

## Work Study: Performance management conversations

As a supervisor, it is important to prioritize performance management conversations with your students. These conversations should be ongoing throughout the work term, and can be formal or informal.

Effective performance management includes setting clear expectations, working together to form goals and learning outcomes, regular check-ins, and providing guidance and feedback on progress and learning.

### Tips for constructive feedback:

1. Use non-judgmental language. Instead, focus on giving supportive, growth-focused suggestions.
2. Use open and welcoming body language.
3. Be as specific as you can. Generalities can be less helpful and may leave your student feeling confused about your expectations.
4. Provide examples of behaviours or actions that you would like to address. Keep things job-related and not personal.
5. Ask your student for their thoughts on your feedback – they may be facing challenges you aren't aware of.
6. State your feedback, and then work together to create a specific and measurable solution.
7. Ensure your student understands the feedback and required next steps. Ask them to summarize their understanding of your conversation.

See the below tips, adapted from the [UBC HR guidelines](#)

### Prepare:

- Ensure you have a safe, quiet and private space to have a discussion with your student
- Consider your student's strengths and areas of improvement, and bring feedback in a respectful and constructive way
- Come to the conversation with an open mind, and be ready to receive feedback yourself
- Consider what you'd like to get out of the conversation. What is the intention?

### During:

Use some of the following questions to help guide your conversations.

Start with a general check-in. Be authentic and show interest in their personal and professional growth.

- How are you doing?



- What has been happening for you since we last connected?
- What has been a recent highlight of your position here?
- What type of challenges have you been facing?
- How can I better support your success, either in this role specifically or in your professional development in general?

Model active listening and probe for additional reflection when needed. Empower your student by asking for their ideas and opinions before providing your own.

- How has work gone over these past few weeks? What updates can you share?
- What skills have you been utilizing recently? In what ways?
- What skills do you wish you were developing more?
- What challenges have you come up against? How are you dealing with them and how can I support you moving forward?
- What are your goals for the remainder of your work term? Is there something you are particularly excited about?
- I'd like to share what I see working well and what I would like to see you focus on moving forward...

Summarize the key points and insights from your conversation. Be intentional about next steps and take the opportunity to share your appreciation for your student.

- Can you summarize your key takeaways?
- What supports do you need to be successful for the remainder of the work term and beyond?
- How do you want to track the outcomes of today's meeting?
- When would you like to revisit your learning goals?
- What has been of the most value or surprised you in this conversation? What did you learn? (here is what I learned about you, the work, myself as your manager)
- Is there anything we didn't get to today that needs attention?

## After:

Take some time to reflect on the conversation. What did you learn about your student? Are there areas of support that need to be adjusted? How will you follow through and follow up on the conversation?

Schedule another time to meet with your student to reconnect about any outstanding or ongoing topics. Meet your students where they are at, and let them know you care about their wellbeing.

If your student is exhibiting concerning behaviour, or appear to be in distress, educate yourself about the [resources available](#) to support them. Connect with your [HR advisor](#) if you have questions or concerns about your student employee's ability to perform their work.

