

4.2 Positive Action Policy

Introduction

Teagasc has a responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of the standards of attendance, work and conduct expected of them. Teagasc also has a responsibility to ensure that every staff member has the necessary resources to enable them to meet these standards. Equally, there is an onus on every staff member to make their line manager aware if they are unable to meet these standards for any particular reason so as to enable Teagasc to provide the appropriate assistance.

It is intended that this Positive Action Programme (PAP) is an informal process that would be availed of by both staff and managers in order to resolve what may otherwise become a grievance or disciplinary issue.

What will it involve?

It will involve the following:

1. Discussion and Counselling
2. Providing Appropriate Assistance
3. Evaluation

1. Discussion and Counselling

During this stage the line manager will make the staff member aware that there is an issue which needs to be addressed. The line manager will then try to establish the reason this issue has arisen and how it may be rectified, for example, frequent lateness in the morning: why is it happening? What can we do to prevent it from happening in the future?

Equally, a staff member may approach their line manager should they have a concern regarding ability to meet the required standards. It may be the case that the staff member feels that they do not have adequate resources, training etc to enable them to meet the required standards. This should be discussed openly with the line manager in order to ensure that the problem can be addressed.

2. Providing Appropriate Assistance

Having established the problem, the line manager will then devise an appropriate course of action to provide assistance. This may involve making the staff member aware of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and their options under it, or it may be arranging for appropriate training and development, or equipment, to be provided. Whatever the course of action, both parties should be fully in agreement that it is appropriate and will address the issue in question.

If it is the case that no underlying issue is identified, the staff member will be made aware of the improvements that need to be made and the timescale in which they should be achieved. It is important to note that in order for this approach to be successful, there must be a shared ownership and a commitment from both the line manager and the staff member to achieving a successful outcome.

3. Evaluation Stage

During the evaluation stage, where appropriate, the line manager will review the employee's progress following the appropriate course of action.

If action involved specific improvements to be made within a particular timescale, the achievement of these improvements will be evaluated. If action involved the provision of necessary skills or resources, the effectiveness of this will also be evaluated. The staff member and the line manager should be proactive in any course of action in order to achieve a successful outcome.

If the desired outcome has not been achieved following the evaluation stage, the following options may be considered:

- the original timescale may be extended
- an alternative course of action may be devised and re-evaluated
- if appropriate, disciplinary procedures may be initiated after all attempts to reasonably address the situation have been made. Any positive action taken must comply with the principles set out in the disciplinary procedure.

The Positive Action Programme is an informal process. However it is recommended that managers provide participants with a letter confirming that positive action has been initiated, the reasons for this, the agreed course of action and the agreed date of evaluation. This letter will be for the staff member and the manager's reference so they are both clear about what they hope to achieve through the process. A template letter of confirmation is available on the HR section of the T-Net.

Version	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Policy Owner
1.0		n/a	HR