myCareer Toolkit: Conversation Leader
Welcome to the new **myCareer Conversation Leader’s** Toolkit

What is the purpose?

UNSW needs employees who are supported and performing at the highest level to deliver on the 2025 Strategy ambition to become a top 50 university.

The purpose of myCareer is to:

- Create a **positive, collaborative, future focused** approach to discussing career aspirations, setting start of the year goals and enhancing and reviewing performance.
- Provide a framework that links the 2025 Strategy to area, team and individual performance.
- Construct clearer role accountability and a safe, supportive environment to encourage ambitious, stretch goals.
- Provide a structure for consistent feedback conversations.
- Provide a structured way for employees and conversation leaders to map out development and career options together.
- Enable greater awareness of employee performance to identify talent across UNSW.
- Provide guidance on performance expectations consistent with recruitment and promotion processes.
- Replace the PDS / PDR process.

* A conversation leader is an employee’s manager / supervisor or this responsibility can be delegated to others in senior roles. *e.g. Associate Deans, Professors, Project or Program Leaders.*
Background information about myCareer

- All UNSW employees\(^1\) and managers\(^1\) are included in myCareer.
- **Conversation Leaders are the audience for this toolkit.** A conversation leader is an employee’s manager / supervisor or this responsibility can be delegated to others\(^2\) in senior roles.
- There is also an employee myCareer toolkit which you can use too.

The feedback from the 2025 consultation process indicates change is needed. The myCareer process benefits UNSW by:

- Guiding leaders to set expectations and spend time on where the real value is generated – positive, future driven conversations to enable people to do their best and have fulfilling careers.
- Employees perform better when leaders are more knowledgeable about their performance and when they receive fair, accurate feedback.
- Career aspirations and development are discussed in way that empowers employees to take control of their own careers.

- **Phase 1** is an introduction to the new myCareer Process. Phase 1 has some online elements and is an opportunity to refine and enhance myCareer.
- **Phase 2** moves myCareer online. It involves testing and finalising an online version of myCareer.

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\(^1\) The myCareer FAQ’s provides UNSW staff definitions.

\(^2\) Conversation leaders may be those who hold other senior roles e.g. Associate Deans, Professors, Project or Program Leaders.

**Note.** Managing unsatisfactory performance has been outlined in a separate toolkit.
Year Ahead Conversation\(^1\) explores future goals, sets expectations and intended professional development for the upcoming 12 months. The End of Year Conversation\(^1\) recognises employees for their effort and contribution from the previous year, as well as outlines strengths and areas for development going forward.

Alignment with Expectations and Faculty / Functional Plans
Leaders will cascade the UNSW Expectations Framework and Faculty or Divisional Plans as inputs when setting expectations and goals with staff.

Mid-year touch point and ongoing feedback\(^2\)
The mid-year conversation and informal check-ins are to acknowledge things working well and things to do differently. They are conversations – not form based. * Different options for managers with more than 10 staff.

Self-assessment
End of year self-assessments are written by employees to summarise performance over the last 12 months.

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\(^1\) The Year Ahead and End of Year conversations can be completed as one conversation. It can be split into two conversations if that is preferable.

\(^2\) The Mid-Year Conversation may be completed as part of existing processes and forums such as Promotion Discussions, Career Development Committees, Tenure Track Discussions, Probationary Meetings and Team Reviews.
# 1. Year Ahead Conversations

Great performance starts with employees having a clear understanding of goals and expectations

## Who is involved & time commitment

| Conversation leaders – may be direct manager or delegate (2 hours: prep, conversation & follow up) |
| Employee: (2 hours: prep, conversation & follow up) |

## What you will need

| Employee Position Description |
| myCareer Plan draft by Employee |
| UNSW 2025 Strategy |
| Division / Faculty goals |
| UNSW Expectations Framework |

## When it occurs

February-April

NB The Year Ahead and End of Year Conversations can be run in **conjunction** or **separately**. This is at the Conversation Leaders discretion but usually it is done as one conversation.

## Action required

- Manager to determine if any delegation of myCareer is required. If delegation occurs, conversation leaders need to be briefed on faculty / divisional expectations and goals.
- Employee completes draft myCareer Plan (yellow cells only) according to the Expectations framework and 2025 Strategy. New employees may require more guidance and support.
- Conversation leader reflects on employees’ myCareer Plan content in relation to others in the team, Expectations Framework, 2025 Strategy and relevant Faculty / Divisional / School / Work Area plans.
- Conversation Leader and employee meet face to face to set expectations relative to opportunity, discuss goals, career aspirations and finalise myCareer plan.

## Support, guides, tools, templates available

**Essential**
- myCareer Plan (Academic / Professional / Senior Leader)
- Training & support for staff & leaders

**Optional**
- Future goals, career aspirations and development conversation guide
- Goal Setting Conversation Guide
- Planning for the year ahead conversation guide
- Diversity conversation guide
- Delegation conversation guide
- Managing difficult conversations guide
## 2. Mid Year Touch Point and Ongoing Feedback

Quality conversations drive performance and support development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who is involved. Time commitment will vary.</th>
<th>What you will need</th>
<th>When it occurs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Conversation leaders – may be direct manager or delegate</td>
<td>• Informal conversation – documentation not essential</td>
<td>• <strong>January-December</strong>: ongoing feedback to ensure progress is supported</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Employee</td>
<td>• <strong>For mid-year touch point:</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>June-August</strong>: formal mid year touch point recommended</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other feedback sources (e.g. peers, external / third party)</td>
<td>• <strong>myCareer Plan recommended as a conversation map</strong></td>
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### Action required

- Managers **with less than 10** employees are to meet for regular informal one to one meetings with employees to give and receive feedback (weekly, monthly or minimum quarterly.) Also meet for the touch point (at least once in Jun-Aug).
- Managers **with more than 10** employees are recommended to **delegate**. Conversation leaders* to meet with employees for regular informal one to one meetings to give and receive feedback. The touch point is also highly recommended (in Jun-Aug).
- **The touch point meeting is about progress, acknowledgement, appreciation and development – not an elaborate data gathering exercise.** This conversation may be completed as part of existing processes e.g. Promotion or Tenure Track Discussions, Career Development Committees, Probationary Meetings.
- Employees are encouraged to regularly gather feedback from other sources (360 input – see guide) to enhance the fairness and accuracy of myCareer.

### Support, guides, tools, templates available

- **Recommended**
  - myCareer Plan (Academic / Professional / Senior Leader)
  - Training & support for staff & leaders.
- **Optional**
  - Feedback guide (360 input)
  - Giving and receiving feedback conversation guide
  - Midyear feedback and touch point conversation guide
  - Managing difficult conversations guide
  - Commentary guide

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* A conversation leader is an employee’s manager / supervisor or this responsibility can be delegated to others in senior roles. 
  *e.g. Associate Deans, Professors, Project or Program Leaders.*
3. Self Assessment *(for manager information)*

Evaluating and acknowledging own performance at the end of the year is essential.

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<tr>
<td>• Employee</td>
<td>• myCareer Plan</td>
<td>• <strong>November-January</strong>: myCareer Plan (self-assessment) &amp; 360 input</td>
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<td>❑ Employee to contact their list of people requesting 360 input or collates 360 input obtained through the year (recommended but not essential)</td>
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<td>❑ Academics to ensure ROS is fully up to date as part of self assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>❑ Employee to complete myCareer Plan self assessment (blue column “What was achieved?”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>❑ Where required, use systems to minimise time to gather data (e.g. BORIS for Academics.)</td>
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<td>Diversity Guide</td>
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<td>Feedback guide (360 input)</td>
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<td>Self-Assessment guide</td>
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<td>Commentary guide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academics: BORIS, ROS (Learning Analytics in development)</td>
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4. End of Year Conversations

Recognising employee efforts and achievement is integral for performance and future development

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| • Conversation leaders* – may be direct manager or delegate (2 hours: prep, conversation & follow up) | • myCareer plan & PD  
• Commentary guide  
• Diversity guide  
• End of Year guide | • February-April: End of Year and Year Ahead Conversation  
• December-April: Senior Staff Review |
| • Employee: (2 hours: prep, conversation & follow up)  
• Faculty/Division (where relevant for Senior Staff Review) |  |  |

Action required

- Expect to receive your employees Self-Assessment at least a week prior to your “Year End” conversation.
- Conversation Leader to review the employees’ myCareer Plan, any 360 input collected by the employee and their own observations as input to the conversation relative to opportunity.
- Employee and Conversation Leader meet face to face for End of Year conversation. The intent of this conversation is primarily positive, to acknowledge progress and appreciate achievements. If improvement is required, discuss constructively and note support / development needed. This can then be incorporated into the “Year Ahead” conversation.
- The Year Ahead (refer to Step 1) is usually discussed in the same meeting. It can be separate (e.g. if End of Year meeting was challenging & a break is needed.)

Support, guides, tools, templates available

**Essential**
- myCareer Plan (Academic / Professional / Senior Leader)
- Training & support for leaders

**Optional**
- Diversity Guide
- Feedback guide (360 input)
- Giving and receiving feedback guide
- Managing difficult conversations guide
- Commentary guide
- End of Year conversation guide
Toolkit Guide by Month and myCareer Stage

February
- Optional Check-Ins and Regular Feedback
- Year Ahead & End of Year Conversations

March

April
- Ongoing Conversation & Feedback

May

June
- Mid Year Touch Point

July

August
- Optional Check-Ins and Regular Feedback
- Mid Year Touch Point

September
- Ongoing Conversation & Feedback

October

November
- Self Assessment

December
- Shut Down

January
- Self Assessment