it.

Exploring the issue

- Can we talk through how you approached this piece of work?
- What's the issue as you see it?
- What impact can you imagine this having on others?
- How engaged do you feel with your work generally?
- How clear are you on the goals, standards and expectations of the role?
- How confident do you feel in your ability?
- How supported do you feel?
- What else is happening that might be having an impact?

Exploring what we can do about it

- How do we move forward from here to get things back on track?
- What's the best first step in resolving this?
- What support would help you? From who?
- What could I do differently to help you be at your best?
- What are the next steps we're agreeing?
- Where might you need to grow your skills?
- What might get in the way and how will we get past that?

Timely and regular feedback and appreciation

A tool to encourage us to regularly seek feedback on our performance from our people leaders, colleagues, direct reports and/or customers and to remind us to show timely appreciation to others.

Seeking feedback

My strengths

- When I'm at my best, what do you see from me?
- When I'm at my best, how does it affect others?
- What are my unique strengths?
- What do you value about my approach?

How can I improve?

- When I'm not at my best, what do you see?
- When I'm not at my best, how does it affect others?
- What could I improve on and how might I go about it?

Top tips

- Be honest
- Be specific
- Be respectful
- Be constructive

Giving appreciation

Ask yourself regularly

- Is there someone I owe a simple thank you to?
- Is there something great I've seen someone do?
- Why was it great and how will I let them know?
- Is there someone I owe some appreciation to? (Including the reliable people who are often in the background)