

Overview of the Topics Covered in this Catalog

A) Detailed questions on the topics addressed in the basic matrix

- Looking back at the job performance (activities, tasks)
- Looking back at personal issues (skills, resources)
- Looking back at social issues (cooperation, communication)
- Looking ahead at the job performance (activities, tasks)
- Looking ahead at personal issues (skills, resources)
- Looking ahead at social issues (cooperation, communication)

B) Additional questions with regard to research and teaching and management positions

- Questions regarding the exchange of views and opinions on issues of research and teaching
- Specific questions targeted at employees in management positions

C) Special topics and issues to be addressed during performance reviews

- (Excessive) workload and stress
- Conflict-prone constellations, conflicts in the team (including workplace mobbing, bullying, and harassment)
- Pay-related issues
- Return to the workplace after extended illness or leave of absence
- Equal opportunities (equal opportunity considerations are included into the catalog as footnotes)¹

A) Detailed Questions on the Topics Addressed in the Basic Matrix

1) Looking back at the job performance (activities, tasks)

Questions directed at the employee:

- How would you describe your current work situation and the current priorities in your work? Did you take on additional tasks and responsibilities in the past year or did you drop certain tasks or responsibilities?
- Which were your most important tasks and work priorities in the past year (in addition to your routine tasks)?
- How have your work priorities changed in the short, medium, and long term?
- Which do think are the primary goals that should be achieved in your area of responsibility?
- How do you rate the results of your work in terms of quantity/scope and quality?
- How do you rate your performance during the past year with a view to the goals achieved since your last performance review?
- Were your areas of responsibility, decision-making powers, goals, and deadlines adequate and clear enough?
- Are the criteria I apply to evaluate your performance clear and transparent to you? How would you describe and evaluate your performance?

¹ Equal opportunity issues should be addressed in performance reviews because seemingly gender-neutral steps taken in human resource planning may turn out to affect men and women in very different ways. Sometimes the same work is evaluated differently when it is done by men than when it is done by women, for instance. In many cases, women are simply expected to be caring and show empathy and don't get any recognition for this behavior. Men, in contrast, may get special recognition and rewards for the same kind of caring behavior. For this reason, some of the questions listed in this catalog include notes that point out gender-sensitive aspects of the topics addressed. These notes are intended to stimulate self-reflection and to aid you in the preparation of the performance review.

- What is the degree of independence you want in your work? Would you like to get clearer instructions or more freedom to work independently?
- Did you have all the resources needed to achieve your goals? Which resources, if any, did you lack?
- Do you see any factors or situations in the technical aspects of your work that put you under stress?
- Are there any factors in your workplace environment that put you under stress or make you feel uncomfortable (workplace setup, noise, lighting, etc.)?
- Are your work processes organized well enough? Are there any problems regarding workflows? Which concrete improvements could be made?
- Do you have any ideas or suggestions for improving workflows in your area of responsibility?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- Which criteria do I apply to evaluate the performance of the employee?
- How satisfied am I with the work of the employee in general?
- In which major areas of work am I especially satisfied with the employee's performance? In which less so?
- How does the employee complete his or her specific tasks? Which tasks were completed particularly well? Which tasks were not completed so well?
- Do the results of the employee's work live up to the goals and objectives that were agreed upon?
- Is the employee diligent and accurate in his or her work? Does he or she deliver results in time?
- Does the employee complete his or her assigned workload within the agreed time frame?
- To which extent does the employee make an effort to cater for the needs of the other members of the team, members of other WU units, and external clients/partners?

2) Looking back at personal issues (skills, resources)

Questions directed at the employee:

- Which positive and negative experiences stand out for you looking back at the past year?
- How do you evaluate yourself? Looking back at the past year, what are you proud of? In which areas are you dissatisfied with your own performance?
- Are there any aspects of your work with which I should be particularly satisfied, in your opinion? Are there any aspects of your work I'm probably not fully satisfied with?
- What do you think are your strengths? Which specific measures, agreements, or training programs could help you to further develop your strengths?
- Can you think of any weaknesses you might have? Which specific measures or training programs could help you reduce these weaknesses?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- What is the employee particularly good at? Does the employee struggle with any aspects of his or her work?
- Which specific aptitudes and capabilities does the employee have? Which measures might help the employee to further develop his skills?
- In which areas does the employee show weaknesses or potential for improvement? Which ideas/suggestions/recommendations/requirements could be considered to achieve improvements?
- Does the employee strive to do his or her best on the job? If the need arises, is he or she willing to and capable of working harder than you would normally expect of an employee?²

² How do I deal with employees who do not work full-time? What kind of effort and commitment do I expect of part-time employees?

- Does the employee show enough initiative when it comes to working independently or would a more independent working style be in order in certain areas?

3) Looking back at social issues (cooperation, communication)

Questions directed at the employee:

- How well do you get along with your colleagues? Are there any arguments with colleagues that go beyond the technical aspects of your work and cannot be solved through objective discussions? Are there any conflicts or animosities?
- How would you rate the overall degree of cooperation in the team?
- What, in your opinion, are the distinctive features and characteristics that make our team special?
- How well do you cooperate with employees from other units and with external partners?
- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of our working relationship?
- Generally speaking, what do you expect of me as your supervisor?
- Are you satisfied with the amount of support you get from me? Are there any areas where you would like to get more/less support from me?
- What are the factors from which you can tell if you get enough support from your supervisor?
- Do you feel that I adequately recognize the skills and aptitudes of you and your co-workers and encourage you to further develop them?
- Do you feel that I make decisions within an adequate time frame?
- Do you feel that you can rely on the decisions I make?
- How would you describe my approach to delegating tasks? Would you say that I delegate too much or too little work? How would you like me to act in this regard?
- Would you say that the volume of the work I delegate is reasonably and evenly distributed among the team members?
- Do you get all the information you need to fulfill your tasks? Are you satisfied with the flow of information?
- Do you feel that I give you enough time to discuss problems that arise?
- Do you spot any misunderstandings in our working relationship? What causes these misunderstandings, in your opinion?
- Do you feel that the way we treat each other is polite and appropriate? Do you think our relationship could be improved in this respect?
- Are you satisfied with the feedback you get from me? Do I give you enough positive feedback if you have done something well? How do you feel about the criticism you get from me? Do you feel that the tone of my criticism is adequate?
- Do you feel that I take your suggestions seriously and implement them?
- How would you describe my approach to dealing with mistakes and errors? What kind of error management culture would you like to see in the team?
- From your personal perspective, do you feel that I treat you and your co-workers equally? Can you think of a situation where you or another team member felt they were being treated unequally?
- Which of the things I do motivate you? Which of the things I do reduce your motivation?
- Are there any aspects of my behavior that irritate you and that you would like to talk over together?
- Do you have any personal comments, suggestions, and requests for me?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- Which position does the employee have in the team?
- Is the performance of the team as a whole the employee's first priority?
- Does the employee support the other team members? Is he or she willing to pass on his or her knowledge?
- How does the employee respond to criticism?

- Is the employee assertive in making his or her points, even if there is resistance?³
- Does the employee have the necessary skills and attributes to communicate and interact successfully with other people?

4) Looking ahead at the job performance (activities, tasks)

Questions directed at the employee:

- Do you see any new tasks and activities lying ahead for you? How would you describe these tasks and activities? How attractive or unattractive are they to you?
- Do you feel that areas of responsibility, tasks, or job profiles should be restructured in your unit or the organization as a whole?
- Is there agreement between the employee and the supervisor regarding any potential changes in areas of responsibility? What does this agreement or disagreement mean?
- Would you say that new or additional resources are needed in your area of responsibility? Are new or additional resources needed for potential new tasks and activities?
- Has your current working time arrangement proved viable? Can you think of any changes or modifications that would benefit everyone involved?
- Do you have any suggestions, however small, for improvements in your area of responsibility or your unit as a whole?
- If you were in my position and had absolute freedom to change one thing in this unit, big or small, what would that be?
- Which training programs or courses have you completed? Have you been able to use what you have learned in your work?
- Which training programs or courses do you need to attend to fulfill your (future) tasks?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- Which changes are currently underway or expected for the near future? In which ways are these changes likely to affect the team and the employee's workplace?⁴
- Is it necessary or useful to change the employee's job profile or area of responsibility in some way? If yes, what will be the likely effect on the employee and his or her work?
- Do I see any areas where the employee could play a more prominent role?⁵
- Is it feasible and desirable to restructure areas of responsibility, assign new tasks, or pass on certain tasks to another employee?
- Which career development perspectives do you see for the employee? How can you support the employee in his or her career development?
- What does the employee need to do to achieve the employee's career goals?

5) Looking ahead at personal issues (skills, resources)

Questions directed at the employee:

- Which perspectives do you see for your career and your personal development? What are your medium and long-term goals?
- Does your current job profile help you or hinder you in working towards these goals?
- Do you feel that you have any aptitudes or skills you cannot put to use in your current position?
- Which of your skills would you like to develop further? Which new skills would you like to acquire?
- Which measures, agreements, or training programs do you need to achieve your career goals for the future?

³ Do I give equal weight to suggestions made by men and women?

⁴ When it comes to expected changes, do I give enough thought to the different conditions and requirements men and women are subject to in their working and personal lives? Do I do enough to avoid unequal treatment?

⁵ Do I assign equal responsibility to men and women?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- What do you expect of your employees? What should remain just the way it is? Which areas of work should be emphasized more? Which less?
- Are the skills and resources available at the moment sufficient to master current and foreseeable challenges in the employee's position?
- What can be done to maintain or restore an adequate match between the requirements of the job profile and the qualifications of the employee?
- Which specific steps can be taken so that the employee can maintain or achieve the required and desired qualifications for the job?
- Which training measures do I consider necessary for the employee's career development?
- Which other career perspectives could be considered (duration of the employment contract, requirements for contract renewal, move to a different position, etc.)?
- Which overall career development perspectives could be considered for the employee?⁶

6) Looking ahead at personal issues (cooperation, communication)

Questions directed at the employee:

- What is going really well in the team? What should remain just the way it is?
- What needs to be changed, in your opinion?
- Are there any areas where you see unused potential for improving cooperation in the team, with other units, or with external partners?
- Can you think of any areas where the flow of information between us two or between the members of the team could be improved? How could the flow of information be improved?
- Looking back at the past year, what did you like about my leadership style? And, more importantly, which changes would you like to see in the future?

Feedback from the supervisor:

- What is going really well regarding the social climate in the team? What should remain just the way it is?
- Which changes do I think are necessary? Are the changes I would like to see limited to the employee or do they involve the team as a whole?

B) Complementary Questions for Research and Teaching and Management Personnel

1) Questions related to balancing research and teaching activities

- How much of your working time did you spend on the areas research, teaching, administrative tasks, and university administration? Do you feel like you spend enough or too much time on any or all of these areas?
- Do you feel that you achieved the goals you set for yourself for the past year?
- What effects does that have on your career goals, in your opinion? What are your personal medium and long-term goals in this respect? How can or should I support you in reaching these goals?
- In your opinion, how realistic are the outlined career goals? What is your opinion on your career opportunities here at WU? And outside WU?
- How well do you think you are integrated into your respective scientific community, and where do you see room for improvement in this regard?
- How do you feel I could best support you in this regard?

⁶ What are my expectations with regard to women's career development, and with regard to men's? Am I careful to address men as (potential) fathers like I do women as (potential) mothers?

- Which areas within your field of expertise are you particularly interested in pursuing? Which of your strengths would you like to be able to use more?
- Do you enjoy conducting research?
- Is your research progressing faster or slower than expected? Why do you think this is?⁷
- What would happen if you failed to achieve the goals you originally set? Which steps would have to be taken to bring important goals back within reach (time-wise)? How can I help in this?
- How would you describe your level of professional expertise? Where do you see your particular strengths, and where do you see room for improvement?
- Do you feel like you are good at developing interesting research questions and independently implementing them into research designs?
- How would you evaluate your methodological skills? Do you feel capable of taking a critical view of the methods applied?
- Which steps have you taken or do you plan to take to strengthen this foundation? Of those you have already taken, which would you say were particularly effective, which were less effective?
- How satisfied are you personally with your publication performance in the past year and the years before that? What are your short-term and long-term expectations in this regard?⁸
- How would you rate your contribution to third-party-funded research? Do you feel that the situation is acceptable as is, or do you think changes should be made?
- How would you evaluate your teaching and your dealings with students? Do you enjoy this part of your work?
- What is particularly important to you in your teaching?
- Where are your individual strengths and weaknesses in this area? What are you doing to develop your strengths and improve your weaknesses? What do you expect of me in this regard and how can I support you most effectively?
- Looking back over the past year, how satisfied are you with your lecture activities at conferences and congresses?
- How well prepared do you feel for giving this kind of presentation?
- What effects did your participation in this type of event have, in your opinion?
- How would you rate your level of participation in the self-administrative activities of your Institute, your Department, or the whole WU? Do you think you should be more or less involved in these activities?
- In your opinion, what medium and long-term tasks and key development areas should our unit be concentrating on in research, teaching, and self-administration?
- Do you have requests or ideas on any of these areas? Do you have suggestions on how we could do things differently or better, or on what would be particularly helpful to you personally?

2) Specific questions for employees with management responsibilities

- Looking back over the past year, which management situations did you find particularly challenging?

⁷ As part of your responsibility to ensure a healthy work-life-balance and to prevent burnout symptoms, WU recommends agreeing on specific time periods (e.g. during the summer when no classes are in session) within critical qualification phases during which employees can concentrate solely on their academic work. Critical qualification phases include, for example, the completion of a doctoral or habilitation thesis.

⁸ When evaluating publication performance, it is common practice internationally (e.g. in recruiting proceedings) to consider the person's academic age in the context of his/her individual biography, meaning that for example time spent for child care or the care of elderly relatives is taken into account. Is publication performance affected by time spent for child care, the care of elderly relatives, or other factors, and am I evaluating these factors fairly?

- How easy or difficult is it to communicate the guidelines passed down from the university management and/or from me to your team? Do you have any ideas how your individual management situation could be simplified in this regard?
- How do my actions support your management activities, and/or how do they hinder them?

C) Special topics and areas during the performance review

1) Stress/Overwork

- How would you rate your workload? Do you ever feel overworked or as if you did not have enough to do?
- How do you feel about the attitude towards working hours in your unit? How openly do team members talk about time-related requirements and needs?⁹
- What specific factors do you think cause stress/overwork?
- Are there certain areas of your job that cause particularly high stress levels for you?
- Are there any factors in the working environment that cause stress (office, noise, lighting, etc.)?
- Are there any changes in the distribution of working hours that could be made to reduce the level of stress/overwork?
- What do you think should be done to improve the situation? What effects would these measures have on other members of the team?

2) Conflict potential, conflict situations within the team (up to and including bullying and harassment)

- How would you rate the appreciation of your work? Do you feel like your colleagues appreciate your work sufficiently?
- Have you experienced or witnessed behavior from other team members that you felt was unappreciative?
- In your opinion, who would have to take which steps to help clarify or solve the situation?
- What other steps should be taken, in your opinion?
- How would you rate my behavior in conflict situations in general? And in this case in particular?
- If you were in my position, what would you do in this particular conflict situation?

3) Salary

- Taking the limited resources available to public institutions like WU as given, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your salary situation?
- How satisfied are you when you compare your situation to other members of your team?
- If you feel your salary is too low, is it because you have a hard time covering everyday living expenses, or because you feel that based on your activities and your performance, your work is not appreciated enough, as reflected by your salary?
- Are there any non-payment-related measures you can think of that would help you feel more appreciated?
- If you put yourself in my position, what are the specific next steps you would suggest I take?

4) Returning to work after a long leave of absence or paternal leave

- How did you feel while you were on leave?
- How did you feel about coming to this meeting today, how do you feel right now?

⁹ Are time-related expectations based on gender roles?

- What particular factors should we bear in mind, with regard to me, your unit, and your own situation?
- What important information should I know as your supervisor, and what would it be important for your colleagues to know?
- Are there any critical points and/or limits from my or your perspective that you feel should be addressed and dealt with?
- Do changes need to be made to your key focal areas, which changes are possible?
- Which of your responsibilities cannot be changed easily and have to be carried out as is?
- Where do you see opportunities and/or wishes with regard to balancing family and job responsibilities?¹⁰
- What measures are offered to employees to help meet the challenges of balancing job and family?¹¹
- Do changes need to be made with regard to your working times and working hours, both from your personal and from a legal perspective? Are these changes feasible and compatible with your work and the workflows both inside and outside your unit?
- Which of the topics we have discussed here today should be communicated to the rest of your team? Who should communicate this information: Do you want to do it, or should I?
- Which of the topics we have discussed here today, on the other hand, do you feel I should keep strictly to myself as your supervisor and, if possible, discuss with no one or only within the team and not with anyone outside the unit?
- How can I and your team best support you?



¹⁰ For example, are meeting times set with the needs of part-time employees and colleagues with child care responsibilities in mind?

¹¹ Are men, for example, encouraged and supported if they want to go on paternal leave?